

Section 1 Educational Resources

Resources On-Line

Gun Violence IS Public Health – A PowerPoint presentation by Dr. Susan L. Polan, PhD., American Public Health Association, that examines gun violence from the perspective of a growing public health crisis.

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1GHDlaJ7Y7ITa70GZBhgvBqYUN1XE8VELOS6iNdYQgU>

Violence – A biblically-based PowerPoint presentation by Rev. Alonzo Johnson, Coordinator, Self-Development of People, PC(USA) that relates gun violence to issues of poverty and race.

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1hMY1hzEcPhstGFLn2-lpfa1pxQ09mvPMwmD9yCmeAxl>

Children & Gun Violence – This article underscores the need for funding research into gun violence. A professor at the Children's Hospital at Montefiore/Albert Einstein College of Medicine documents that, in the US, 16 children per day are *admitted* to hospitals because of gun violence. That's 5,862 per year, but we have no count on how many children die of gun violence in emergency rooms or before being admitted to a hospital.

<http://www.cnn.com/2017/05/04/health/children-gunshot-wounds-study/index.html>

Films

Trigger: The Ripple Effect of Gun Violence

A film by David Barnhart, an award-winning producer, director, and documentary filmmaker.

The documentary frames gun violence as both a disaster and a public health issue. It addresses the critical issue of gun violence prevention by moving the conversation away from the polarizing extremes that have long dominated the debate and lifting up the voice and experiences of those who seek common ground and a new way forward. *Trigger* was produced in part as a response to the 219th General Assembly (2010) resolution *Gun Violence, Gospel Values: Mobilizing in Response to God's Call* and to shed light on the growing issue. The documentary is the result of a collaborative effort of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, and the Compassion, Peace, and Justice Ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

There is a study guide and bulletin insert that goes along with this DVD for use in congregational or other community based meetings during screenings.

For additional resources and downloads: <http://www.triggerdoc.com/next/resources/>



Americans Remember the Loved Ones They've Lost to Gun Violence

The families of gun victims speak to their fellow Americans about the need for practical steps to prevent gun violence. View this short video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FIHQJlavfps>

Newtown: What Remains After All is Lost?

Filming over the course of nearly 3 years, Filmmaker Kim Snyder explores a traumatized community in the aftermath of the deadliest mass shootings of schoolchildren in American history. Screened at the Sundance Festival and other international film venues, *Newtown* tells the story of resilience in the face of unspeakable tragedy.

Learn more about hosting a screening in your community at <http://www.newtownfilm.com>

Changing the Conversation: America's Gun Violence Epidemic

Produced for use in high school and college classrooms and broad community settings, this film shifts the conversation from strictly Second Amendment rights to a broader focus on preventing a public health epidemic of gun violence. Purchase info at <http://www.changegunviolence.com>

Making A Killing: Guns, Greed and the NRA

This film tells the stories of how guns, and the *billions* of dollars made by the gun and ammunition industry, impact the lives of everyday Americans. It features personal stories from people across the country who have been affected by gun violence, including survivors and victims' families. The film exposes how the powerful gun companies and the NRA are resisting responsible legislation for the sake of profit. It looks into gun tragedies that include unintentional shootings, domestic violence, suicides, mass shootings and trafficking – and what we can do to put an end to this profit-driven crisis.

Learn more about the film: <http://www.bravenewfilms.org/makingakilling>

Obtain a copy of the film: <http://www.bravenewfilms.com/makingakilling>

Raising Adam Lanza: A Documentary

In the wake of the mass killings at Sandy Hook Elementary School, FRONTLINE investigates a young man and the town he changed forever. Adam Lanza left behind a trail of death and destruction, but little else. He left no known friends, no diary. He destroyed his computer and any evidence it might have provided. His motives, and his life, remain largely a mystery. In collaboration with *The Hartford Courant*, FRONTLINE looks for answers to the central—and so far elusive—question: who was Adam Lanza?

To view the trailer or film: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/raising-adam-lanza/>

2020: January 31, 2014 Young Guns – A Diane Sawyer Special

Diane Sawyer and David Muir take a sharp look at kids and guns in a special report that originally aired on Jan. 31, 2014 at 10 pm ET.

To view the special online: <http://www.abc.go.com/shows/2020/episode-guide/2014-01/31-2020-131-young-guns-a-diane-sawyer-special>

The Inside Scoop: May 15, 2017 Host Catherine Read Interviews Presbyterian Author James Atwood on his Book, *Gundamentalism*

This video offers a wide-ranging discussion of the current impact of guns in America, in conversation with James Atwood, with a special appeal to gun owners to support gun safety and reasonable gun laws. The second half of the interview features Andrew Goddard, parent of a son injured at the Virginia Tech shooting and now Director of the Virginia Center for Public Safety. He gives an excellent overview of the state of Virginia, as a case study for all 50 states.

View online at <https://youtu.be/VfTSUM-6HZw>

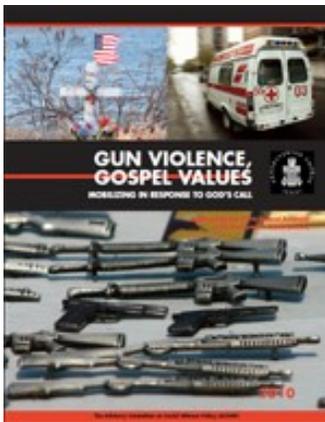
The PC(USA) & Gun Violence Prevention Policy

The PC(USA) and its predecessor bodies have addressed gun violence through the actions of many General Assemblies in the last fifty years. Beginning in the late 1960's, in response to the assassinations of public leaders, the General Assembly called for "...control [of] the sale and possession of firearms of all kinds." Similar resolutions were passed again in 1976, 1988, 1990, 1991, 1996 and 1998.

Each resolution reflected a sense of moral urgency in response to rising gun violence and the cultural trends that contributed to it. These resolutions have called on the church to be involved in education and advocacy at the federal, state, and community level to prevent gun violence. In 1991 and 1996, these resolutions were backed up with strong educational curricula as well as comprehensive strategies for advocacy.

In 2008 the General Assembly recommended that churches should take seriously the pastoral implications of caring for members of our community who have experienced the pain of gun violence, advocate for legislation that would increase the safety and well-being of communities in relation to the presence of guns, and conduct a national study on gun violence. From this recommendation, a gun violence prevention task force of ten people was formed under the auspices of the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.

The task force worked tirelessly over the next two years and produced a comprehensive study of contemporary gun violence in the United States, complete with recommendations for the church as to how to address this critical issue. This study was *unanimously* approved by the 219th General Assembly:



Gun Violence, Gospel Values: Mobilizing in Response to God's Call, PC(USA) Advocacy Committee on Social Witness Policy

This report, approved by the 219th General Assembly (2010), challenges our society's fatalism and numbness in accepting the world's highest gun death rates, reviews past church stands and proposes a new "spiritual awakening" to support needed laws: a church-related, community-based strategy inspired by "Heeding God's Call" in Philadelphia, with similar groups in Richmond, VA and central NJ. The report includes analysis of our culture of violence-acceptance, with its undercurrents of fear, desperation, and suicide, and advocates a public health approach to halt spread of guns and gang violence.

To download a pdf version:

https://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/acswp/pdf/gun-violence-policy.pdf

To purchase hard copies: <http://www.store.pcusa.org> Order item # 2405211002

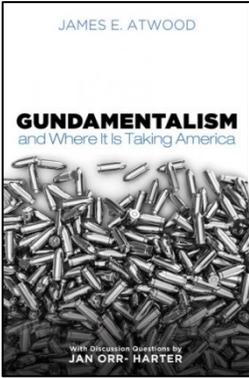
On Gun Violence Prevention, PC(USA) General Assembly Action, 2014

—From the Presbytery of Hudson River

This is the most recent action taken by the General Assembly regarding gun violence. It directs the church to speak out on a variety of legislative matters with the aim of reducing gun violence; it encourages Presbyterians to learn more about the theological issues involved in gun violence; respond pastorally to situations of gun violence, and to claim a bold witness against gun violence by hanging signage on church property declaring it a gun-free zone.

The full final version of this action is provided in this Toolkit, p. 37.

Study & Small Group Suggestions



Gundamentalism & Where It Is Taking America

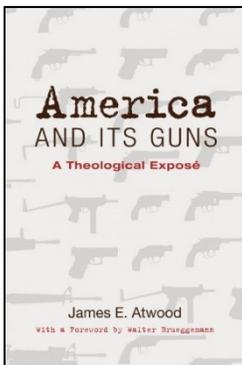
By James E. Atwood

Discussion Questions by Jan Orr-Harter

Gundamentalism and Where It Is Taking America offers an immensely readable and comprehensive overview of the issue of gun violence in America, with discussion questions following each chapter. While written from a faith perspective, the book is designed for both church groups and a broader audience, including college, law, medical and public health schools; law enforcement agencies; local government and community groups. James Atwood is a retired Presbyterian pastor and an avid deer hunter for half a century. During most of that time, he has been in the forefront of the faith community's fight for two constitutional rights: the right to keep and bear arms and the right to live in domestic tranquility, free of gun violence.

Atwood explains why guns mystically control so many Americans. Chapters include such topics as: How Did We Get Here?; Straight Talk to Anyone Buying a Gun for the First Time; Policing the Inner City; Can Guns be Made Safer? Atwood's book, which details his learning in a lifetime in the struggle for reasonable gun laws in America, puts dependable social and theological analysis of our unique national epidemic into your hands along with scientific data that will provoke honest reflection and discussion for the building of a safer and saner America. Along with the discussion questions, suggestions for action are also included.

To purchase the book: <http://wipfandstock.com/gundamentalism-and-where-it-is-taking-america.html>



America and Its Guns: A Theological Exposé

by James E. Atwood

Foreword by Walter Brueggemann

Six Session PPF Study Guide by Jan Orr-Harter

James Atwood, an avid hunter, cautions that an absolute trust in guns and violence morphs easily into idolatry. Having spent 40 years as a Presbyterian pastor fighting against the easy access to firearms, one of which took the life of a friend, he uses his unique experience and his biblical and theological understanding to graphically portray the impact guns have on our society. He documents how Americans have been deceived into believing that the tools of violence will provide ultimate security, whether they take the form of advanced military technology or a handgun in the bedside stand. He closes with a wake-up call to the faith community, which he says is America's best hope to unmask the extremism of the Gun Empire. This book will appeal primarily to persons of faith because it brings together multiple aspects of the gun death crisis in America—the statistics, the laws, the players, the options— with the underlying spiritual and theological imperatives of what is often considered to be a “hands-off” political issue. Available at <http://www.amazon.com> in print and Kindle or with the publisher's group discounts. Call 541-344-1528 or order from <http://wipfandstock.com/catalogsearch/result/?q=America+and+its+guns>

See the next page for the PPF Six Session Study Guide for this book.

Rev. James Atwood, right, speaks and conducts workshop for groups across the nation. See media coverage with Jim at <https://youtu.be/VfTSUM-6HZw>

Contact: James Atwood, 1236 Glenside Dr. Harrisonburg, VA 22801
540-568-8523 jatwood1959@gmail.com



A Short Summary of **BATTLEGROUND AMERICA** One Nation, Under the Gun

By Jill Lepore, *The New Yorker*, April 23, 2012

The Second Amendment

The Second Amendment: “A well-regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.”

Demographics

- There are nearly 300 million privately owned firearms in the United States: 106 million handguns, 105 million rifles, and 83 million shotguns. That works out to about one gun for every American.”
- T.J. Lane, the teenager who killed his classmates at Chardon High, found the gun he used in his grandfather’s barn. It belonged to his uncle.
- The United States is the country with the highest rate of civilian gun ownership in the world. “The second highest is Yemen, where the rate is nevertheless only half that of the U.S.”
- Men are far more likely to own guns than women are, but the rate of gun ownership among men has fallen since 1980 while it has remained the same for women in the same stretch of time....Gun ownership is higher among whites than blacks, higher in the country than in the city, and higher among older people than among younger people.
- In many states, to purchase a gun from a licensed dealer you need a permit, which requires you to complete firearms-safety training. People who buy guns from private sellers at gun shows or through other private exchanges aren’t required to take a firearms-safety class. These exchanges fall under what is called the “gun-show loophole.”
- 40% of the guns bought in the United States are bought from private sellers, not licensed dealers.
 - Arms are military weapons. A firearm is a cannon that you can carry as opposed to artillery so big and heavy that you need wheels to move it, or people to help you...the firearms used by a well-regulated militia (at the time the Second Amendment was written) could be discharged only once before they had to be reloaded.
 - The Second Amendment was drafted by James Madison in order to assure the Anti-Federalists that the people would have the right to form a militia. The original version read: “The right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed; a well armed and well regulated militia being the best security of a free country: but no person religiously scrupulous of bearing arms shall be compelled to render military service in person.”
 - None of this (the debate over the Second Amendment) had to do with hunting. People who owned and used long arms to hunt continued to own and use them...As Garry Wills once wrote, “One does not bear arms against a rabbit.”

America’s Evolving Relationship to Guns

- Firearms have been regulated in the United States from the early days. “Laws banning the carrying of concealed weapons were passed in Kentucky and Louisiana in 1813, and other states soon followed: Indiana (1820), Tennessee and Virginia (1838), Alabama (1839), and Ohio (1859). Similar laws were passed in Texas, Florida, and Oklahoma. As the governor of Texas explained in 1893, the ‘mission of the

concealed deadly weapon is murder. To check it is the duty of every self-respecting, law-abiding man.’ ”

- Although the laws were occasionally challenged, they were rarely struck down in state courts.
- The National Rifle Association was founded in 1871. For most of its history, the NRA was chiefly a sporting and hunting association.
- The first major federal gun control legislation pieces were the 1934 National Firearms Act and the 1938 Federal Firearms Act. Taken together, they created a licensing system for dealers and prohibitively taxed the private ownership of automatic weapons. The NRA supported both.
- In 1939, The Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the 1934 act, unanimously agreeing with solicitor general Robert H. Jackson that the Second Amendment is “restricted to the keeping and bearing of arms by the people collectively for their common defense and security.”

The Modern Gun Debate

- Gun-rights arguments have their origins not in 18th century Anti-Federalism but in 20th century liberalism. They are the product of what the Harvard law professor Mark Tushnet has called the “rights revolution,” the pursuit of rights, especially civil rights, through the courts.
- In the 1970’s, the NRA began advancing the idea that the Second Amendment guarantees an individual’s right to carry a gun, rather than the people’s right to form armed militias to provide for the common defense.
- Fights over rights are effective at getting out the vote. Describing gun-safety legislation as an attack on a constitutional right gave conservatives a power at the polls that, at the time, the movement lacked.
- Ronald Reagan was the first Presidential candidate whom the NRA endorsed. His election made it possible for conservatives to begin turning a new interpretation of the Second Amendment into law.
- Orrin Hatch became the chair of the Subcommittee on the Constitution, and commissioned a history of the Second Amendment, which resulted in a 1982 report, “The Right to Keep and Bear Arms.” The authors of the report claimed to have discovered “clear—and long-lost—proof that the Second Amendment was intended as an individual right of the American citizen to keep and carry arms in a peaceful manner, for protection of himself, his family, and his freedoms.”
- In 1986, the Firearms Owners Protection Act was passed, repealing parts of the 1968 Gun Control Act (passed largely in response to the assassinations of Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr.) and giving new legal authority to the NRA’s interpretation of the Second Amendment, and a growing body of scholarship funded by the NRA.
- Chief Justice Warren Burger said that the new interpretation of the Second Amendment was “one of the greatest pieces of fraud, I repeat the word ‘fraud,’ on the American public by special-interest groups that I have ever seen in my lifetime.”
- Between 1968 and 2012, the idea that owning and carrying a gun is both a fundamental American freedom and an act of citizenship gained wide acceptance and, along with it, the principle that this right is absolute and cannot be compromised; gun-control legislation was diluted, defeated, overturned, or allowed to expire; the right to carry a concealed handgun became nearly ubiquitous.

For the entire article, see <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2012/04/23/battleground-america>

Connecting with Others

National Groups & Contacts in all 50 States

There are many ways to get involved in preventing gun violence. You can start a group or chapter in your church or with others in your community. Below we list national groups, as well as a contact in each state, someone already working near you on this issue. These groups work together on significant anniversaries, such as the 5th anniversary of the Newtown School Shooting in Dec. 2017 and the anniversary of the Orlando Nightclub shooting on June 12. Many groups provide resources for “National Gun Violence Awareness Day” in June and for holding “Gun Violence Prevention Sabbath” in your community on various days throughout the year. Please help us add to and update this list. Email suggestions to: JanOH4@aol.com

Coalition to Stop Gun Violence - <http://www.csgv.org> Founded in 1974 and based in Washington DC, a coalition of 47 national organizations working together to prevent gun violence. The Presbyterian Church (USA) is a member and Presbyterian author Rev. Jim Atwood is on the national board of directors.

Everytown for Gun Safety - <http://www.everytown.org> 646-324-8250 Based in NY, NY, created from a merger in 2013 of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America and Mayors Against Illegal Guns, Everytown has contacts in every state in the US. Moms Demand Action sponsors the Gun Sense Action Network in every state and the Mother’s Dream Quilt Project. Everytown promotes National Gun Violence Awareness Day in June, asking Americans to wear orange and to create local events to raise awareness.

Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence - <http://www.bradycampaign.org> 202-370-8100 Founded by Jim and Sarah Brady and sponsor of the Million Mom March in 2000, the Brady Campaign has launched a goal to cut American gun deaths in half by 2025 through a combination of public policy, safety and public awareness changes. Based in Washington DC, they also sponsor the Legal Action Project to use the court system to support sensible gun policy. With 94 chapters across the US, they maintain an on-line map that shows local affiliates across the nation. Their website offer worship resources under “God not Guns.”

States United to Prevent Gun Violence - <http://www.ceasefireusa.org> or <http://www.supgv.org> Established in 2010 to create a 50 state solution on gun violence. Based in NY,NY, States United maintains a clearinghouse of 31 states so far, with groups working together on gun violence prevention. They can help you get started in your state. Their website also offers a quick check on which popular investment funds are profiting from the gun and ammunition industry and how to find a fund that isn’t.

Americans for Responsible Solutions - <http://www.americansforresponsiblesolutions.org> Founded by Gabby Gifford and Mark Kelly in 2012, ARS sponsors education, advocacy and a significant Political Action Committee (PAC). ARS has merged with the Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, which has worked for over 20 years to mobilize lawyers to help strengthen gun laws. The Law Center maintains an on-line resource and scorecard on the gun laws in each of the US states. Click on your state to find current regulations. www.smartgunlaws.org/search-gun-law-by-state

Violence Policy Center - <http://www.vpc.org/> The Violence Policy Center does investigation and analytical work to provide accurate statistics on gun violence, information on the gun industry and steps to prevent gun violence.

The Newtown Action Alliance - <http://www.alliance.newtownaction.org> Founded in Newtown, CT after the 2012 Sandy Hook school shooting, the Newtown Alliance exists to “provide comfort, education, scholarship and other support and resources to people and communities impacted by or living in the aftermath of gun violence in American society, and to help them lead the way toward positive cultural change.”

Faiths United to Prevent Gun Violence - <http://www.faithsunited.org> Over 50 national religious groups working together to sponsor Gun Violence Prevention Sabbath each year and other mutual projects to lessen the grip of gun violence and the gun industry on America. Their website "Other Resources" includes an excellent *Gun Violence Guide for Faith Leaders*.

National Gun Violence Victims Action Council – <http://www.gunvictimsaction.org> After originating action to compel Starbucks to change their gun policy, NGVAC works to involve economic power and corporate behavior to change the gun violence culture in America.

Gun Violence Archive - <http://www.gunviolencearchive.org> The GVA provides free public access to accurate reporting on gun-related incidents in America. Not an advocacy group, GVA gathers near real-time data from over 2,000 media, law enforcement, government and commercial sources daily. Results are published at www.facebook.com/gunviolencearchive

State Contacts: (Please help us update this list. Send new local contact info to JanOH4@aol.com)

Alabama Contact www.momsdemandaction.org to connect with their AL chapter
<http://www.facebook.com/MomsDemandActionAL>

Alaska We are Anchorage <http://www.weareanchorage.org>

Arizona Arizonans for Gun Safety <http://www.azfgs.com> 9920 S. Rural Rd,
Suite 108, PMB #36, Tempe, AZ 85284 602-547-0976 info@AZFGS.com

Arkansas Arkansas Stop the Violence, PO Box 94578, North Little Rock, 501-351-1066
walter.crockran@lrsd.org

Brady Campaign of Arkansas, Diane Bunten, centralarkansas@bradymail.org

Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, Kathleen Hills, Little Rock h.kathleen@gmail.com

California Women Against Gun Violence <http://www.wagv.org> Los Angeles, CA 90034 (310) 204-2348
University of California at Davis Violence Prevention Research Program
<http://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/vprp>

Colorado Colorado Ceasefire <http://www.coloradoceasefire.org>
Colorado Progress Now <http://www.progressnowcolorado.org>
Hunters Against Gun Violence <http://www.huntersagainstgunviolence.com>
Faith Communities United to End Gun Violence <http://www.cfcu-co.org>

Connecticut Connecticut Against Gun Violence <http://www.cagv.org> 203-955-1009 info@cagv.org
Asylum Hill Congregational Church, Hartford, CT. (Stand Up- Speak Out)
Mothers United Against Violence, Hartford, CT Nancy Kirchmyer, 860-228-4390 or 860-670-4078
or nkirchmyer@hotmail.com

Delaware Delaware Coalition Against Gun Violence <http://www.decagv.org>

Florida Florida Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence, founded by the League of Women Voters following the Pulse Nightclub massacre, the worst mass shooting in American history
<http://www.preventgunviolenceflorida.org> pbrighamlwvoc@gmail.com 850-224-2545