

America, and the Price of Violence

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The mass shooting that occurred in Uvalde, Texas on May 25, 2022, is a senseless act that killed 19 innocent boys and girls and two teachers. Most people who care about the right of children to have safe schools and get good education seem to think that the killing goes on due to easy access to guns, and therefore, ask for stricter gun control laws. Others suggest that more armed guards should be stationed at schools to protect children, teachers, and the staff. Still others suggest that teachers should be armed. But these suggestions are likely to make schools look like prisons that undermine the freedom of students and teachers for the sake of giving largely deranged gun owners opportunities to own more arms and kill innocent people. No suggestion considers the long-term cultural and psychological impact of armed guards and armed teachers on innocent children. The purpose of this paper is to highlight the magnitude of the human, material, and psychological cost of violence in America, especially on children.

“The Gun Violence Archive, a nonprofit organization that tracks shootings in the US, counted at least 214 mass shooting incidents during the first 5 months of 2022, and more than 17,300 lost their lives. The organization defines a mass shooting as a single incident in which at least four people are shot, not including the gunman.” Yet, before the end of the 2nd day of 2023, the number of mass shootings reached 6 incidents, the number of people killed reached 190, of which 132 were suicides, and the number of injuries reached 143. In addition 2 children below the age of 11 years were killed.

<https://www.gunviolencearchive.org/>

According to the records of the Gun Violence Archives, 39,514 violent incidents happened in 2014, killing 12,346 people, and injuring 21,866, of which 665 children of less than 11 years old were killed or injured,. In 2015, the number of gun violence incidents increased to 49,129, killing 13,573 people, and injuring 26,893, of which 679 children under the age of 11 years were killed or injured. In 2016, the number of gun violence incidents climbed to 54,700, killing 15,137 people and injuring 30,587, of which 665 children of less than 11 years old were killed or

injured. In 2017, the number of gun violence incidents rose to 58,110, killing 15,741 people and injuring 31,358, of which 721 children of less than 11 years old were killed or injured.

In 2018, the number of gun violence incidents declined to 54,146, killing 14,943 people and injuring 28,285 of which 663 were children of less than 11 years old who were killed or injured. In 2019, the number of people killed rose substantially, it reached 39,599 of which 24,090 were suicides, and injured 30,199. As for children who were killed or injured, their number was 211. In 2020, the number of deaths rose again, reaching 43,710, of which 24,156 were suicides, and the number of injures reached 39,543. As for children the number of the killed or injured was 301. In 2021, the number of gun violence deaths rose again, reaching 45,092, of which 24,090 were suicides, and the number of the injured reached 40,598. As for children under the age of 11 years old, the number of those who were killed or injured was 315. In 2022, the number of gun violence deaths declined to 44,225, of which 24,090 were suicides, and the number of injures was 38,489. As for the American children who continue to be victimized by violence, 313 were killed and 679 were injured.

<https://www.gunviolencearchive.org/past-tolls>

According to the Reader's Digest, "every day in America, an average of 321 people are shot. Of that number, 111 die: 42 are murdered and 65 die by suicide; one is shot and killed by accident, another is shot by law enforcement and another dies of an undetermined cause. The gun violence statistics are even more grim when it comes to kids: Every day, 22 children aged 17 and under are shot. Five die, three of them murdered and two killed by suicide. Eight are shot by accident and survive, and eight are shot by a gun left unsecured at home".

<https://www.rd.com/article/gun-violence-statistics/>

Therefore, to deal with the gun issue constructively, we should, as a society and concerned citizens, work together and acknowledge the following: First, we should recognize the mass shooting phenomenon for what it really is in order to put an end to it once and for all. Second, we should admit that the right to carry arms was enshrined in the US Constitution to arm the White colonialists to protect the land they had confiscated from its native owners who were trying to defend themselves, their families, and their land from criminals determined to kill most of them and confiscate every piece of land they owned.

Since the natives who survived the colonialists massacres have abandoned armed struggle to recover their rights for peaceful means about a century ago, the need of the White people to carry guns should have ended a long time ago. The continuation of the right to carry arms serves the interests of the arms manufacturing industry, the arms dealers, and the corrupt politicians who are willing to help whoever contributes to financing their election campaigns so they can stay in power, regardless of who lives and who dies from the general American public.

Therefore, the reason of mass shooting is not easy access to guns only, and thus it cannot be addressed by enacting laws to restrict gun ownership. As long as people are allowed to carry guns, mass shooting incidents and violence will continue to intensify, and so will the police killing of innocent people. In 2021, the police killed 1055 men and women.

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/585149/people-shot-to-death-by-us-police-by-gender/>

The Cost of Inaction

If the current mass shootings trend continues, the number of victims would most likely exceed 50,000 by the end of this year (2023). This is more than the 40,000 Americans killed in the Korean War in three years (1950-1953) and more than 85% of the 58,200 American soldiers killed in the Vietnam War in 10 years (1965-1975). This means that the average number of US soldiers killed in Vietnam annually was less than 12% of the expected number to be killed in mass shooting this year. America sacrificed about 100,000 of its young men and women in the 1950s and 60s to save its democratic system at home and protect the West from Communism; today America is allowing deranged gun owners to massacre over 40,000 of its sons and daughters in 2022 and cause great damage to the social and cultural fabric of its society for the sake of protecting the interests of corrupt politicians, arm manufacturers, and arms dealers.

According to official US government reports, issued by the CDC, “45,879 people died by suicide in the United States in 2022; that is one death every 11 minutes.” And for every suicide death, there are: 4 hospitalizations for suicide attempts. 8 emergency department visits related to suicide; 27 self-reported suicide attempts, and 275 people who seriously considered suicide. It is clear that this number of suicides is twice as large as the numbers we extracted from the Gun Violence Archives and mentioned above

<https://www.cdc.gov/suicide/suicide-data-statistics.html>

In addition to the above, a report aired on the radio December 30th, 2022, said that the rates of suicide among the White American people increased by 60% in the last year, while increasing by 90% among the Black people.

What should be done?

The logical answer to this question should be easy. Since fighting between the settlers and the natives stopped about 100 years ago, the cause that justified the [second amendment](#) to the US constitution should have ended a long time ago. Since the government is responsible for the continuation of the manufacturing and selling of arms to the public, it should terminate this trade and compensate all people involved in it. Therefore, it is suggested that the US government should buy and close all the establishments that make and sell guns to the public, in addition to buying and destroying all the arms that citizens own over a 3-5 year period.

According to its cost, the price of the Korean War is \$67 billion in 1953 dollars, and \$535 billion in 2008 dollars. And according to The Balance organization, the price of the Vietnam War is \$168 billion in 1975 dollars, or \$1 trillion in today's dollars. So the price of those losing wars exceeds \$1.5 trillion. Assuming that the US government will pay \$500,000 for each gun dealer, whose total number is about 64,000 stores, the price of closing gun shops would be about \$32 billion; and if the government pays each gun manufacturer \$1 billion, whose number is 143, the cost of closing all gun plants would be \$143 billion. And if the government pays each American gun owner \$200 for each gun, whose number is 393 million, the cost of collecting and destroying all private guns would be \$78 billion. So the total cost of ending this nightmare and winning the war against mass and police shooting of innocent Americans would be about \$253 billion; approximately 17% of the price of losing the Korean and the Vietnam wars.

This is the only way to guarantee that our children and grandchildren will be safe in their homes and schools, enjoy and love their country, and contribute to making it safer and better. Our children are the most precious assets we have; therefore, we should take good care of them. Guns do not protect people, they kill people, and arms do not prolong lives, they end lives.

Prof. Rabie is a distinguished professor of International Political Economy; he attended 5 universities and taught at 11 others on four continents. He has published 60 books, about 200 scholarly papers, and over 2000 newspaper articles. Books are 16 in English, one in Albanian, and 41 in Arabic. English Books include *Saving Capitalism and Democracy*; *Global Economic and Cultural Transformation*; *A Theory of Sustainable Sociocultural and Economic Development*; *The Global Debt Crisis and its Socioeconomic Implications*. (Palgrave Macmillan 2013-2017) One of the English books, "History of Racism", was translated and published in six other languages: German, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and Polish. Arabic Books include 3 poetry collections, 2 novels, and a story; the rest is mostly academic books and collections of ideas and reflections. Prof. Rabie is president of the Arab Thought Council in Washington, DC, a member of the Arab Thought Forum, and a fellow of the Alexander Von Humboldt Foundation since 1992. Grants and scholarships financed his education from high school to receiving his Ph.D. in 1970 from the University of Houston; grants covered studies in Jordan, Egypt, Germany, and America. He is the winner of the State of Palestine Lifetime Achievement Award for scholarly publications and several other awards. His writings and positions reflect a strong commitment to peace, social justice, freedom, human development, as well as social, cultural, economic, and environmental sustainability.

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Links to Google Scholar, ResearchGate, and the encyclopedia.

https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=evo_c4QAAAAJ&hl=en&citsig=AMD79op143N3h2Qo7R_hDsZtzBuYxsGi6g

<https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Mohamed-Rabie-2>

<https://www.encyclopedia.com/arts/culture-magazines/rabie-mohamed>