

I submit the following article in its entirety and with proper attributions to the author, as I will be drawing largely upon the author's writings during my public testimony today.

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### Shadow of the Gun

By Daniel Greenfield, Sultan Knish Blog: <http://sultanknish.blogspot.com/>

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Every day another one of the stories comes in. A teacher panicked by a plastic gun, an army man on a cupcake, a t-shirt, a pop tart chewed into the shape of a gun or a finger gun hits the panic button. Suspensions and lectures quickly follow as the latest threat to the gun-free zone, usually in the form of a little boy, is tackled to the ground and lectured to within an inch of his life.

Tellingly these incidents rarely take place in the inner city schools where teenage gang members walk through metal detectors at the start of the day. The safety officers in those schools, big weary men with eyes that look everywhere at once, don't waste their time on toys. Not unless those toys are full-size, painted black and filed down to look like real guns.

It's usually the schools where a shooting is wholly unlikely; where gun violence is not a daily reality, but an unlikely convergence of horror, that institutional vigilance hits an irrational peak as every school imagines that it could be the next Columbine or the next Sandy Hook.

The NRA's initial proposal of armed school guards was met with an irrational chorus of protests. More guns aren't the answer, was the cry. And the leading crier was the White House's expert skeet shooter. In a country where law enforcement is heavily armed and gunmen are stopped by gunmen in uniforms, a strange Swedenization had set in. The problem was not the man, it was the gun. Get rid of the guns and you stop the killing. Schools across the country are banning not the gun, but the idea of the gun. It is a conceptual prohibition that is meant to push away the threat of gun violence by eliminating any mention of the G word. Gun-free zones mean places where guns cannot be mentioned, depicted or even symbolized as if the refusal to concede the existence of a firearm will eliminate the threat of it being used on the premises.

This isn't a precautionary attitude, but a pacifist one. Gun horror is not a productive emotion, but learned helplessness disguised as moral superiority. Rather than teaching children to hate killers, schools are instead teaching them to hate guns. And reducing murders to instruments rather than morals, children are left with no sense of right and wrong, only an instinctive horror of violence.

Pacifists have always demonized armies rather than invaders. During WWI they obsessed over gas. During WW2, it was the bomber and the tank. During the Cold War they demonized nuclear weapons. In the War on Terror, they target the drone. By dealing with the object rather than the subject, they are able to avoid the question of moral responsibility. Rather than hold the Nazis, Communists or Islamists accountable for their actions, they extended a blanket condemnation over the weapons-wielders.

The American GI was just as bad as the SS man or the Kamikaze pilot or the Political Commissar. The only difference was in who had the bigger guns. And the one with the bigger guns, was also the most to blame.

That same attitude can be seen today when Israel is blamed for every battle with Islamic terrorists because it has the bigger guns. Rather than evaluating the nature of a conflict and the values of both sides, the pacifists score every war based on firepower.

While the left likes to indulge in stereotypes of gun-toting rednecks and bomb-brandishing generals, the only people who judge the worth of a man by his weapon are the pacifists, the gun-fearers and gun-hiders who mythologize weapons as black agents of evil.

To believe that there is no such thing as constructive violence is to reject free will. Without accepting the necessity of constructive violence, there is no good and evil, only armed men and unarmed men. Without constructive violence, two boys playing cops and robbers in the schoolyard are not acting out a childish morality play, they are becoming desensitized to murder, and without it a child with a pop tart chewed into the shape of a gun is on the way to being a school shooter.

If there is no such thing as constructive violence, then the police officer is not the solution to crime, he is part of the cycle of violence. And if that cycle of violence does not begin with a man choosing to use a gun for good or evil, then it must begin with the gun. The man becomes the object and the gun becomes the subject. American ICBMs become just as bad as Russian ballistic missiles. An Israeli soldier killing a suicide bomber is just as bad as the terrorist. There are no good guys with guns. To have a gun is to be the bad guy.

For decades the gun-control lobby has brandished assault rifles at press conferences and spent more time describing their killing power than their manufacturers have. The rifle has been upgraded to the assault rifle and now, in the latest Orwellian vernacular used by the White House and the entire media pyramid beneath it, weapons of war.

The dreaded assault rifle or weapon of war or killing machine of mass death actually kills rather few Americans. The average shooter doesn't bring an AR-15 to a Chicago

gangland dispute. Despite the number of these weapons in private hands, most of the killing takes place with handguns in the same parts of the country where large amounts of illegal drugs are sold, women trafficked and stores robbed.

Shootings in America are not caused by guns, they are caused by crime. Guns really do not walk off store shelves and go on killing sprees. That's what criminals are for. But the trouble with that discussion is that it takes us into moral territory. Talking about guns is easy, talking about souls is not. If guns don't kill people, then we have to ask the difficult question of what does kill people.

It's a bigger question than just Adam Lanza pulling the trigger in a classroom full of children. It is a big question that encompasses the Nazi gas chambers and the Soviet gulags, the Rape of Nanking and September 11. It is a question as big as all of human history.

Pacifists once used to be able to address such questions, but they have become obsessed with the technology of violence, rather than the spiritual origin of violence. And the technology of violence is largely beside the point. Guns do not motivate people to kill. Nor do they represent that much of a quantum increase in death.

Some of history's worst massacres happened long before firearms became useful for more than scaring off peasants. The heavily armed Americans of the 50s had lower per capita murder rates than medieval London. It isn't the gun that makes the killer. It's not the hand that kills, but the mind.

The gun-free society has little interest in individuals. Its technocratic philosopher-kings want big and comprehensive solutions. Their answer to gun violence is to feed a horror of guns. Their answer to obesity is to ban sodas. Their solutions invariably miss the point by treating people like objects and objects like people.

In the Middle Ages, rats were put on trial for eating crops. Today we put guns on trial for killing people. The left has tried to reduce people to economics, to class and then race, gender and sexual orientation. It has done its best to reduce people to the sum of their parts and then to tinker with those parts and it has failed badly. The best testimony of its profound spiritual failure is that the worst pockets of gun violence are in urban areas that have been under the influence of their sociologists, urban planners, psychologists, social justice activists, community organizers and political rope-pullers for generations. And what have those areas brought forth except malaise, despair, blight and murder?

Banning guns will do as much for those areas as banning drugs did. It is not the shadow of the gun that has fallen over Chicago, but an occlusion of the spirit. Social services have had generations to save the city and they have failed because the technocracy can reach the body, but it cannot reach the soul.

The gun-control activists drew the wrong lesson from Newtown as they drew the wrong lessons from WW2 and September 11. The lesson is not that weapons are bad, the lesson is that people in the grip of evil ideas are capable of unimaginable horrors regardless of the tools at their disposal. A single man can kill a classroom full of children with a gun and a few men can kill thousands with a few box cutters. It isn't the tool that matters. It's the man.

Unwishing the gun brings us back to the sword. Unwishing the sword brings us back to the spear. Unwishing the spear brings us back to the stone club. And what then? When every weapon that ever existed or will exist is undone, all that remains is the deadliest weapon of all. The mind of man.

The gun, the sword, the spear and the club took countless lives and saved countless lives. Civilization has always balanced on a future made possible by little boys playing cops and robbers and playing with little green army men. They can either grow up to be the protectors of the future or the frightened men who will stand aside and do nothing when they hear the screams begin to come because they have been told that all violence is evil.

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