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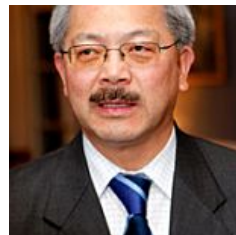
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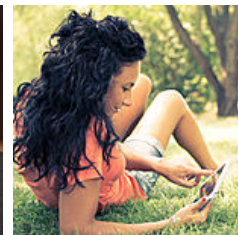
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Moms Demand SWATting

A disturbing trend on the fringes of the gun-control movement

By Charles C. W. Cooke

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Colorado Ceasefire gun-control rally in Denver, April 2013. (File photo)

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You see a GunFiltH waving its penis substitute,
exit, call police. Armed robbery in progress.” So wrote Twitter user “Little Black

Comments **27**

Dog” on September 13 of this year.

The injunction was a particularly colorful one, but the idea behind it, alas, is not as uncommon as one might wish. “I see you #opencarry with a gun in public,” a man named “joe villa” threatened earlier this week, “i’m calling the cops. psycho behaving erratic. make your day.” A translation for the more literate among us: “The law be damned; exercise your rights under the law and I’ll threaten your life.”

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“Take a look through the comments threads on Moms Demand Action’s Facebook page,” *Bearing Arms*’s Bob Owens tells me, “and you’ll see a lot of this.” “Not,” he clarifies,

from the *leaders* of the group. But it is a mindset popular among the followers. On there, on the Coalition to Stop Gun Violence —

ironically — and on GunFreeZone.net, you’ll notice commenters advocating that people call the police and exaggerate what is going on, hoping to get the cops to come in.

A cursory trawl through those sites reveals that Owens is correct in his assessment. The lion’s share of the commenters are innocuous and cordial — nothing more than law-abiding Americans participating in civil society. There are peaceful promises not to shop at Target or Kroger or Chili’s unless those businesses explicitly prohibit customers from bringing their firearms in with them; there are vehement-but-idle suggestions that anybody who wishes to carry a gun in public must have something seriously wrong with him; and there are the usual ignorant claims that shootings in America are on the increase (in fact, the opposite is true). But, every 20 comments or so, one sees exactly what Owens describes. Reacting to a photograph of a man standing at a checkout with a handgun holstered upon his hip, mom-who-demands-action Joyce Ward asks, “Why weren’t the police called immediately?” And “why,” Ward continues, “wasn’t he shot by the police for having a weapon?” Fellow poster Lisa McLogan Shaheen has a similar inquiry, wondering, “Why hasn’t someone called 911 so the cops can gun him down?” Others go a little further, proposing that they might help their cause along if they were actively to bring about an altercation. “Every time I see someone with a gun in a store I will call 911,” Jennifer Decker vows, “they’ll get tired of that right quick!!!” Even that plan is too limited for Ann Marie. “Just call the police every time you see someone with one,” she counsels, “the police will get sick of it eventually or have a run in with one of these clowns and then things will change.”

In almost every such comment, it is also asserted regretfully that there is an ugly double-standard at play in America’s thriving gun culture. “If he were black,” one Wayne Senftner laments, “some frantic white woman would call 911 and the cops would murder him on sight like in ohios walmart [sic] killing of the black man

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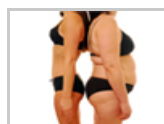
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holding a toy air rifle.” Presumably, Senftner cannot see how peculiar this statement looks to outsiders, nestled as it is among the hysterical output of “frantic white women” who are recommending that others do just that. Naturally, one shouldn’t let facts get in the way of a good whine. But what happened to Crawford should serve as a *warning* to the malcontents, not as an encouragement. The “black man holding a toy air rifle” to whom Senftner refers was named John Crawford III, and he was killed because, to borrow a phrase from Lisa McLogan Shaheen, a fellow shopper “called 911 so the cops could gun him down.” “If you sync the phone call to the footage,” Bob Owens tells me, “you’ll notice that Ronald Ritchie, the caller, makes claims that are not true.” Among those claims, the *Guardian* records, were that “Crawford was pointing the air rifle at customers,” that he threatened “two children,” and that he was recklessly “waving it around.” This does not appear to have been the case. Indeed, when the lattermost statement was made, Owens notes, “the gun’s muzzle was pointed to the ground.” So pronounced are the discrepancies between Ritchie’s story and the surveillance footage that John Crawford’s family is hoping to take legal action. “He’s basically lying with the dispatchers,” the family’s attorney, Michael Wright argues. “He’s making up the story. So should he be prosecuted? Yes, I believe so.”

Which is to say that, whether or not the allegedly well-intentioned reformers of Moms Demand Action and GunFreeZone.net are aware of it, they are flirting with disaster. On the surface, Ann Marie’s grubby little hope that police will eventually “have a run in with one of these clowns” may appear to be less threatening than was Ronald Ritchie’s fatal mendacity. But, if Marie were successful, the end result would likely be the same. There is no kind way of putting this, I’m afraid: Ultimately, what we are seeing on the fringes of the gun-control movement is the suggestion that American citizens be “SWATted” for their choices — that, in the name of a political disagreement, one party calls the cops on another and, under false pretenses, puts them in harm’s way. Is this reconcilable with “common sense” change?

“You’re putting the police in a situation where to the best of their knowledge the call is coming from inside the house,” Owens explains. “In the worst case, the perpetrator will say, ‘I’ve killed my wife and kids; come get me if you can.’” In other instances, he will exaggerate or twist the truth to lure authorities into a situation that is not at all as it has been described. In all cases, however, the intention is the same: To harm or to scare the target. Real-world examples abound. Sometimes, as in the cases of conservative activists Erick Erickson and Aaron Worthing, attacks have been contrived by those seeking political or legal revenge. At other times, they have been ordered purely as entertainment. (Earlier this year, a video-gamer who was streaming himself playing *Counter Strike* was SWATted by a jealous opponent. The incident, which was filmed, makes rough viewing: One moment, the player is enjoying his game; the next, he is being thrown to the ground by armed officers, their guns drawn.)

It is the high-profile cases that make the news — especially when the motive is explicitly political. But, for all the drama that the targeting of celebrities invites, it



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is difficult to imagine why an ostensibly distressed call from a grocery store would in practice have different consequences than a call reporting a reputed murder. If, as “Little Black Dog” and “joe villa” have proposed, a cop receives a complaint of an “armed robbery in progress” or an armed “psycho behaving erratic,” his response is likely to be severe. (Indeed, those who doubt that law enforcement treats every report with pronounced seriousness and an excess of caution might consider reading up on the typical response to proclaimed school shootings.)

The open-carry movement can at times be needlessly provocative, unforgivably impolite, and depressingly counter-productive. Mom’s Demand Action’s mawkish and narcissistic hoplophobia to one side, I share the concern of those who feel that some advocates of the right to bear arms have traded justifiable concern regarding the integrity of their rights for gratuitousness, confrontation, and vanity. Nevertheless, there are constructive and there are disastrous ways of establishing social and legal bright lines, and the proposals that are simmering around the gun-control movement’s fringes fall decidedly into the latter camp. Having been widely chastised for their stupidity, both “Little Black Dog” and “joe villa” removed their boorish warnings and slunk, chastened, back into their festering holes. Their friendlier allies at MDA and beyond would do well to follow suit, politely advising the hotheads that this really isn’t a game.

— *Charles C. W. Cooke is a staff writer at NATIONAL REVIEW.*

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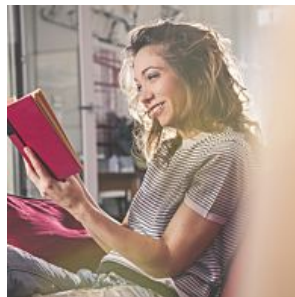
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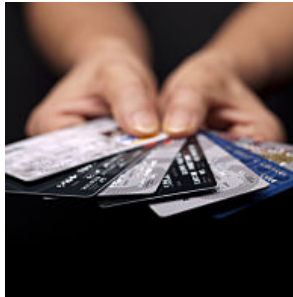
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skarlson • 4 minutes ago

In New York cops shot at a man who was basically walking around talking to himself. They struck bystanders and charged the man with attempted murder or some other garbage. If they can do that they can charge these people with something similar. It is against the law to call 911 with frivolous calls at least in WI.

^ | ▾ • Reply • Share ›

BMB • 9 minutes ago

Every instance of false report needs to be prosecuted fully and these people need to serve significant jail time. It is reckless endangerment at the least and if someone is killed as a result of these false reports, manslaughter. In this day and age it is not hard to trace a call to the caller. A few publicized cases of these wackos going to jail might nip this in the bud.

^ | ▾ • Reply • Share ›

uberdave1 • 13 minutes ago

Liberalism 101 Lesson 62:

As Liberalism 101 Lesson 40 states in part:

"It is from liberals only that the rights of the masses emanate. The silly notion that all rights are "endowed by the creator" is as passé as any notion that has sprung from a group of dead white slave owners."

This applies most especially to the knuckle dragging hayseed hick's mythical, manufactured "right to bear arms".

Not only does this ownership of weaponry imply that the simpleton masses have the intelligence to take decisions without the assistance of benevolent progressives and that there can be ownership of anything outside of the collective but it denies the total control that Liberal Marxist Progressive policy requires to bring about the fundamental change.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›

Beagle • 16 minutes ago

Based on their own statements, SWATting is attempted murder. They clearly state they have the specific intent to kill when they do it. Charge some of these dangerous idiots with attempted murder, and not just the anti-gun nuts, all the SWATters.

I knew a guy who had an angry ex call the police on him and say "He said he would never be taken alive." If he had even twitched during the arrest the cops said they would have shot him. The underlying accusation was completely made up by the way. He was never charged with anything. This is not a harmless prank to say the least.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›

michaelh613 • 21 minutes ago

Shouldn't people encouraging the crime of false reports hoping to create a violent incident be immediately prosecuted.

Last time I checked filing a false report, call 911 when there isn't an emergency and trying to deny someone their civil rights are all crimes, the last being a federal felony

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

Paul_in_NJ → michaelh613 • 20 minutes ago

All true. And you *will* see the victims of SWATting strike back -- with a lawsuit. Not that Ye Mainstream Media will be quick to report on that.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

Mupton • 27 minutes ago

What's the greater threat to law and order? Regulated open carry, or false police reports?

I hope Ronald Richie gets a serious sentence for his role in Crawford's death.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

Mickey Logan • 29 minutes ago

"“I see you #opencarry with a gun in public,” a man named “joe villa” threatened earlier this week, “i’mcalling the cops. psycho behaving erratic. make your day.” " You would think that their inability to make their case without lying would give them pause. But that would require a modicum of intellectual honesty.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**** Defiant Soul **** • 31 minutes ago

Let me give all these "Stop Gun Violence" people a heads up.... the way to do that is allow more citizens to be armed. Law abiding people aren't the ones out committing the gun violence.

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

JP • 32 minutes ago

People get all warm and fuzzv when they see a police packing a Sig or a H&K. But.

they would go nuts seeing a retired Navy SEAL carrying the same weapon.

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

the_gripping_hand • 35 minutes ago

Perhaps a series of lawsuits against these groups, asserting that they engaged in a conspiracy to violate civil rights laws, are in order.

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

TGMCCOY • 36 minutes ago

Thinking now of several current and retired State and Fed Officers who still carry, visibly and publicly. These "Moms" et.al. are fools...

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

SpaceCommie • an hour ago

I don't have any clue what to make of this. "People with guns are dangerous, so they should be shot"?

It's disturbing for all sorts of reasons.

4 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

Random_Failures → SpaceCommie • 27 minutes ago

It's truly frightening on many levels - agreed. The slope on this one is very slippery.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

Joel5 • an hour ago

Isn't it the left who always accuses the right of political violence?

4 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

Chang 场河 • an hour ago

Open carry is a terrible idea. It doesn't make these comments any less reprehensible, but those who are truly interested in preserving gun rights should avoid intentionally provoking those who are uncomfortable with them.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›

michaelh613 → Chang 场河 • 20 minutes ago

Your statement provokes me so you should not be allowed to speak in public

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

Eric Edwards → Chang 场河 • 37 minutes ago

Why is open carry a terrible idea? Because you don't agree with it? And if people avoided everything that someone else is uncomfortable with, what could we ever do? I am uncomfortable with DU or DailyKos spewing left wing hate speech and with Rolling Stone doing hit jobs on every conservative in sight, but that doesn't mean they should shut down.

I have seen a couple of people in my area carrying their weapons and no one seemed to care; they were doing their shopping like anyone else, weren't bringing undue attention to their weapons, and were not threatening anyone. So how did those people "intentionally provoke" anyone? And what manner of foolishness is it to assert, as you do, that a person who wants to preserve his rights has to conform to the tender sensibilities of those who are "uncomfortable with them"?

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

AK Coyote → Eric Edwards • 20 minutes ago

Well said Eric.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›

Redemption Searcher → Chang 场河 • 44 minutes ago

Baloney. In every one of these crazed shootings. an open carry citizen with

...any, in every one of these cases involving an open carry where a good aim could've defused the situation. Aside from customers consuming alcohol in establishments being prohibited, I'd feel a lot safer with open carry people around.

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

Redemption Searcher → Redemption Searcher • 43 minutes ago

Why do people think cops are safer with guns than average citizens? Because of their "training"? Please. (don't know why i addressed this to myself, whoops)

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

Timothy Lane • an hour ago

Just another reminder that "tolerant, open-minded" liberals are the most intolerant and closed-minded people imaginable -- and ready to do anything to get their way.

4 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

fryet • an hour ago

It would seem to me that the best response would be "making a false report to the police will get you in jail, not the one lawfully carrying a gun."

5 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

GBWO → fryet • 44 minutes ago

Eactomundo! That is what is going to happen and they will get sued by the innocent person they SWAT!

^ | v • Reply • Share ›

DevinDenver • an hour ago

How ironic that these knuckleheads will get all a twitter (pun intended) over someone EXCERCISING THEIR CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT to carry a gun, but go ape sh*t over someone voicing their opinion over abortion or gay marriage. Either they believe in "rights" or they don't.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

uberdave1 → DevinDenver • 11 minutes ago

Short answer...

...They don't.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›

AK Coyote → DevinDenver • 17 minutes ago

If you aren't a liberal and drunk on their Kool-Aid, you have no rights.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

pellmellus → DevinDenver • an hour ago

They believe in their rights only, which evolve according to their whim.

5 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

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