THE U.S. CULTURE OF FIREARMS AND THE NEW NORMAL

A presentation by

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God, Guns, Capitalism, and Hypermasculinity: Commentaries on the Culture of Firearms in the United States

Warren J. Blumenfeld

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2021
Firearms violence plagues our nation.
I have deep concerns over this plague.
I advocate for several governmental firearms safety regulations.
I am always open to respectful discussion and debate on these important topics.
1. A Culture of Firearms in the United States
2. Shooting by the Numbers
3. What Can We Do?
1. A CULTURE OF FIREARMS IN THE UNITED STATES
1232: Chinese invented gunpowder (black powder)

Mixture: sulfur, charcoal, potassium nitrate

Filled tubes with powder, light a fuse as rocket aimed at enemy
MATCHLOCK GUNS

- **1400s:** Matchlock guns – Portuguese - first mechanically firing guns
- Wicks attached to clamp that sprang into gunpowder
- **1607,** Pilgrims brought these guns
- Spanish first brought to the North American continent
Columbus: matchlocks & hand cannon

Sailed from Haiti, ordered shot fired through shipwrecked hull of Santa Maria to scare Native Americans to the power of European firearms.

He also had breech-loading wrought-iron cannon, and arquebuses -- an early type of portable firearm supported on a tripod or a forked rest.
1509 wheellock guns - Europe
- Wicks replaced by friction wheel mechanisms
- Generated spark to ignite gunpowder
1630 Flintlock guns
Flint striking ignition mechanism.
Common in Colonial America
LONG RIFLE

- Long Rifle ("Kentucky Rifle," "Pennsylvania Rifle")
- French and Indian War, Revolutionary War
- Spiral grooves giving iron balls spiraling motion improving stability and accuracy
End of 16th century – Germany & other European countries

“wheel gun” (revolver) included revolving cylinder containing several chambers and at least one barrel for firing

1836: Colt revolver, first mass-produced, multi-shot, revolving firearms
1850: shotguns, also called “scatterguns”

Usually fired from the shoulder, they use a single-fixed shell to fire numerous small spherical pellets called “shot” or a solid projectile called a “slug.”

Today, these firearms range from single action to semi- and fully-automatic.
1862: Gatling Gun, rapid-fire
Forerunner of machine gun
Richard Gatling
Union forces, American Civil War
1871: Cartridge revolver
.44-caliber, rear loading, 1872 by Colt
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.
Congress could regulate sawed-off shotguns in interstate commerce under National Firearms Act of 1934

This shotgun does not have “some reasonable relationship to the preservation or efficiency of a well regulated militia . . . ."
Plaintiff challenged constitutionality of Washington D.C. handgun ban

Existed 32 years

5-4 decision, Second Amendment established an individual right for U.S. citizens to possess firearms

Struck down D.C. handgun ban

Miller as an exception

Law-abiding citizens cannot use sawed-off shotguns

Convicted “criminals” & “mentally ill” could be restricted from owning firearms
OTHER COURT CASES

- **2009: U.S. v. Dorosan**
  - Upheld banning firearms on government property

- **2009: U.S. v. Rene**
  - Upheld banning firearms from “juveniles” in Juvenile Delinquency Act
SECOND AMENDMENT
U.S. CONSTITUTION

SECOND Amendment
as defined by the founding fathers

SECOND Amendment
as defined by the NRA

Dave Granlund © www.davegranlund.com
A kid on the playground throws a rock at another kid on the playground. The teacher gives rocks to all of the kids, since, after all, only a good kid with a rock can stop a bad kid with a rock.
“Owning guns is a mainstream part of American culture and it’s growing every day. My God, there’s nothing more mainstream in this country than 100 million Americans who own firearms.”

NRA SPENDING V. GUN CONTROL SPENDING
"This is not—for the NRA—about Second Amendment rights. This is about gun manufacturers making millions and millions and millions of dollars. This is about retailers making millions and millions and millions of dollars."

— Joe Scarborough, Morning Joe host, Republican Representative from the 1st district of Florida 1995-2001
CHRISTIANS IN MICHIGAN
ANTI-MASK & SOCIAL DISTANCING ACTIVISTS

I WILL NOT TRADE MY 'FREEDOM' FOR YOUR SAFETY!
Engraved on Side of Gun

- Special AR-15 assault rifle
- Spokesperson, Former Navy SEAL Ben “Mookie” Thomas,
- “designed to never be used by Muslim terrorists”
SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA
GUN CLUB

Joy to the World?
SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA
GUN CLUB

Peace and Goodwill?
HOLY SMOKE BULLET URNS
STOCKTON, ALABAMA

- $1250 for One Pound of Cremated Ash
- 250 Shot Gun Shells, or
- 100 Rifle Cartridges, or
- 250 Pistol Cartridges
- $100. extra for Decorative Wooden Coffin-Like Box for storage.
HOLY SMOKE BULLET URNS
STOCKTON, ALABAMA

Thad Holmes & Clem Parnell, Owners

Tony Landenwish loading cremated remains into ammunition
“You know I’ve thought about this for some time and I want to be cremated. Then I want my ashes put into some turkey load shotgun shells and have someone that knows how to turkey hunt use the shotgun shells with my ashes to shoot a turkey. That way I will rest in peace knowing that the last thing that one turkey will see is me, screaming at him at about 900 feet per second.”
FIRST 600 IN LINE BY 5 A.M. GET ONE OF THESE TWO PRIZES!

Browning X-Bolt Medallion Rifle - $799.99 Value

GET IN LINE EARLY! OVER $8,700 IN PRIZES

Must be 18 years or older. See store for details.
GERGERON’S RESTAURANT
PORT ALLEN, LOUISIANA

GOD GUNS
AND GUMBO
THANK YOU
for carrying your gun today
10% Discount
BERGERON’S RESTAURANT
700 Hwy 415, Port Allen, LA 70767
(225) 381-3333

THANK YOU
for carrying your gun today.
10% Discount

JEWELRY BY HAROLD
NORTH LIBERTY, IOWA

Jewelry by Harold
extraordinary designs for ordinary people

BUY HER A DIAMOND
GET A FREE HUNTING RIFLE
LGBTQ Nightclub
Orlando, Florida
Latinx Night
June 12, 2016
Early Morning Hours
Shooter Murdered 49 People
Wounded another 53 People
Sold Raffle Tickets
AR-15 military-grade assault rifle
Similar to one used in Pulse shooting
Backlash: Outrage, Insensitivity
Cancelled raffle not because of backlash
Stated raffle conducted by for-profit company might be illegal in state’s judicial system
VIOLENT MOVIES
VIOLENT VIDEO GAMES
2. SHOOTING BY THE NUMBERS
“Driving is more regulated than owning a gun....Currently, in my home state, I can walk into a store and purchase a firearm with a quick run of my driver’s license number and walk out minutes later. There isn’t a test, a required class on gun safety I have to take, or a background check to see if the person buying the gun is on medication making the purchase a bad idea for himself or others.”

MATTHEW GILMAN
GUN OWNER, AUTHOR
States that **allow** the practice of "openly carrying a firearm" in public in plain sight.
“LEGAL” CONCEALED CAMPUS CARRY

CAMPUS CARRY LAWS BY STATE

- Oregon 2011
- Idaho 2014
- Utah 2004
- Colorado 2003
- Kansas 2013
- Wisconsin 2011
- Texas 2016

Legend:
- Allowed
- Discretion of individual colleges/universities
- Prohibited
“LEGAL” CONCEALED CAMPUS CARRY

- 2013, 19 states introduced legislation to allow concealed carry on campuses statewide
- 2014, 14 states introduced similar legislation
- 2013, two bills passed,
  - **Kansas** allows concealed carry generally. Colleges & universities cannot prohibit unless a building has “adequate security measures.”
  - **Arkansas** allows faculty to carry
- 2016: **Tennessee** allows faculty to carry
- 2016: **Texas** concealed carry generally
- 2022: 41 states allow concealed carry in the community.
God, Guns & Country!
That's what made America Great!
President, Jerry Falwell Jr.

Founder, Jerry Falwell Sr., Southern Baptist Minister

At mandatory convocation assembly

Falwell Jr. urged all students to apply for concealed weapons permits
“I’ve always thought that if more good people had concealed-carry permits, then we could end those Muslims before they walked in. I just wanted to take this opportunity to encourage all of you to get your permit. We offer a free course. Let’s teach them a lesson if they ever show up here.”
Liberty University first U.S. university with its own National Rifle Association-compliant “anti-terrorist” firing range facility
CASE BY CASE
CONCEALED CARRY CAMPUSES

23 States, Decision Made by Each Campus Individually

- Alabama
- Alaska
- Arizona
- Arkansas
- Connecticut
- Delaware
- Hawaii
- Indiana
- Iowa
- Kentucky
- Maine
- Maryland
- Minnesota
- Montana
- New Hampshire
- Oklahoma
- Pennsylvania
- Rhode Island
- South Dakota
- Vermont
- Virginia
- Washington
- West Virginia
STATES CONCEALED CARRY CAMPUS **ILLEGAL**

- California
- Connecticut
- Delaware
- Hawaii
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- New Jersey
- New York
- Rhode Island (partial)
“Sometimes a cigar is just a cigar.”
Sometimes a gun is a penis.

SIGMUND FREUD
“All complicated machines and appliances are very probably the genitals -- as a rule the male genitals -- in the description of which the symbolism of dreams is as indefatigable as human wit. It is quite unmistakable that all weapons and tools are used as symbols for the male organ: e.g., ploughshare, hammer, gun, revolver, dagger, sword, etc.”
"BIG DICK" TOY MACHINE GUN
MILTON BRADLEY CO., 1922

Ready! Aim! FIRE!

"Big Dick"

American Boys Attention!

Get at the breech of a Big Dick! Exciting fun; no danger.

Shoots thirty-six (36) wooden bullets as fast as you can turn the firing-crank. Shoots true as your aim.

Big Dick is modeled after the machine guns in use on the European battlefronts and for indoor war play has no equal.

Price $3.00

Sold by most good toy dealers or direct from us on receipt of price.

Milton Bradley Co.
Makers of the World's Best Games.
CONSIDER YOUR MAN CARD REISSUED.
American Marine, Jeff Cooper,
1962 coined term “hoplophobia”
Greek ὁπλον – hoplon ("arms," “weapons")
and φόβος – phobos ("fear")
“Hoplophobia”: a so-called irrational aversion to weapons, or the fear of firearms or armed citizens
Not recognized by Psychological Organizations
“HOPLOPHOBIA”

The Heartbreak of Hoplophobia*

*Hoplophobia:
A fake malady defined as “a morbid fear of guns.”

Survivors of Gun Violence
1. United States / 120.5
2. Falkland Islands / 62.1
3. Yemen / 52.8
4. New Caledonia / 42.5
5. Montenegro / 39.1

230. Taiwan / 0.0
OVERALL FIREARMS DEATHS / BY COUNTRY, 2019

- Brazil — 49,436
- United States — 37,038; 45,222 (2020)
- Venezuela — 28,515
- Mexico — 22,116
- India — 14,710
- Colombia — 13,169
- Philippines — 9,267
- Guatemala — 5,980
U.S. compared to 22 other “higher income” countries

- U.S. less than ½ population of all other 22 combined
- U.S. residents 10 times more likely to be killed by guns
- U.S. gun-related murder rate 25 times higher
- U.S. 82% of all the gun violence
- U.S. 90% of all women killed by guns
- U.S. 91% of all young people under 14 killed by guns
- U.S. 92% of all young people 15-24 killed by guns
“Overall, our results show that the U.S., which has the most firearms per capita in the world, suffers disproportionately from firearms compared with other high-income countries. These results are consistent with the hypothesis that our firearms are killing us rather than protecting us.”
Last few years:
- Average: 33,000 gun deaths per year
  - 11,000 gun-related homicides
  - 22,000 suicides and undetermined
UNITED STATES BY STATE
HIGHEST GUN-RELATED DEATHS / 100,000 RESIDENTS

10. Tennessee / 15.4
9. New Mexico / 15.4
8. Oklahoma / 16.5
7. Wyoming / 16.5
6. Arkansas / 16.7

5. Montana / 16.8
4. Alabama / 17.5
3. Mississippi / 17.7
2. Louisiana / 19.1
1. Alaska / 19.6

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
6. Arkansas / 16.7

Tom Cotton
Arkansas Senate Race

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
### RATIO: GUN DEATHS / GUN OWNERSHIP

#### States with the Five Highest Gun Death Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Household Gun Ownership</th>
<th>Gun Death Rate per 100,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td>60.6 percent</td>
<td>20.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>45.6 percent</td>
<td>19.06</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Montana</td>
<td>61.4 percent</td>
<td>16.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>57.2 percent</td>
<td>16.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Wyoming</td>
<td>62.8 percent</td>
<td>16.32</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### States with the Five Lowest Gun Death Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Household Gun Ownership</th>
<th>Gun Death Rate per 100,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>18.1 percent</td>
<td>5.22</td>
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<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>11.3 percent</td>
<td>5.19</td>
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<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>13.3 percent</td>
<td>4.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>12.8 percent</td>
<td>4.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Hawaii</td>
<td>9.7 percent</td>
<td>3.31</td>
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</tbody>
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NRA LOBBYING CONGRESS
SUNLIGHT FOUNDATION, 2013

- 93% of Senators Who Rejected Gun Control
- NRA paid, 2013 following Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting, December 14, 2012,
- 20 students (6-7 years old), 6 adult staff murdered
- Top NRA recipients
  - Roy Blunt (R-Missouri) $60,550
  - Saxby Chambliss (R-Georgia) $56,950.
  - John Thune (R-South Dakota) over $40,000
  - Lindsey Graham (R-South Carolina) over $40,000
  - Jim Inhofe (R-Oklahoma) over $40,000
2012 (national election year), NRA paid total $1,022,237
260 national candidates
   ▪ 233 Republicans and 27 Democrats

2014, NRA paid total $812,460
222 national candidates
   ▪ 211 Republicans and 11 Democrats
NRA POLITICAL VICTORY FUND RATINGS
2016 U.S. SENATE, INCUMBENTS

NRA Ratings of Incumbents in Competitive
2016 Senate Races

NH | Kelly Ayotte A
WI | Ron Johnson A*
NC | Richard Burr A
OH | Rob Portman A
PA | Pat Toomey A
CO | Michael Bennet C+
IL | Mark Kirk F
<table>
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<th>State</th>
<th>Incumbent</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<th>State</th>
<th>Incumbent</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tr>
<td>CO</td>
<td>Mike Coffman</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>NE</td>
<td>Brad Ashford</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Ami Bera</td>
<td>F</td>
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<tr>
<td>FL</td>
<td>Carlos Curbelo</td>
<td>A*</td>
<td>IL</td>
<td>Bob Dold</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>MN</td>
<td>Rick Nolan</td>
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<tr>
<td>IA</td>
<td>Rod Blum</td>
<td>A*</td>
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<td>TX</td>
<td>Will Hurd</td>
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<td>NV</td>
<td>Crescent Hardy</td>
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<td>AZ</td>
<td>Martha McSally</td>
<td>A*</td>
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<td>NJ</td>
<td>Scott Garrett</td>
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<tr>
<td>ME</td>
<td>Bruce Poliquin</td>
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<td>CA</td>
<td>Steve Knight</td>
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SENATORS BOUGHT BY THE NRA

- Mitt Romney (R-UT): $13,648,000
- Richard Burr (R-NC): $6,987,000
- Roy Blunt (R-MO): $4,556,000
- Thom Tillis (R-NC): $4,421,000
- Marco Rubio (R-FL): $3,303,000
- Joni Ernst (R-IA): $3,125,000
- Josh Hawley (R-MO): $1,392,000
- Mitch McConnell (R-KY): $1,267,000
- Ted Cruz (R-TX): $176,000
Before and up to 1996, Australia had relatively high rates of murder, but a tragic incident at Port Arthur, Tasmania, April 28, 1996, was the proverbial straw that broke the poor camel’s back. On that date, a man opened fire on a group of tourists killing 35 and wounding another 23. The massacre was the worst mass murder in Australia’s history.
Taking decisive action, newly-elected conservative Prime Minister, John Howard, negotiated a bipartisan deal between the national, state, and local governments in enacting comprehensive gun safety measures, which included a massive buyback of more than 600,000 semi-automatic rifles and shotguns, and laws prohibiting private firearms sales, mandatory registration by owners of all weapons, and the requirement that all potential buyers of guns at the time of purchase give a “genuine reason” other than general or overarching self-defense without documentation of necessity.
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By 1996, polls showed overwhelming public support of approximately 90% for the new measures. And though firearms-related injuries and death have not totally come to an end, homicides by firearms fell by 59% between 1995 and 2006 with no corresponding increase in non-firearm-related homicides, and a 65% reduction in gun-related suicides.

Other studies found significant drops in robberies involving firearms, and contrary to fears by some, no increase in the overall number of home invasions.
Just six days after the terrible hate-inspired gun murders of 50 Muslims praying at two Mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand on March 15, 2019, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern announced sweeping new firearms regulations, which included banning semi-automatic rifles and large-capacity ammunition magazines, and a mandatory government buyback of previously sold weapons.
The U.S. Congress enacted a brief federal ban on assault weapons, The Public Safety and Recreational Firearms Use Protection Act, in September 1994. The ban, which also included barring high-capacity magazines, expired in September 2004 as required in its 10-year sunset provision. The measure has not since been reauthorized by Congress.
As a provision inserted as a rider into the 1996 federal government omnibus spending bill, the Dickey Amendment, named after Arkansas Republican Representative Jay Dickey and lobbied heavily by the National Rifle Association, passed the Congress into law. It mandated that “none of the funds made available for injury prevention and control at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) may be used to advocate or promote gun control.”
3. WHAT CAN WE DO?
A combined 59% think it’s important for elected leaders to “pass stricter gun control laws,” including 83% of Democrats, 52% of Independents and 37% of Republicans.

That includes 41% who believe it’s “very important” and 18% who think it’s “somewhat important,” while 13% said it’s “not too important” and 19% believe it’s “not important at all.”

A majority want Congress to pass legislation that places “additional restrictions on gun ownership,” with 34% saying it should be a “top priority” for lawmakers and 22% believing it’s an “important” priority, but not a top one.
WHAT CAN WE DO?
SACRIFICE PEOPLE TO THE GUN GOD
WHAT CAN WE DO?
SUPPORT NO-COMPROMISE / NO (FURTHER) REGULATIONS
WHAT CAN WE DO?
OWN MORE AND MORE AND MORE... GUNS
WHAT CAN WE DO?
OWN MORE AND MORE AND MORE...GUNS

AN ARMED SOCIETY,
IS A POLITE SOCIETY.
Erosion of civility in modern life:
- In human relationships
- Government
- Business
- Media
- On-line

93% - Incivility a Problem
71% - Worse than a few years ago
75% - incivility is leading to political gridlock
60% - incivility has led them to stop paying attention to political debates or conversations
59% - incivility is deterring people from entering public service
WHAT CAN WE DO?
REFORM AND FURTHER REGULATE USE AND OWNERSHIP OF FIREARMS

James Brady
President Ronald Reagan’s Press Secretary
Shot with Reagan, March 30, 1981

Gabby Giffords
U.S. Representative, Arizona
Shot, January 8, 2011
Civil rights leader, Representative John Lewis of Georgia
Led other Democratic Party activists
Sit-in on floor of U.S. House of Representatives
Protest House refusing to pass comprehensive gun safety
Vast majority of people in U.S. support, June 22, 2016
WHAT CAN WE DO?
REFORM AND FURTHER REGULATE USE AND OWNERSHIP OF FIREARMS

- Ban and criminalize possession of semi-automatic & “assault” weapons.
- Close loopholes like buying weapons at gun shows and online.
- Ban firearms purchase from people on federal “no-fly” list.
- Continue banning purchase of firearms & ammunition on Internet.
- Initiate universal background checks.
- Increase waiting period & make background checks more rigorous & effective.
- Interface all data bases monitoring firearm ownership to assess the firearm-owning population more accurately and effectively.
Initiate background checks each time individuals purchase ammunition.

Limit number of firearms any individual can own.

Limit number of bullets any firearm magazine can hold.

Ban & criminalize purchase & possession of armor piercing bullets and hollow-tip bullets.

Ban “Bump Stocks” rapid-fire enhancement device.

Ban firearms “silencers.”
WHAT CAN WE DO?

REFORM AND FURTHER REGULATE USE AND OWNERSHIP OF FIREARMS

- Hold gun shop owners liable when selling firearms & ammunition to anyone who is not legally eligible: minors, felons, people with history of mental illness.
- All firearms must contain a safety device to prevent discharge of weapon by unauthorized users.
- All firearms owners must have a firearms locked box.
- Outlaw permitting concealed weapons, especially in places like houses of worship, colleges, bars, restaurants, and political rallies.
WHAT CAN WE DO?
REFORM AND FURTHER REGULATE USE AND
OWNERSHIP OF FIREARMS

- Raise the age to 21 (preferably 25) for firearms purchase.
- Ban “ghost guns.”
- Fully repeal “Dickey Amendment” passed by Congress in 1996 mandating that “none of the funds made available for injury prevention and control by the Center for Disease and Prevention may be used to advocate of promote gun control.”
- Increase funding for research investigating the causes and solutions for firearms violence.
WHAT CAN WE DO?
REFORM AND FURTHER REGULATE USE AND OWNERSHIP OF FIREARMS

- Initiate a White House conference and an office of gun violence prevention.
- Investigate and initiate effective anti-bullying policies in schools and workplaces.
- Increase funding for mental health services and drug treatment nationwide.
- Increase the number of school counselors in every school.
- Access all incidents and continually update training procedures of law enforcement agencies on the national and local levels to better ensure equitable and bias-free policing in the communities in which they are meant to serve.
WHAT CAN WE DO?
REFORM AND FURTHER REGULATE USE AND OWNERSHIP OF FIREARMS

- Require all firearms owners to take and pass a course in the proper use, safety, and storage of their weapons.
- Require firearms to contain a safety device designed to prevent the discharge of the weapon by accident or by unauthorized users.
- Institute ongoing gun buyback programs in towns and cities across the nation.
- Pass “Red Flag Laws” allowing judges to issue an extreme risk protection order, which temporarily bans a person from owning a firearm if family or others near to the person can show they are a danger to themselves or others.
WHAT CAN WE DO?
REFORM AND FURTHER REGULATE USE AND
OWNERSHIP OF FIREARMS

- Institute implicit bias trainings in schools, workplaces, and to reduce the incidents of the disproportionate violence toward people of color.
- Provide free of affordable anger management trainings for people who need these programs.
- Run for office and vote for candidates committed to passing gun safety regulations.
- Support measures to reduce the rates of poverty and hunger, and reform the tax system eliminating loopholes for the rich to avoid paying their fair share.
WHAT CAN WE DO?
SPEAKING THE UNSPEAKABLE!!!
“Two things are infinite. The universe and human stupidity. ...and I’m not so sure about the universe.”
[Not] The End