

British Society of Criminology

The British Criminology Conferences: Selected Proceedings. Volume 1: Emerging Themes in Criminology. Papers from the British Criminology Conference, Loughborough University, 18-21 July 1995. This volume published September 1998. Editors: Jon Vagg and Tim Newburn. ISSN 1464-4088. See end of file for copyright and other information.

'BANG!' GOES THE NEIGHBOURHOOD: FIREARMS, VIOLENCE AND SOCIAL DISORDER

Peter Squires

Introduction

This paper was originally written during the first part of 1995 and delivered to the Loughborough conference in July 1995, some eight months before the horrific events of 13 March 1996 in Dunblane. Before 1996, Britain's most infamous peacetime firearm incident occurred in Hungerford when Michael Ryan, having already killed 16 people and injured several more with his combination of weapons, a Kalashnikov assault rifle, an M1 carbine and a Beretta pistol, was cornered in a local school classroom. Shortly before 7pm the surrounding police heard a single muffled shot. Entering the building they discovered Ryan's body (Josephs 1993).

The several connections between Hungerford and Dunblane have received much attention in the past year, and the unheeded lessons of the late 1980s are apparent to most commentators. The contrasting social, political and, ultimately, legislative responses to both events, and their longer term significance, will undoubtedly remain a subject of more than merely academic enquiry for many years to come. Back in 1995, however, I sought with this paper to engage in a wider debate about firearms, violence and society.

The general objective of this paper is to review recent debates about the problems of firearm violence in the USA and the UK, before turning to consider contrasting discourses of gun control. The paper posits a general assumption about civil society confronted by the problem of the gun. Thus the paper endeavours to engage in a wider debate about post-modern society in which firearm use and abuse are both cause and symptom of wider tensions relating to the breakdown of forms of collective security, epidemic levels of fear and insecurity, social fragmentation and division, individualism, crime and violence. The paper has been edited and revised since July 1995 in order to take proper account of important issues emerging since March 1996. However, it retains its original focus. It is not, primarily, a discussion of Dunblane or the UK gun control debate that followed.

Civilisation, authority and violence

The invention of the firearm played a vital role in the establishment of modern nation states. In turn, the process of industrialisation reinforced the growing power of these states by equipping their enlarged armies with the firepower to subdue the world. However, in the post-industrial world, the state's relative monopoly of domestic firepower may have been broken in the USA and many parts of Europe whilst facing a developing challenge in the UK. A dangerous new situation has been created and the gun is causing a new kind of havoc. Political interventions into the crime problem in both Britain and America frequently stress community and neighbourhood values as potential solutions to the crisis of violence and public disorder yet it is frequently in the most violent and beleaguered neighbourhoods that firearm violence has made the greatest inroads (see for example Canada 1995).

A distinctive feature of the modern form of governing has been the effective monopolisation of legitimate force in the hands of the state. There is, no doubt, something of a tautology here for, as Walter Benjamin observed, echoing Shakespeare, 'legitimacy' is one of the spoils that usually accrue to the victor. There is, of course, usually far more to it in practice. Consolidation of the means of violence and the establishment of collective security must rank as the first foundations of liberal governance. One need not accept the central premises of contract theory; it is enough to acknowledge its powerful ideological legacy. Thus, for Hobbes, singular authority ended the war of all against all. For Locke this legitimate authority established the order of life, liberty and property and, later, for Blackstone, it sought to enshrine the doctrine of personal security without which all other rights were meaningless. With Blackstone, however, the principle of the right of individuals to collective security was placed in tension with another, the right of individuals to protect themselves if threatened. The different evolution of this Common Law principle in English and American conditions is worth noting. In the latter context, the conditions of frontier society, and a mixture of individualism, egalitarianism and republican resistance sponsored a much stronger 'right to self defence' than was tolerated under English Law (Brown 1991).^[1] In the discursive 'space' between these contrasting resolutions of the authority and order problem, two distinct approaches to the issue of collective security emerged which, in their own ways, have become more problematic in recent years (see McDowell and Loftin 1983).

The first approach concerns the idea of security and justice as public goods which cannot be rationally and efficiently allocated by private market mechanisms. To some extent this presumption has already been challenged, in theory and practice, on both sides of the Atlantic and in post-apartheid South Africa (Cohen 1990). In the USA, South Africa, and in large third-world cities such as Rio de Janeiro, perimeter security cordons, armed private police forces and state of the art access control systems guard down-town business districts, tourist-rich locations, and up-market residential enclaves. In Britain, where the commitment to collective security has been more enduring, although private sector policing has been one of the fastest growth industries (South 1988), the idea of privatised personal or residential security, whilst widespread in the business and retail sectors, has not yet made such dramatic inroads into more conventional policing tasks.

More recently, we have witnessed an emerging neo-liberal (or republican) critique of collective security as a concept. In the US, this critique has been tightly tied into the debate over Second Amendment rights to own and carry firearms. More recently the debate has broadened out to cover the post-Vietnam, anti-federal, 'survivalist' groups and the variety of paramilitary organisations which, since Waco and Oklahoma, and the Clinton Administration's gun-control measures, have been an especial focus of concern. The advocates of this 'new republicanism' drew upon the neo-liberal, even libertarian, arguments that 'social justice' is a mirage (Hayek 1976), 'society' no more than an aggregate of individuals (Nozick 1974) and 'collectivism' a dangerous, passive and stultifying form of unfreedom (Joseph and Sumption 1979, Letwin 1983). The alternative suggested by Nozick involved the idea of private protection agencies, supported by public subscription, and flourishing or failing according to market principles (Nozick 1974: 12-15). The irony for Nozick was precisely, in his view, the tendency of private protection agencies to amalgamate and ultimately to monopolise the exercise of coercive force, thereby establishing a new basis for the minimalist state.

The fact that this supposed tendency towards monopolisation is detected by Nozick, yet nowhere in his work specifically rejected as undesirable, takes us to the second approach to the problem of collective security, namely the question of its legitimacy. In place of the single social contract of authority, Nozick substitutes a multitude of individual contracts of choice. Clearly, forms of legitimation are crucial to each approach. The legitimacy of state collectivist forms of security rested upon periodic democratic legitimation and 'consent'; the implied endorsement given to legal codes and the systems of rights and obligations they established for citizens. Only a single sovereign authority could guarantee such 'rights', or indeed take them away.

The conquest of violence or new forms of power?

Another important feature of the exercise of governing power in the modern age is, as Foucault has noted, the economy of its exercise; efficiency, invisibility, and the absence of overt force through the constitution of docile, malleable bodies (Foucault 1977). Even so, the attainment of 'civilised hegemony' frequently relied upon quite explicit forms of violence and warfare. As Mestrovic has suggested, following Foucault and others, there is no reason for assuming that civilisation, by itself, is a humanizing force (Mestrovic 1993: 41). Where the contractual model of civil society expels explicit force and violence to the margins - the 'darkness on the edge of town' - then, arguably, so does Foucault. Liberal historiography has portrayed this development as a 'conquest of violence' (Critchley 1970), or as a 'demand for order in civil society' (Silver 1967). In contrast we should surely argue that violence and disorder have only been displaced or decentred, though perhaps national differences in the social processes involved have generated quite different national attitudes to firearms (Tonso 1982).

This is not the place to cover in detail the processes of state formation or the new modes of citizenship governance which led to the consolidation of democratic patriarchal authority. In short, however, the definitive feature of our modern civilisation concerned its new methods of industrial production, and these new methods both depended upon and gave rise to new forms of social and political power; new forms of accumulation and of accounting, new sciences and new forms of regulating - both of property and of people. Emphasising the connectedness of this technical and social 'progress', Foucault described the conditions which gave rise to the take-off of the West in the following terms:

'If the economic take off of the West began with the techniques that made possible the accumulation of capital, it might perhaps be said that the methods for administering the accumulation of men made possible a political take off ... in fact the two processes - the accumulation of men and the accumulation of capital - cannot be separated.... Each makes the other possible and necessary, each provides a model for the other.' (Foucault 1977: 218-21)

Yet absolutely central to the political and economic power of the West has been its military prowess (Mann 1986: 453-5, 490). In turn, this was dependent upon new ways of exerting military force, in particular, upon new forms of deadly technology - in short, the firearm. As Kiernan has argued, 'firearms were essential to the rise of the modern state' (Kiernan 1967:136). In due course, new and remarkably 'industrial' methods of first producing, and then using, the gun established the 'military industrial complex' which sustained the power of the West. Foucault again:

'The Classical age saw the birth of the great political and military strategy by which nations confronted each other's economic and demographic forces; but it also saw the birth of meticulous military and political tactics by which the control of bodies and individual forces was exercised within states ... Historians of ideas usually attribute the dream of a perfect society to the philosophers and jurists of the eighteenth century; but there was also a military dream of society ...' (Foucault 1977: 168-9)

This 'military dream of society' turned into a nightmare as nineteenth century wars, especially the American Civil War and the Franco-Prussian War, and twentieth century wars, the two 'World Wars', brought a newly rationalised industrial efficiency to the task of mechanised slaughter (Ellis 1993: chapter 5; Pick 1993). For Bauman, the inhumane violence represented by the Holocaust, or Hiroshima, is not an aberration of our industrialised modernity but rather very much a direct product of our civilisation (Bauman 1989).

Now, in the age of post-industrial society, the gun, once the instrument of a new form of social, political and military order in Europe and the West, is coming to wreak new kinds of havoc. There are several dimensions to this. At home our domestic politics are increasingly preoccupied by armed crime and the threat of terrorism, both of which are fuelled by the lucrative trade in illegal weapons. Fear has become an indispensable component of the political barometer, security has become big business (Christie 1993). In the third world and, more recently in Eastern Europe, local and regional conflicts have been facilitated, exacerbated and sustained by an abundant supply of firearms, more often than not obtained from the arsenals of the world's major military and industrial powers. Paradoxically, the 'democratic peace' celebrated by Critchley (1970) may have been little more than an incidental spin-off of the near monopolisation of firepower in the hands of states and

superpowers during the twentieth century. In contrast, the 'post-modern' conditions of post industrial society have seen nation-states struggle to maintain 'order' in the face of powerful, economic, political and ideological challenges threatening social disintegration and renewed levels of interpersonal - and frequently armed - violence.

Throughout the 1970s and until the mid-1980s arms sales around the world appeared to be growing at an alarming rate (Kidron and Smith 1983). However the restructuring of the international military/economic order following the ending of the Cold War and the subsequent collapse of the Soviet Bloc seems to have markedly curtailed this pattern of escalating arms transfers (Harkavy 1994, Anthony 1994). Unfortunately, this development has also been associated with increasing activity in what Karp has called the 'black' and 'grey' arms markets which, 'although much smaller than the orthodox trade ... are of great importance, providing the weapons which are most likely to be used' (Karp 1994), and which, in the unstable international situation are able to penetrate into domestic, illegal, underground and third world markets.

Governments, especially when in recession, seem keen to retain the economic activity, jobs, exports, and revenues assured by their arms industry. The paradoxes of security and political order in the wider world become ever more apparent with the recognition that the most powerful voices within the United Nations (UN) - the five permanent members of the UN Security Council (USA, Russia, UK, France and China) are themselves responsible for 86 per cent of arms sales to the developing world (Baird 1994).

This apparent restructuring of a post-industrial, post-cold war, world order seems to be prompting new opportunities for strictly domestic or regional forms of violence and disorder. It suggests that at least some of the processes by which western states have consolidated their coercive power and legitimacy, during the past three centuries, have ceased to function effectively. We will examine the nature and significance of this, seemingly, 'post-modern' condition of insecurity later. Before that we need to describe the processes by which modern nation states established their systems of collective security. Charles Tilly provides us with something of an overview:

'States specialise in the control and use of coercive means - surveillance, detention and armed force. Historically, western states have consolidated and expended chiefly through war and preparation for war. In the process western rulers have increasingly limited anyone else's use of concentrated means of coercion within their own territories, have used their own coercive means to limit further the interests of dominant classes and have recognised the right of others to do likewise. Warring in the international sphere and policing in the domestic sphere, states have monopolised the larger scale means of collective violence and set stringent limits on the deployment of smaller scale violence. ... When agents of states do intervene in domestic struggles - whether or not the other participants have violent means or ends - they frequently do so through force or threats of force. ... During the last few centuries of western history, however, national states have come very close to establishing an oligopoly over warmaking.' (Tilly 1989)

Maybe modern states have not entirely eliminated the domestic capacity to armed anti-state violence. Questions of terrorism, riot or, recently, the emergence of 'civil' wars or regional and ethnic conflicts in the wake of key geo-political readjustments in the international world order certainly remain. Beyond such examples, however, the broad-based legitimacy of the monopoly exercise of domestic force is seldom in serious question.

On the other hand, the process of consolidating monopoly control of the means of violence has seldom been other than long and arduous and, as we have said, in many instances it has only recently been concluded. In both Britain and the USA, the consolidation of the means of coercive force occurred over a rather lengthy period of some two and a half centuries.

Collective control of violence in Britain

In Britain the crucial foundations were set in the period immediately following the Civil War, although the process was not concluded until well into the nineteenth century. And it was not until 1920 that the (albeit qualified) British 'right to bear firearms' was legislated out of existence by the Firearms Control Act (Greenwood 1972, Malcolm 1994).

The consolidation of monopoly control over firearms which began in the mid-seventeenth century proceeded by the incremental establishment of restrictions upon who was allowed to possess firearms and use them, how they were to use them and where they were permitted to

use them. The restrictions overturned the former situation in which access to and ownership of firearms had been both a privilege and a duty, and principally denied access to firearms on the basis of religious affiliation (no Catholics), or according to a property qualification. On the other hand, firearm ownership was required as a duty by virtue of membership of the local militia. Militia members, as ratepayers, had to contribute to the cost of civic defences, support town 'watch' schemes and, when required, assist in raising 'hue and cry' to bring outlaws and felons to justice (Greenwood 1972: 7-11). Militia organisation largely disappeared over the course of the next century, though some of their functions were later taken over by private associations for the prosecution of felons (Little and Sheffield 1983, Shubert 1981).

Amidst repeated concerns with 'popish plots' and fears of rebellion leading to periodic forays into disarming first Catholics, then Protestants, a major firearm control measure was passed in the form of the Game Act of 1671. This Act substantially tightened the property qualification applying to the right to hunt game and effectively outlawed the simple possession of firearms by any person not so qualified. Blackstone noted that, under the Act, the property qualification required to hunt was 50 times the amount needed to permit a man to vote (Malcolm 1994: 71; Hay 1975:189). The immediate result was that less than one per cent of those living on the land were entitled to hunt game, even on their own property. The 1671 Act created a new structure of law enforcement and gave a 'new class of gentry-appointed officials ... direct power over the sport. It gave them a kind of "private game police"' (Malcolm 1994: 70). Gamekeepers or other appointed persons were empowered to search premises on a warrant and seize all 'illegal' weapons or other 'engines of destruction' (Hay 1975: 194). Malcolm's conclusions about the primary purposes of the game legislation are unequivocal:

'The Game Act of 1671 made it no longer necessary to prove that guns and bows had been illegally used; it simply included them in the list of prohibited devices, thus depriving nearly the entire population of a legal right to own them. There can be no doubt that this prohibition was intentional ... [The Act] lowered the standard of proof ... [leaving] much to the discretion of the individual justice, and put more emphasis on confiscating the weapons of tenants on country estates rather than locking up poachers.' (Malcolm 1994: 72-3)

Later criticism of the Act saw it as a feature of class legislation (Thompson 1975). The Act 'circumscribed arms ownership more than ever before or since'. The aristocracy's control over the distribution of weapons was substantially tightened, 'the use of an act for the preservation of game was a customary means to curb lower class violence & \$133; [it] effectively transferred nearly exclusive control of the power of the sword to the country gentry' (Malcolm 1994: 74-6). Whilst enforcement of the Act was rather mixed, with poaching offences reflecting the bulk of the cases, its major significance lay in its establishment of a system for the regulation of access to weapons by class and religion in the tumultuous political context of seventeenth century Britain.

The broader political tensions of seventeenth century Britain were only settled with the ascendancy of William and Mary. This ensured not only the clear and final establishment of Protestant dominance, but also promised the restoration of the 'traditional' rights and liberties of Englishmen, amongst them a right to arms and an attempt to resolve the problems concerning the role and authority of the militia. In due course, following substantial drafting and redrafting of clauses, Article 7 of the Bill of Rights spelled out the right of Englishmen to have access to weapons in the following terms:

'the Subjects which are Protestants may have arms for their defence suitable to their condition and as allowed by Law.' (cited in Malcolm 1994: 119)

Absent from this final formulation was any reference to the militia or any reference to principles of 'common' or 'collective' defence. The statement remains very conditional. It specifically excludes all but Protestants, and it refers to 'Subjects' not citizens. Effectively the article implies an individual right to be armed to repel burglars, that is to say, *an individual right for personal defence*. And finally, with the phrase, 'as allowed by Law' it anticipated the need to further limit the right to arms whenever the Law might see fit (Malcolm 1994: 119-21).

In subsequent years, the law went on to do just that.

The unsettled political situation at the turn of the nineteenth century saw the introduction of temporary restrictions on the right of access to firearms although, during the greater part of the nineteenth century - even after the establishment of police forces - it was asserted that 'any person could purchase and keep in his possession a firearm without any restriction'. By the early twentieth century this right had vanished. By this time, the problem of highway robbery had been long since resolved, and the practice of duelling as a means of resolving disputes had been outlawed and had fallen into abeyance (Kiernan 1988, Gilmour 1992).

Finally, with the establishment of Police forces in all areas following the County and Borough Police Act of 1856, the private prosecution societies largely disappeared. The consolidation of coercive force had been largely achieved in mainland Britain. But what of the right to firearms?

As we have seen, the English right to arms had always depended upon what was 'allowed by law' and, in the latter part of the nineteenth century, concerns began to be raised and pressure for change began to mount. Firstly a system of licensing firearms was introduced, then proposals addressed the carrying of firearms outside the home. Later, following widespread concerns about armed robberies and urban violence in London, a number of bills were introduced seeking to restrict access to concealable pistols and revolvers (Greenwood 1972, Pearson 1983). None of these Bills were successful until 1903 when the Pistols Act was passed to prohibit the sale of pistols to minors and felons. By 1920, however, the context had changed enormously. In response to the turbulent domestic and international politics at the end of World War I, Parliament passed the Firearms Control Act, described as a 'comprehensive arms control measure'. Effectively this act repealed the right to be armed by requiring a firearm certificate, eligibility for which was to be decided by a senior police officer, for anyone wishing to 'Purchase, possess, use or carry any description of firearm or ammunition for the weapon' (Greenwood 1972). It was highly significant, according to Malcolm, that 'while the reverberations of the French Revolution left the English right to keep arms intact, the repercussions of World War I and the Bolshevik Revolution did not' (1994: 170).

Control of violence in the USA

Whereas the 1689 Bill of Rights had exploited the fiction of an Englishman's 'ancient and indubitable rights' to carry into law a qualified and conditional 'permission' regarding access to firearms, the early American colonists were no less creative in establishing a rights claim regarding firearms suitable to their own circumstances. The form of words eventually adopted by the US Congress and sent to the state legislatures for ratification as the Second Amendment to the constitution of the United States declared: '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' (see Malcolm 1994, Chapter 8).

It is not my intention here to explore the origins and significance of the Second Amendment, except insofar as it directly relates to the question of the consolidation of monopoly coercive power in the hands of the state. The process of consolidation of domestic coercive force is roughly coterminous with that in Britain, the early foundations being laid down by the context of the War of Independence and the requirements of survival in hostile frontier conditions. However, compared to Britain, the achievement of monopoly control over violence was more recently, and incompletely, achieved.

Brown has argued that since the American revolution, violence has been a constant feature in American social, political and cultural life. The key question, he believes, is why Americans have so frequently resorted to violence as a way of resolving conflicts. His response is that 'repeated episodes of violence, going back into our colonial past have imprinted upon our citizenry a propensity to violence. Our history has produced and reinforced a strain of violence which has strongly tinted our national experience' (Brown 1975: vii). A great deal of American violence has comprised socially conservative forms of vigilante resistance to social change, preserving established community interests; but this is by no means the whole of the story.

Deriving, in part from the doctrine of popular sovereignty which underpinned the politics of the American revolution, vigilantism

'arose as a response to a typical American problem: the absence of law and order in a frontier region. On the frontier, the normal foundations of a stable orderly society - churches, schools, cohesive community life - were either absent or present only in rough makeshift forms. The regular, legal system of law enforcement often proved to be woefully inadequate & \$133; In frontier states, law and order was often a tenuous thing. Outlaws ... took every advantage they could of the social disorganisation stemming from the newness of the settlement and the weakness of the traditional institutions of state, society and church.' (Brown 1975: 94)

Geographical difficulties, transportation problems and the cost of financing law and order were also part of the equation - self-motivated vigilante action was cheap, informal and highly

flexible. Even late in the nineteenth century and into the present century when systems of law enforcement had been established in most areas, Brown shows how vigilantes often established a parallel system of community justice alongside the official system and sometimes with the open collusion of law officers (Brown 1975:122-59).

Alongside this 'frontier culture' which Slotkin finds deeply embedded in the US psyche (Slotkin 1992) the broad foundations of the American consolidation of monopoly control of violence were laid in the later nineteenth century around four major violent conflicts: (1) the American Civil War, (2) the defeat, by the 1880s, of the American Indians, (3) the conclusion of the 'war in the west', otherwise known as the Western Civil War of Incorporation, which saw the victory of conservative urban and industrial interests and the consolidating authority of capital (Trachtenberg 1982, Brown 1991) and, (4) the rapid development, in the 1880s, of the National Guard and allied policing methods in the northern industrial states to combat growing labour militancy (Weiss 1978).

A fifth factor, still relevant today, centres upon the phenomenon of racial violence, itself intimately linked to the contrasting 'frontiers' encountered within key phases of US history (Slotkin 1992). In some ways race and violence have become more pressing problems in many of America's sharply divided cities. Despite the gradual decline of vigilantism, lynchings remained common well into the twentieth century. Brown cites evidence of some 2,500 *recorded* lynchings during 1889 and 1918 in southern and western US states, and 13 major race riots in American cities during the years of American involvement in World War I (Brown 1975: 215). The more recent race riots of the 1960s, reflecting a new urban black ideology, are further evidence of the unresolved problems of racism, political authority and violence in American life. As Brown notes, however, they also suggest a shift to the mainstream. By the late 1960s, 'ghetto blacks, at last, became one with earlier violent Americans in employing one of the violent weapons of any people whose political aspirations remain significantly unfulfilled after other alternatives have been tried' (1975: 235).

Thus the wider debate on firearms in American society reverberates with the history, folklore and political philosophy of America's past. It draws upon the complex constitutional debates about citizens, freedom and citizen militias from the late eighteenth century, through to the more practical considerations of personal safety in the wilderness of the early settlers. Later on, patterns of life on the frontier of the developing nation added their own particular emphases and justifications to American attitudes to firearms and violence (Einstadter 1978). As Brown puts it, 'A cluster of beliefs mentally programmed westerners to commit violence: the doctrine of no duty to retreat; the imperative of personal self-redress; the homestead ethic; the ethic of individual enterprise; the Code of the West; and the ideology of vigilantism' (Brown 1994: 393). Subsequently, Hollywood added its own gloss to this 'cowboy culture', as have American experiences of war, from the American Civil War through to twentieth century experiences of the two World Wars, the Cold War and, not least, experiences of loss and betrayal in Vietnam, with all that this has entailed for recent American politics and culture (Hellman 1986, Slotkin 1992, Gibson 1994).

As Kennett and Anderson conclude, 'The gun ... [in America] is part of a whole series of traditional attitudes about government, society and the individual. They run, like so many threads, through the tapestry of the national past. In its essence, the gun controversy is a struggle between these attitudes and new ones' (Kennett and Anderson 1975: 254). And they continue, consistent with the conquest of violence thesis,

'But in the long run, time works against the gun. Increased social consciousness finds its excesses intolerable, whereas they were once accepted without thought. The era of thermonuclear war (sic) has made the citizen soldier harder to defend. The war against crime has mobilised the computer and other sophisticated techniques. Moreover, the police have come to regard the armed citizen more as a hazard than an ally. The city is the enemy of the gun, and the city is growing ... In megalopolis the gun as necessity seems doomed. (Kennett and Anderson 1975: 255-6)

Optimistic thoughts for the future of modern civilisation, no doubt. But, as the argument of this paper suggests, the conquest of firearm violence is far from completed. If anything, the gun is even more popular (Wright et al. 1983). The Brady Law and Clinton's gun control measures notwithstanding, the spectre of the gun has in no way been exorcised. The citizens of Kennett and Anderson's megalopolis have, more recently, been buying their guns in droves. Their reasons for doing so speak volumes. For as Sherrill noted in 1973, 'after any serious riot gun sales are said to jump fourfold in that locale', adding that: 'Doubtless there is some connection between the rise in crime and the increase in gun sales, but there is no way to know to what

extent the teetering mound of arms causes crime and to what extent it is simply there as a defensive response' (Sherrill 1973: 22. This remains a problem in much criminological analysis of the US gun question. See in particular, Kleck 1991, and the debate between Alba and Messner and Kleck in the *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 1995). Two years after Sherrill's remark Kennett and Anderson, from their avowedly more cultural and 'sociological' perspective, drew their conclusion in a particular direction. For them, the purchase of guns by American citizens

'reflects the persistent view that the ultimate defence of the individual American, his final, back-to-the-wall recourse, is his gun. It was a sentiment that was felt in frontier log cabins and in isolated farmhouses and lingers today in city and suburb. The ultimate fear is not that government will tyrannise, but that it will fail to protect. That fear persists; it causes lines to form in front of gun stores after every major riot or atrocity.' (Kennett and Anderson 1975: 253-4)

Similarly, Richard Raynor, discussing the Los Angeles Riots in the wake of the first Rodney King verdicts, commented: 'The riots began on Wednesday, 29th April 1992. Monday, 4th of May, was the first day - the first of many - that gun sales topped 2,000 in Southern California, twice the normal figure, a gun sale every forty seconds' (Raynor 1992). However, having reviewed a range of research projects during the 1970s examining the links between fear of crime and the demand for security devices - alarms, locks and handguns - Wright was unable to establish a clear and simple relationship (Wright 1980). Far more important, according to McDowell and Loftin, were the ways in which individuals responded to three determinants of collective security: high violent crime rates, civil disorders and police strength. They concluded, 'the demand for legal handguns is positively related to riots and crime rates and negatively related to a measure of resources devoted to collective security, the number of police per capita. We interpret this as evidence that legal handgun demand is responsive to evaluations of the strength of collective security' (McDowell and Loftin 1983: 1147).

Discussing this question of the use of handguns for self-defence, Kleck has noted how, until recently, the orthodox view suggested that possession of firearms gave residents a false sense of security and that the idea of using firearms to deter potential criminals was dangerous and foolhardy. However his research on 'civilian defensive gun use' suggests a rather different picture. Three and a quarter million households reported using firearms defensively between 1976-81 with 645,000 handgun owners doing likewise. Comparing these figures against the incidence of firearm related crime 'the best available evidence indicates that guns are used about as often for defensive purposes as for criminal purposes' (Kleck 1991: 107). A 1989 national survey found that 27 per cent of gun owners have a gun mainly for protection, and 62 per cent said that protection from crime was at least one of the reasons they owned guns. This implies that some 14 million people keep guns mainly for protection and another 32 million who keep them partly for protection' (1991: 116). Furthermore, most gun owners indicated that they would shoot aggressors in the right circumstances. Eighty per cent said they would get their guns if they suspected someone breaking in and 78 per cent said they would shoot a burglar if they felt threatened (1991: 111). Concluding his discussion of these issues, Kleck noted that 'most gun owners, including many who do not have a gun [primarily] for defensive reasons, feel comfortable with guns, feel safer from crime because of them, and believe their guns actually do make them safer from crime' (1991: 120).

At the broadest level political authority in the USA may not seriously be in question (notwithstanding the persistent sniping of fringe militia radicals) and the balance of coercive force remains overwhelmingly in state hands. But the firepower in private hands is also truly awe-inspiring and, given the propensity of modern Americans to use these weapons against others and against themselves, it behoves us to ask a number of important questions. What is the significance of widespread private firearm ownership and widespread firearm use in the context of modern insecurities and uncertainties about the role of government in delivering, fostering or facilitating public order? In what way might widespread resort to firearms announce the arrival of a new stage in liberal governing consequent upon the seeming collapse - or at best the weakening - of a social commitment to collectivist principles of public safety and order? Finally, what new values, processes and institutions might be developing to take the place of those thought to have failed?

To paraphrase Foucault's own metaphor of the 'great confinement', might our post-modern insecurities prefigure the great (American) 'tooling-up'? A corollary of this 'tooling up', according to Mestrovic, is the coming of a new 'barbarian temperament'; an intolerance of others and an insensitivity to suffering. In response to a growing fear of the new 'barbarian

hordes', or the 'ghetto underclass' or just the 'vermin' on 'our' streets, authority has begun to toughen up its act.^[2]

Gun culture and the politics of violence

The modern premise of a society founded by the gun was that, ultimately, it could dispense with the gun. By contrast, the uncertainty currently facing many Americans precisely concerns whether 'banning weapons will make their lives more or less dangerous' (Malcolm 1994: 165). At the moment, many seem to be hedging their bets. According to McCaghy and Cernkovitch, 'A large segment of Americans want something done about guns; in the meantime they keep guns in case they have to do something with them' (McCaghy and Cernkovitch 1987: 141, emphasis in original; see also Zimring 1985). As Sweeney (1994) noted, 'few places in the civilised world, outside America, can match New York for unlawful killing'. Rudy Giuliani was elected as mayor in the Autumn of 1993 on the strength of a promise to put an end to the carnage of unlawful killings on the streets, but no one doubts either the enormity of his task or the size of opposition he faces.

On one Saturday in the spring of 1994, Sweeney wrote, the NYPD logged the following firearm homicides (Sweeney 1994):

- A corpse wrapped in a carpet, drilled with bullet holes in the front of 1790 Bruckner Boulevard in the Bronx.
- The corpse of an unknown female in her thirties shot repeatedly in her left side in Ozone Park, Queens.
- A husband shot in the chest by his estranged wife in Brooklyn.
- A 14 year old shot in the head with a .32 revolver by his brother by mistake.
- A 20 year old blown away as he walked with a woman on Southern Boulevard in the Bronx.
- A shop assistant in a grocery store zapped in the head in Sheepshead Bay.
- A man in his 20s shot in the chest, back and arm at 420 W140th Street in Harlem.
- A man in his twenties found with three bullet holes in the head on the rooftop of 510 W135th Street in Harlem.

However, the bigger picture across North America presents even further questions. In 1970 it was estimated that there were 90 million guns in private hands in the USA, though the researchers went on to remark that other commentators 'supported by some data' were willing to put the figure at anything from as low as 50 million to as high as 200 million (Morris and Hawkins 1970: 64). By 1991 this was precisely the figure Kleck produced, long guns accounting for around two-thirds of the civilian weapon stock but handguns representing a significantly growing share (Kleck 1991: 17-21).

Reviewing the available data on firearm ownership in the USA in 1978, Williams and McGrath found that the most recent National Opinion Research Survey available suggested that fully one half of sampled households contained at least one firearm. This conformed to the rates of 43 to 50 per cent discovered in the corresponding surveys they re-analysed and is consistent with Kleck's findings of 49 per cent of households owning guns. Furthermore, in those households with guns, the mean number of guns owned was four whilst the average handgun owner tended to have at least two (Kleck 1991: 21). Interestingly, in view of much recent concern and press speculation about firearm distribution and violence, in 1978 the rate of legal ownership of firearms by blacks (32 per cent) fell significantly below that of whites (Williams and McGrath 1978: 51-6). Of course, much data like this only raises further questions about the extent of illegal ownership and possession of firearms. In any one year over 100,000 guns are stolen from private citizens, with further evidence, from a Police Foundation study, suggesting that 'approximately 25 per cent of the criminal arsenal is made up of expensive handguns that were stolen from private citizens' (DeZee 1978: 42).

Justice Department statistics published recently revealed that in 1992 violent crimes involving handguns broke all previous records, rising almost 50 per cent above the annual average of the past five years. Handguns had been used in a grand total of 931,000 murders, rapes, robberies and assaults in 1992 (up from the previous annual average of 667,000 between 1987 and 1991). To put these figures into a rough perspective across the developed world, the following comparison is revealing, though it comes from a date before the rapid increase in handgun offences noted above. In 1983, while there were 8 handgun killings in the UK, and 35 in Japan, there were a grand total of 9,014 in the USA (Bromhead 1988). This rising trend

of violent and firearm-related crime continued into 1993, a year during which the FBI Uniform Crime Reports recorded over 23,000 homicides, some 16,189 undertaken with firearms, of which no less than 13,252 were shootings with handguns (Davis and El Nasser 1994).^[3]

McCaghy and Cernkovitch show that in the USA in 1985 approximately 60 per cent of all homicides (including suicides) were firearm-related, whilst in 43 per cent of murders the cause of death was a handgun, in 7 per cent a shotgun and in 4 per cent another form of firearm. Certainly, however, some proportion of these shooting will involve the defensive use of firearms and the figures will include shootings by police officers and other security personnel. The authors conclude, however, that the evidence on causes of death in the US points to the conclusion that 'from 1960 to 1975, the increase in the number of homicides was largely the result of an increase in firearm homicides' (McCaghy and Cernkovitch 1987).

Discussing the wider politics of the American crime problem in 1973, Blumberg identified the roots of America's contemporary law and order crisis. Not only had what he called the 'law and order ideology' fashioned an exclusive and essentially defensive consensus around a supposedly beleaguered (white) middle class, insulating their values and protecting their institutions from attack, it had also led to unprecedented levels of fear and some seemingly drastic forms of self-protection. In practical terms, he continued, the 'law and order crusade' had encouraged the misapplication of existing laws, the creation of repressive new ones and the waiving of suspects' rights in a manner designed to intimidate, silence, restrain, detain, search or even imprison US citizens (ibid.: 27-9). He concluded that 'We live in dangerous times and our insecurity mounts because we have failed to invest in people' and that 'The existing system of justice in America promotes and reinforces class warfare by indicating to those at the bottom that they have no real stake in our society' (ibid.: 44).

In Los Angeles the symbols of class warfare and exclusion seem to proliferate. The prevalence of threats, sanctions and warnings to 'outsiders' that litter the up-market commercial and residential districts of Los Angeles are key components in what Davis calls a new 'militarisation of city life grimly visible at street level' (Davis 1990: 223). The most affluent neighbourhoods, he notes, 'isolate themselves behind walls guarded by gun-toting private police and state-of-the-art electronic surveillance'. Thus, in the LA suburbs, 'residential areas with enough clout are able to privatise local public space, partitioning themselves from the rest of the metropolis, even imposing a variant of neighbourhood "passport control" on outsiders' (ibid.: 246). Next come the fences, the walls and, reflecting the further devaluation of public space and anti-pedestrian bias, coherent urban security design as approved by LAPD architects. Security has become the key 'positional good' (ibid.: 228). As Davis comments, 'even as the walls have come down in Eastern Europe, they are being erected all over Los Angeles', a form of 'urban apartheid' in the city (ibid.: 228-30). Unfortunately, despite this obvious investment in defensive security, Currie drew an important connection between 'tough' penal policy and 'hardened' crime prevention. 'Like the unprecedented increase in incarceration, this new defensiveness might have been expected to do something substantial about the crime rate. With the possible exception of declines in burglary resulting from more elaborate "hardware", it did not' (Currie 1985: 9).

In the poorer urban neighbourhoods of American cities, Vergara noted similar tendencies towards a fortress mentality of crime control. 'Fortification epitomises the ghetto in modern America today', he remarks:

'Buildings grow claws and spikes, their entrances acquire metal plates, their roofs get fenced in, and any additional openings are sealed cutting down on light and ventilation. Glass windowpanes in first floor windows are rare. Instead, windows openings are bricked in or fitted with glass bricks. In schools and in buses, Plexiglas, frosty with scratches blurs the view outside.' (Vergara 1994a)

The consequences of such dramatic forms of 'target-hardening' are not difficult to detect. The preoccupation with crime takes its toll on civic life, and in its place a kind of privatised urban survivalism prevails. Post Offices resemble frontier forts, neighbourhoods, warehouses and building sites draped in razor-ribbon wire take on the appearance of military installations and 'churches also turn into fortresses'. The 'new brutalism' evident in fortified urban architecture, whether represented in the DIY survivalism of the ghettos or the more up-market security-styled design of the commercial centres, prompts a rephrasing of Foucault's famous question. In the post-modern city, we now have to ask: 'Why is it that libraries, schools, post-offices, welfare centres, housing projects and office developments so resemble one another, and all resemble military establishments or bunkers?' (see Foucault 1977). The answer clearly has to do with the fear of crime and the collapse of confidence in public order. Thus,

'in violent neighbourhoods social arrangements have evolved that befit a state of war ... groups of disabled or elderly residents going from their secure buildings to cheque-cashing outlets and the supermarket require police or security guards for escorts ... Dogs and security guards protect the few who can afford them. And if one is to believe the residents, just about everybody keeps a gun.' (Vergara 1994a)

Vergara's recent work on 'The New American Ghetto' (1995), describes 'a special kind of ground, a place set apart from the more pedestrian territory of simple consumers and producers'. In recent years, he notes, such places have acquired rather more obvious signposts because, 'in sections of Chicago, Newark, Detroit and New York City where the murder rate has reached record highs, there are dozens of billboards designed solely to urge people to stop killing and getting killed. Mostly they are sponsored by churches and civic organisations - public service announcements for populations so endangered that they constitute their own macabre advertising niche' (Vergara 1994b). The billboards, which began appearing in poor communities during the late 1980s, carried messages to parents such as 'Don't Let Your Child Be The Next Victim Of Violent Crime', or 'It's Time for Peace, Stop the Killing', or simply 'Cease Fire' in large red letters, dripping blood. Another billboard photographed by Vergara on the South Side of Chicago captioned 'Take Crime Out Of Your Child's Life' carried a childlike match stick drawing of one boy shooting another in the head with a huge revolver, although this particular billboard had been 'amended' by the addition of a 'sideways baseball cap on the aggressor, thus identifying him as a gang member' (Vergara 1994b).

This politics of firearms intersects many other social issues in contemporary America, throwing up many intriguing paradoxes. For many Republicans, as we have seen, the right to bear arms defines a particular type of commitment to civil rights. Yet at the same time, it is the fear of the 'gun in the wrong hands' that sustains and, from time to time animates the more philosophical versions of republican idealism. In particular, the alleged relationships between firearms, race and class, and the idea of the violent ghettos, fuel a hard-edged cocktail of racist and reactionary values linking the break-down of family and community with drug-dealing, criminality, benefit dependency, and firearms. As Freedland noted in January 1995, in a critical commentary on the rising influence of a new right-wing republicanism in the USA, these issues go to the heart of middle-white America's preoccupation with the 'underclass'. Many influential opinion leaders, he suggests, appear to be in agreement that, 'something [does] have to be done about the offspring of the (mainly black) underclass, who, raised by teen-moms, grow into gun-wielding, benefit draining, drug-dealing hoodlums' (Freedland 1995).

Other efforts have also been made to take the disarmament message to the young. As early as 1986 a UNICEF report, Action for Children noted that 'there has been a massive arms build-up in the toy industry of the United States. The majority of best selling toys are weapons or action figure dolls ... War toy sales jumped from an estimated US \$325 million in 1982 to nearly US \$1 billion in 1984' (cited in Morgan 1989). In due course, bowing to liberal consumer pressure, the giant US marketing chain 'Toys R Us' agreed to cease selling and promoting toy or imitation firearms. The decision followed a spate of news reports about children mistakenly shot and killed by police or neighbours whilst playing with toy guns or killing one another whilst 'playing' with their parents' real firearms (Larson 1994).

Addressing the problem of the violent socialisation of American children is tantamount to an admission that the problem of firearm violence in the USA is not especially a racial or even a ghetto issue, though, as with all social problems, it is there where the problems are most acute (Canada 1995). As we have seen, America's adherence to the gun and its tendency to violence have been established over a period of nearly three centuries. Whether the armed American Citizen, the fortress housing complex, the no-go ghetto, or the bunker bureaucracy, with its paramilitary officials and their 'war' against crime offer a portent of things to come remains to be seen.

Meanwhile, the only thing that can be concluded with certainty about the state's withdrawal from - or indeed its inability to deliver - collective security is that the poorest and most vulnerable will come to discover another dimension to the deepening inequality they already experience. As the Reagan Task Force on Violent Crime concluded: 'We are not convinced that a government, by the invention of new programmes or the management of existing institutions, can by itself recreate those familial and neighbourhood conditions, those social opportunities, and those personal values that in all likelihood are the prerequisites of tranquil communities' (cited in Currie 1985: 10). If this amounted to no more than the familiar neo-

liberal claim that governments could not make people good by law, it might not have merited further comment, but insofar as it implied that Governments could do very little about crime then it certainly raised a question about the future of liberal government. As Currie commented, 'the passivity that began to infect scholarly thinking about crime during the seventies had become enshrined as a fundamental principle of government policy' (ibid.).

Currie has been prominent amongst recent American writers on the 'crime problem' who have linked the symptoms of social breakdown, community fragmentation, and the obliteration of meaningful mainstream educational and employment opportunities for whole generations of mainly black and Hispanic inner-city, youth. But whilst acknowledging that 'criminal violence is woven into our social fabric' (1985: 4), his concern is that it marks a 'brutal and appalling affront to any conception of civilized social life'. Put this way, the question becomes one of the relationships between civilisation, violence and social organisation. Progress in civilisation can, as the American experience demonstrates, co-exist with high levels of violence. Indeed, to some extent it depends upon high levels of violence, or at least the potential capacity to exercise violence - as Mestrovic has put it, 'American culture resorts to violence and harsh punishment to try to curb violence. America is also the world's largest supplier of weapons. America uses the imagery of violence to treat violence by declaring metaphorical wars on drugs, crime, AIDS, sexual abuse and other social problems caused by violence' (Mestrovic 1993: 42). Social disorganisation (the disorganisation and undermining of social institutions, social processes and social discourses), on the other hand, threatens not only the production of more violence but also impedes the capacity of the state to respond in ways which pay more than mere lip service to liberal notions of democracy and citizenship. Favourite amongst the potential responses to these several problems have been the ideas of neighbourhood regeneration and community redevelopment. In 'communitarianism' the American sociologist Etzioni sought to bring the essential ideas to Britain. By and large he found a receptive audience. But there was often more than a little ambiguity to these conceptions of community. While 'society' and 'the social' had become rather taboo concepts in conservative analyses of the crime problem, community and neighbourhood had become the focal sites of crime prevention activity. Paradoxically, though, some of the strongest and most exclusive conceptions of community seem to exist in those very neighbourhoods where crime and violence escalate to the most threatening proportions, as Sanders demonstrates in his study of 'drive by' shootings and 'gang bangs' in suburban San Diego (Sanders 1994).

We should now turn to assess the extent to which similar themes and issues can be detected on this side of the Atlantic.

Even in the quietest neighbourhoods

At 8.30pm on 18 April 1995, a Metropolitan Police officer was shot following a call, described as 'routine', to a house in Ilford, East London. The officer later died as a result of gunshot wounds to the chest and stomach. A neighbour, who heard the shots fired and witnessed the aftermath, commented, 'I can't believe it's happened in this area. It's full of respectable people' (*The Guardian*, 19 April 1995). Another neighbour, quoted in the *Daily Mail*, added, 'It is all horrifying. This is a quiet neighbourhood' (*Daily Mail*, 19 April 1995).

Less than a week later newspapers carried reports of a 'club raider' shot and killed by armed police at a social club in Tyneside. According to Northumbria's Assistant Chief Constable, the peace and quiet of the area had been disturbed by a spate of shop and pub raids 'by thugs with imitation guns'. The police had received a tip-off that the social club was to be raided and decided to station a tactical firearms unit within the club. No shots were fired at the police but, in the confusion when the intruders were challenged, police officers opened fire, killing one man. As *The Guardian* rounded off the story: 'Local residents ... slept through the incident and were startled yesterday that armed criminals had come to the generally quiet area'. Adding emphasis, a neighbour's comment was recorded: 'It is frightening to think that people have been using guns so close to our homes, [this] is normally a quiet place' (*The Guardian*, 25 April 1995).

A third example, from the *Daily Mail* (13 May 1995), told the story of the 'RAF hero shot by muggers'. According to an MoD spokesman who knew the victim, he was just not the kind of person 'to give in to a couple of street punks'. When the victim refused to hand over his wallet he was shot five times at close range. A police spokesman commented: 'For a complete stranger to walk up to someone and fire five shots into them is completely unheard of' and

then added, somewhat inconsistently, 'Sadly these days muggers are quite prepared to shoot people in attacks like this'. Last word, and therefore closure, on the report was achieved in typical fashion by a comment from a local resident who noted 'We get kids around here bending aerials and things like that. Usually [sic] when people are mugged they are threatened with a knife, never shot. I can't believe how severe it was'.

My aim, in what follows, is not to undertake an analysis of the press reports, interesting though that may be. I have in mind something more basic; a review of the apparently increasing prevalence of firearm use in crime (in Britain and the USA) alongside popular and often populist fears of rising violence, an assessment of how the 'politics of firearms' on either side of the Atlantic might be compared or contrasted and a brief commentary on the relations between forms of violence, ideas of community and contrasting modes of establishing security and social order.

That said, there is a certain symmetry to the press reports. Guns obviously seem unwelcome and intrusive in 'quiet' neighbourhoods. This appears so whether they are carried, and fired by potential criminals, as in the first and third examples, or by the police as in the second. Even so, the ambiguous twist given to the second story by *The Guardian* is intriguing. The shock element here was not so much to do with the fact that burglars, equipped with real - or possibly imitation - firearms, had raided a social club in a 'quiet residential area', but that officers from a police firearms unit had shot and killed a (possibly unarmed) burglar. It was not the burglary that was exceptional, but the killing. As the Tyneside neighbour put it, the people 'using guns so close to our homes' were the police.

But if these were neighbourhoods described as quiet and peaceful by residents, where guns were considered an alien presence, what of other neighbourhoods? Indeed, are there other neighbourhoods? The question goes to the heart of many of our contemporary concerns about society, law and order. For when the languages of 'community' and 'neighbourhood' are employed as supposed antidotes to problems of crime, public disorder and the social fragmentation from which they are often said to spring, it can come as something of a shock to discover how vulnerable the peace can be. But the corollary of the sentiments expressed by the 'respectable' residents of a quiet neighbourhood in Ilford, or the 'quiet neighbours' of the Tyneside social club, is that there are other neighbourhoods in which the sound of gunfire might not seem so exceptional.

And there are other neighbourhoods

During 1993-4, South London achieved some notoriety for firearm-related violence. In 1993 the Drugs Related Violence Intelligence Unit was established within the Metropolitan Police, partly in response to suggestions that the force had not been responding effectively to evidence of armed 'Crack Gangs' operating in South London (Silverman 1994: 293). The following year, the Metropolitan Police identified tackling the criminal use of firearms as a core service priority (Griffiths 1994) and 'Operation Safety Catch' and the 'Silence a Gun' phone line campaign, designed to remove illegal weapons from circulation, were launched. Later in 1994, the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) established a 'national enforcers group' to co-ordinate the activities of Police and Customs agencies in a concerted effort to stem the flow of illegal firearms into the country. Furthermore, in London, amidst a flurry of press publicity, important decisions were taken by the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, Sir Paul Condon, and by the Chief Constable of the Greater Manchester force, supported by the Home Secretary, to authorise the routine arming of more police officers in specialist response units.

The number of robberies involving firearms in the UK increased by 34 per cent between 1990 and 1992, and handguns are the preferred weapon in such incidents. Since 1988 the proportion of robberies in which firearms were used has continued to rise. Some 8.6 per cent of robberies involved firearms in 1988 whereas the figure had reached 11.7 per cent by 1991. The number of bank robberies in which firearms were used has increased by 59 per cent since 1990-91, and the number of building society raids by 28 per cent (Home Office 1992). In 1993, shots were fired by robbers during the commission of a robbery on 123 occasions in London compared with two occasions (one fatal) when the police returned fire. In the same year, firearms were issued to Flying Squad Officers on 686 occasions (Griffiths 1994). Overall, during the decade to 1994 police in England and Wales recorded an increase of 142 per cent in the use of handguns in crime.

The apparent link between drugs and firearms continued to cause particular concern, however. During 1994, the violence associated with drug dealing in London, especially crack cocaine, was said to be reaching unprecedented levels. 'Shootings in South London were

happening at the rate of three a fortnight' (Silverman 1994: 81), and 'in one 39-day period, the Met logged 470 firearms incidents. On average, the police were dealing with two shootings every day and they estimated that several hundred crack dealers had access to firearms - which in practice often means automatic weapons including even machine guns' (op cit.: 294).

The number of offences of attempted murder and 'other acts endangering life' increased by 30 per cent between 1990 and 1991, although since 1981 the total number of offences of murder, attempted murder and other acts endangering life has almost trebled. This upward trend looks likely to continue. As Silverman notes, between January 1993 and the summer of 1994 there were 13 murders and 32 attempted murders 'linked to the trade in crack cocaine in London' (ibid.). Silverman's work reveals how the Metropolitan Police's 'Operation Dalehouse' uncovered vital links between several murders and attempted murders in South London during 1998-91. Although each was a separate incident, important connections were discovered between the victims, the perpetrators, the accomplices and associates of each - or the weapons used. The confidential and unpublished Metropolitan Police report on Operation Dalehouse (discussed in Silverman 1994) listed the following incidents (to simplify, I have only listed the firearm incidents)

1. shooting and attempted murder of man in street,
2. shooting and attempted murder at night-club,
3. shooting and attempted murder of two men, one was killed, the other seriously injured,
4. shooting and attempted murder of two police officers,
5. shooting and attempted murder of woman,
6. shooting and attempted murder of two police officers pursuing suspect at night-club,
7. street attack against man in street by two others with handguns,
8. armed attack on two men, one shot and killed the other injured,
9. shooting and attempted murder of man

Apparently, according to the Metropolitan Police Report, the same firearm was used in incidents 8 and 9. The offender in incident 1 and incident 9 was the intended victim in incident 8. The same firearm was used in incidents 1 and 4 (cited in Silverman 1994: 81-3). And so it goes. South London is hardly a 'community', and it is not exactly 'rocked with gunfire', although a report in *The Observer* (28 May 1995) quoted police sources as saying that the growing arsenal of illegal firearms held by drug dealers meant that shooting incidents were averaging two a day. Such evidence does suggest a greater willingness to use firearms and changing patterns of armed violence. It also suggests something about our conceptions of 'community' and 'social order'.

Uncertain 'communities' and mean northern neighbourhoods

As Silverman notes, 'When a police officer gets murdered in gentrified Clapham, it's clear that the old certainties have changed' (Silverman 1994: 231). He has a point, but the certainties may not be as old as is sometimes imagined. For instance, as Gould and Waldron imply, it was precisely the shooting of a number of police officers by armed burglars in the exclusive middle class districts of Outer London during the latter part of the nineteenth century that led to a growing panic about armed burglars which, in part, eventually persuaded Parliament to pass the Pistols Act in 1903 (Gould and Waldron 1986, Malcolm 1994). Likewise, a concern about firearms and violence emerged in the late 1940s and was reflected in the first demise of PC George Dixon, in the film *The Blue Lamp*. As Reiner notes, it took the police some time to attain the high levels of consent they achieved in the post-war era. The traditions now thought to be in jeopardy may not be so long-standing after all (Taylor 1981, Reiner 1992). We will consider the significance of these developments later.

By 1993 and 1994 some of the worst firearm violence appeared to have moved to Manchester and Liverpool, though a further threshold was crossed in Burnley in 1991. During the summer disturbances in Burnley that year, firearms were first used against the police in a riot situation. Of course, riot may not necessarily imply the absence of community, far from it, but it is a conception of community far removed from the quiet, consensual, residential norm usually featured in crime prevention literature or nostalgic representations of 'community policing'.

A more obviously recognisable community *location*, Moss Side, in Manchester (or 'Gunchester') became the focus of rising concern about firearms, drug-dealing and crime in the early 1990s. When we turn to consider these questions of community, violence and crime there appears to be more than a little inconsistency in the dominant languages of law and order. According to Silverman, reporters like an identifiable 'front line' and Moss Side, or 'England's Bronx', was said to be both a community, yet also 'a battle zone which still conformed to all the war clichés' (Silverman 1994: 231).

Commenting on the changes and the increasing propensity to armed violence in the Moss Side area, Silverman quoted the remarks of a senior detective in the area:

'I now look upon the period when criminals used a knife as the good old days. Here in Manchester, the tool of the trade is the gun. That's how you resolve disputes - with firepower. The gun is an everyday currency. You can hire it and return it. Just like a library book. Except that there are more suppliers of guns in these parts than libraries.' (ibid.)

Yet by early 1995 the Chief Constable's Annual Report was able to take some modest satisfaction in the fact that after three years of rapid increase, 'all categories of gun related violence fell sharply in 1994' (Tredre 1995) (see Table 1).

Table 1. Firearm Related Crime in Manchester 1989-1994

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
Murders	5	1	5	2	5	4
Serious woundings	34	36	51	61	66	56
Other violence	159	160	158	176	203	124
Robberies	247	291	401	528	743	590
Burglaries	13	14	14	32	31	31
Total	458	502	628	799	1048	805

Source: R. Tredre, *The Observer*, 14 May 1995

The claim was made that Moss Side was well on the way towards the development of a 'gun culture' and only drew back from the brink following territorial control deals struck between rival gangs, more sensitive patterns of policing and other socio-economic interventions. Even so, all sides regarded the truce as fragile and, possibly, only temporary. Meanwhile, many other northern cities, in particular Liverpool, appeared to be experiencing rapid increases in firearm-related violence. In the hyperbole of journalism, these were 'mean' northern neighbourhoods where, amongst the 'local toughs', 'gun culture has spread like a rash' (Beaumont, *The Observer*, 28 May 1995).

In other similar northern conurbations characterised historically by heavy industry, tight communities, and strong working class traditions, the exodus of investment, jobs and opportunities has left the local populations of tough young men with only territory, reputation and pride. In Clydeside, five people were shot dead in one week in March 1995 whilst the number of firearm offences has almost doubled over the past twelve months. In Northumbria there have been three murders, three attempted murders and four woundings involving firearms in 1994. During the year 250 offences involving the use of firearms were recorded. In Strathclyde firearm offences increased by 67 per cent during 1994 whilst, since 1992, 3,400 illegally held firearms have been recovered, including four Kalashnikovs and a sten gun. In such places

'The gun has become an everyday weapon. Organised criminals, gangs of toughs and even teenagers are tooling up and settling disputes that would once have warranted a beating with a burst of gunfire. In the past month there have been eleven shootings; two men have died, two have been seriously injured. ... The last four weeks have been a nightmare as two,

perhaps three, turf wars have erupted. One involves gangs which control security at the city's hugely lucrative pubs and night-clubs. The others centre upon on less lucrative issues of pride and territory.' (Beaumont 1995)

Ambiguous communities and dangerous communities

The notion of community is problematic, and membership of a community is often qualified. We could hardly be waging a 'war' against crime without our 'criminal enemy' also being members of the community. Yet the ideology of citizenship sits rather uneasily with the rhetoric of 'beasts' and 'outsiders' so often part of the popular rhetoric on crime. Nor does the idea of community sit too comfortably with the exchange of shots. While government crime prevention policies and some policing practices exploited the idea of traditional community (and some of the values associated with citizenship) they effectively pushed some categories of people beyond the community. They became the outsiders from whom the 'real' community was deemed to require protection.

Yet the irony of attempts to re-establish this version of community in late twentieth century Britain was not lost on Fielding, who argued, echoing Cohen from 1979, that 'Just at the historical moment when every commonplace critique of technological post-industrial or mass society moans the irreplaceable loss of the traditional community, so a new mode of deviance control is advocated which depends on this same lost community being present.' (Fielding 1984)

Yet alongside government messages about the importance of rebuilding communities and 'moral rearmament', policy on 'law and order' contained a new call to arms, for the debate on the routine arming of the British police took off, once again, in the early 1990s. An important catalyst for a resurgence of interest in debates about arming the police has always been, as Greenwood has shown, the murder of police officers on duty (Greenwood 1972). Yet despite a number of incidents which focused public opinion in the early 1990s, evidence does not support the view that the police themselves were being overwhelmed by a rising cycle of uncontrollable violence. Between 1990 and 1992 the number of serious assaults on police officers on duty (GBH) fell by almost half from 1356 in 1990 to 836 in 1992 (data for 1993 suggests a continuation of this downward trend). And likewise, despite the attention devoted by the media to recent incidents, the number of police officers killed on duty shows a fairly stable pattern since the mid-1960s:

Period:	1964-69	1975-79	1985-89	1990-94
Police officers killed on duty:	11	8	10	10

In short, the pressure for arming the police - the principal form in which the firearms debate has surfaced politically in the UK - cannot be adequately explained only by reference to violence against the police. We have to look elsewhere for the source of 'the need' suggested by Waddington in 1988 when he concluded that: 'Official policy and formal organisation have developed over recent years ... *in response to the need for more frequent armed operations*' (Waddington 1988, emphasis added).

While it appears that there has been a disproportionate rise in armed police operations in London, Waddington takes issue with those (Benn and Worpole 1986, for example) who argue that the data suggest a significant over-reaction by London police. In fact the figures of firearm issues to Metropolitan Police officers record not the occasions on which firearms were issued but the number of weapon issues per officer per day, and thereby appear to overstate the trend. There is still room for some ambiguity, however, for it is unclear whether the figures include the issue of weapons to officers who are more routinely armed, for instance those working in ARVs, or on airport security or diplomatic protection duties. Finally, Waddington disputes the suggestion that the rate of police arming far exceeds the rate of 'serious armed crime', finding a very strong statistical correlation between the two trends (Waddington 1991: 43-6).

We have already seen that during 1993-4 the number of shootings, linked to the connection with crack cocaine trade in South London, began to cause concern. There followed several developments in the police response to firearm incidents. In 1994 the Metropolitan Police identified tackling the criminal use of firearms as a core service priority (Griffiths 1994) and a number of campaigns designed to remove illegal weapons from circulation were launched. Later, in 1994, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, Sir Paul Condon, (followed by

the Chief Constable of Greater Manchester) authorised the routine arming of more police officers in specialist response units. Later the same year, Sir Paul's comments caused something of a stir in the gun trade and shooting press when he argued, during a press conference, that a large proportion, up to 70 per cent, he claimed (though without revealing his evidence for the claim), of illegally held firearms in Britain emanated from legitimate dealers and license holders (Darbyshire, *Daily Telegraph*, 3 August 1994).

With the exception of a few occasions (immediately following World War II, during the 1960s, and in relation to the supply of weapons to paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland) the gun question has not surfaced so strongly in Britain as a *supply-side* issue.^[4] For instance, following its election victory in 1970, the Conservative Government, in tandem with a range of new 'law and order' measures, set in motion a 'thorough review of the law on the control of firearms in Great Britain'. A Home Office Working Party was established and its report (never published) led to a Green Paper in 1973 (HMSO 1973). The underlying philosophy of the Government was outlined in the foreword to the Green Paper:

'The extent of firearms use in crime is growing ... determined criminals will usually manage somehow to acquire firearms [but] society should, through legal controls, nevertheless seek to make this as difficult as possible. The only effective way of doing this is to reduce society's total gun inventory. Consequently, a considerable minority of law-abiding citizens must be subjected to increased regulation and restriction of their firearms ownership and use patterns.' (HMSO, 1973)

In fact no amendments to the 1968 Firearms Act followed, although a subsequent Labour Government did substantially increase Firearm Licence fees in 1976 and 1978 (Harding 1979). Even so, despite the formal setting aside of the Green Paper, there are many in the UK firearm lobby who continue to regard the principles implicit in it as guiding the operating philosophy of those enforcing firearms controls in Britain. In contrast to the 1973 Home Office view, however, Harding's own research suggested that, during the period covered by the Green Paper and in the years immediately following, 'the rate of firearms use is not in fact increasing any more quickly than is the overall rate of crime in this group of [serious] offences & \$133; in so far as firearms use in crime can be said to be increasing, it is doing so only as a function of the reasonably slow increase in serious crimes of violence' (Harding 1979: 767, 773).

However, more recent data does suggest that the situation has changed. 'There was a qualitative change in the mid-1970s towards a greatly increased use of firearms' (Waddington 1988: 52-3) although the particular concern of 1973, the increasing use of sawn-off shotguns in robberies, now seems to be taking second place to a concern about the increasing use of handguns (see Figure 3). As Morrison and O'Donnell (1994) have pointed out in their study of armed robberies in London, however, the most appropriate measure might not be based on the fact that a firearm caused injury. In armed robberies, the most common firearm related offence (representing 44 per cent of firearm offences in 1991, a figure comparable to US data: De Zee 1978) weapons are carried to intimidate rather than shoot (Kleck 1991). Weapons were fired in only 7 per cent of armed robberies and the most common type of 'firearm injury' occurred when the weapon was used as a blunt instrument - 28 per cent of injuries, compared to 6 per cent of injuries resulting from a weapon being fired (Morrison and O'Donnell 1994: 28-9).

Firearms, disorder and society

The contrasting analyses of firearms control in the USA and the UK raise many important issues for the future of our respective societies. These concern the quality of life afforded to the citizens of these societies and the conceptions of social justice, social order, citizenship and community they entertain. The two societies may face similar general dilemmas of disorder, violence, disintegration and anomie, but the particular problems they encounter, and the practical ways in which they go about addressing them may be quite different.

The long-term perspective in which I have situated this analysis of firearms and society, has sought to sketch the relationship between coercive power, industrialisation and the use of firearm violence with the formation of nation states, the establishment of political authority and the fabrication of the basic conditions for citizenship and social order. But this has always been, and has to be seen as, a dynamic process; citizenship, political authority, industrialisation and so on, were not end-states but parts of a process. The development of a

lively discourse on individual rights and freedoms - in the USA - regarding the right to own and possess firearms, is a case in point. This ideology connected so neatly with the establishment of lucrative domestic markets in weapons for the people, and coincided with epidemic levels of fear about violent crime (Zimring 1985), itself fuelled by the saturation levels of firearm penetration into American society, such that the foundations of social order and political authority were said by many to have been undermined.

In the UK, by contrast, a more conservative-deferential collectivist tradition facilitated the near monopolisation of the instruments of violence in the hands of the state at a time, shortly after the ending of the First World War, when an intensification of internal and external disorders seemed imminent. A degree of political consensus, sustained by the relatively low salience of the firearm problem kept the issue off the political agenda. Furthermore, generally improving opportunities and standards of living and the, by no means insignificant, fact that participation in 'shooting and field sports' remained, largely, an activity largely frequented by the rural land-owning upper classes meant that firearms were seldom a live political issue (Tonso 1992).

As we have already seen, this largely privileged access to firearms is very much part of the English tradition - indeed, it is a large part of the explanation for why smooth-bore shotguns remained outside conventional firearms control until the 1960s. It seems that until the 1960s Britain had no major firearms problem. Things were to change and disturb this conservative consensus, but its persistence is worthy of note. In the decade following the war there is evidence of a significant tightening of police policy in relation to the issue and renewal of firearm certificates, with the Home Secretary commenting that 'I would not regard the plea that a revolver is wanted for the protection of an applicant's person or property as necessarily justifying the issue of a firearm certificate' (Home Secretary, 17 October 1946, quoted in Greenwood 1972: 72). The implication was clear; protection of persons and property was a collective task to be carried out by the police and the state, not a responsibility discharged by individuals acting in their own interest. The collective providential state had taken upon itself the task of safeguarding the last liberty of individuals, in this sense the British tradition differed significantly from the American.

However the pattern began to change during the late 1950s. In the Metropolitan Police District, firearms were known to have been used or carried in only 19 robberies in 1950 (31 per cent of total robberies), and five years later in only 13. By 1960 the number had risen to 53, more than doubling to 114 by 1965. At the end of the decade the figure was 272, representing 42 per cent of all robberies. The six-yearly averages of armed robberies involving firearms are instructive and clearly show the rapid take-off in armed crime after the mid 1960s (see Table 2).

Table 2. Robberies in London in which a firearm was involved: six-yearly averages and percentage of all robberies

	1946-51	1952-57	1958-63	1964-69
No.	23.5	15.3	47.1	168.3
Per cent	(31)	(35)	(41)	(42)

Source: Greenwood (1972: 161, 170)

However, as Morrison and O'Donnell (1994) show, armed robberies are now in quite a different league entirely, with over 1,000 armed robberies per year by 1975 and over 5,000 per year by 1991.

During the 1960s the overall incidence of firearm fatalities began to increase. Reflecting these statistics concern began to grow about violent crime and, especially firearm use in violent crimes although, even in 1965, both the Home Secretary and the police were still resisting the imposition of additional controls to restrict shotguns in line with other firearms. It took a dramatic shooting incident in August 1966, in which three police officers were killed, to shatter the apparent consensus. Whilst the officers were killed with handguns, Roy Jenkins, as Home Secretary, went on to propose extra controls on shotguns. Two years later, the consolidating 1968 Firearms Act was passed followed, the same year, by the tough new Criminal Justice Act as the Government looked for a hard response to the seemingly growing threat of violent crime (Greenwood 1972).

Two years later, amidst continuing concern about violent crime the incoming Conservative Government announced its plans for a review of firearms and their control. Even so, as we

have seen, its philosophy remained remarkably consensual, it reiterated the need for tougher controls, and it promised to redraw the balance of arms somewhat, inconveniencing the law abiding and restricting the responsible (shotgun) gun-owner, in order to better control the criminal. Even so, no legislation followed, though it is claimed that, in view of the tougher licensing and higher fees, the number of Firearm Certificates held in Great Britain has fallen from over 255,000 in 1968 to around 168,000 in 1992, a drop of approximately one third ('Cadmus' 1994). As we have seen, in the 1970s the pattern of firearms usage, and the efforts of the police to contain and control it began to change. The tradition of consensual collectivism which had for so long represented the dominant pattern of firearms control in Britain began to fall apart.

Harding predicted that a backlash was likely should the Government seek to lean apparently too heavily upon the rights and freedoms of the law abiding in its efforts to contain the criminal (Harding 1979). Reading the commentaries of many of Britain's current gun and shooting magazines one gains a definite impression of an seemingly beleaguered minority defending their rights and their sport against the uncaring, alien, heavy handed central state (Cooper 1994, 'Cadmus' 1994). No doubt this impression, the 'Alamo mindset', is precisely the desired message. Small wonder then that, in the USA, the pro-gun lobby are still able to label gun-controllers as 'Un-American', latent communists and sympathisers. Firearms are certainly emerging as a critical - and often highly divisive - issue in contemporary societies.

In the longer term, therefore, whereas firearms and the social relations of firearms control helped create and civilise nations, in many ways they now seem to begin to threaten to destabilise them. On either side of the Atlantic the precise processes, factors and issues have differed markedly - as has the size of the problem - but the overall result is similar. Industrialism promised technical solutions for social problems, rationality and efficient technical processes. In many respects our security industries are still ploughing that particular furrow in search of the appropriate technical fix for social disorder.[\[5\]](#)

Likewise, modernism seemed to promise control, the utilitarian training of all that is human, the planning of all that is social, or spontaneous. Industrial society brought us the firearm, modern methods of industrial production, distribution *and advertising* gave us ubiquitous handgun. Furthermore, in the nation where most of these are produced, modern methods of production, distribution and advertising are contriving to make weapons even more widely available (Canada 1995).[\[6\]](#) Capitalism turned the gun into a commodity, gave it an image and then went on to create the underlying conditions in which it would find a use and where, paradoxically, it would be sought as a protection when modern, seemingly ineffective, strategies of collective public order maintenance began to break down. Effective gun control processes, the safety catch at the heart of many modern methods of law enforcement and one of the only real guarantees of social order, appear to be failing.

Admittedly, the process is that much more advanced in the USA and, as Waldron notes, London is not New York. Shots were fired on three occasions by the Metropolitan Police in London during 1993 compared to 312 incidents in which NYPD officers fired their weapons in New York (Waldron 1994). Even so, everyone is 'tooling up'. Gun control is, paradoxically, coming to mean more guns. On either side of the Atlantic more guns are seen to be the solution for increasing gun violence.

Notes

1. An example of this was the shooting of a British tourist by a Florida householder in the aftermath of a burglary attempt. A Leeds Coroner's Court held that the tourist had been unlawfully killed, while a Florida District Attorney's office refused to prosecute on grounds of self-defence. The tourist, from Leeds, had been a member of the Arnold Schwarzenegger fan club. Whilst in Florida he broke into the home of the club chairman, presumably to steal mementos. His activities disturbed the householder, who confronted the intruder with a gun. The intruder tried to flee but was shot and killed during his attempt to escape. [\[Back to text\]](#)
2. The allusion is to a speech by David Maclean MP, when he was a Home Office minister. The Minister had wanted to deliver a provocative and strongly-worded speech until, on the advice of senior civil servants, his remarks were suitably 'toned down'. Maclean had intended to defend the Conservative government's new-found 'toughness' on crime in the following terms: 'if [these policies] result in more people in

prison, then so be it. I am not concerned about over-full prisons. I am more worried about empty streets because honest people are afraid to go out'. And he concluded, 'our real task is to drive the vermin off the streets'. Despite the changes, the original text was released to journalists. [\[Back to text\]](#)

3. See also Morris and Hawkins (1970); New York State Crime Commission, National Center for Health Statistics 1933-68, and FBI statistics 1970-71 reported in Sherrill (1973); Bromhead (1988); Zimring (1991); the FBI Uniform Crime Report, 1994 and Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms report, 1994. [\[Back to text\]](#)
4. At the end of World War II, fearing that 'souvenir' firearms had been brought home by returning troops, the Home Secretary authorised a six-week amnesty during 1946 when the 'illegal' weapons could be surrendered without fear of prosecution. In all the exercise netted over 75,000 weapons including 59,000 pistols and 1,580 machine guns (Greenwood 1972). The issue was picked up in interesting ways by the film industry. The shooting of PC George Dixon in *The Blue Lamp* (1947) suggested the danger of firearms for British patterns of policing, whilst a recent Terence Davies film contained an intriguing scene with a whole classroom of Liverpool boys hiding souvenir firearms - presumably brought home by their fathers - in their desks. The scene offers an important comment on schooling in contemporary America where a number of schools are reported to have installed metal detectors to prevent students bringing guns and knives to class. [\[Back to text\]](#)
5. Witness the enthusiasm for all manner of surveillance systems operating in modern societies (see Lyon 1991) and the eagerness with which closed circuit TV systems have been grasped as a supposed panacea for street crime and disorder (Squires and Measor 1995). [\[Back to text\]](#)
6. See the discussion of the 'post-industrial' handgun, the new polymer-framed Smith and Wesson 0.4 calibre Sigma pistol, in Adam (1994). [\[Back to text\]](#)

References

Adam, R. (1994) 'The New Smith and Wesson Sigma Series', *Guns and Shooting Magazine*, Vol. 9, No. 6, June.

Alba R.D. and Messner S.F. (1995) 'Point Blank Against Itself: Evidence and Inference About Guns, Crime and Gun Control', *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 11(4).

Anthony, I. (1994) 'Current Trends and Developments in the Arms Trade', in Harkavy, R. and Neuman, S. (eds) *The Arms Trade: Problems and Prospects in the Post-Cold War World*, Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Sept, Vol. 535.

Baird, V. (1994) 'Lethal Lies: The Arms Trade', *New Internationalist*, November.

Bauman, Z. (1989) *Modernity and the Holocaust*. Polity Press.

Benn, M and Worpole, K. (1986) *Death in the City: An Examination of Police Related Deaths in London*. Pluto Press.

Blumberg, A.S. (1973) *Law and Order: The Scales of Justice*. NJ: Transaction Books.

Bromhead, P. (1988) *Living in America*. London: Longman.

Brown R.M. (1975) *Strain of Violence: Historical Studies of American Violence and Vigilantism*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Brown R.M. (1991) *No Duty to Retreat: Violence and Values in American History and Society*. University of Oklahoma Press.

Brown, R.M. (1994) 'Violence', in Milner et al. (eds), *The Oxford History of the American West*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

'Cadmus' (1994) 'A Matter of Policy', *Guns Review*, Vol 34, No. 8, August.

Canada, G. (1995) *Fist, Stick, Knife, Gun*. Boston: Beacon Press.

- Cohen, D. (1994) 'On the Way to School, Johannesburg 1994', *Observer Magazine*, 17 April.
- Cress, L. (1984) 'An Armed Community: The Origins and Meaning of the Right to Bear Arms', *Journal of American History*, Vol. 71, No. 1.
- Critchley, T.A. (1970) *The Conquest of Violence*. London: Constable.
- Currie, E. (1985) *Confronting Crime: An American Challenge*. New York: Pantheon.
- Davis, M. (1991) *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles*. London: Verso.
- DeZee, M.R. (1978) 'Gun Control and Federal Legislation', in J. Inciardi and A. Pottiger (eds), *Violence and American History*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Ellis, J. (1993) *The Social History of the Machine Gun*. 2nd ed. Pimlico: Random House. Orig. pub. Croom Helm, 1976.
- Einstadter, W.J. (1978) 'Robbery-Outlawry on the US Frontier, 1863-1890: A Re-examination', in J. Inciardi and A. Pottiger (eds), *Violence and American History*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Foucault, M. (1977) *Discipline and Punish*. London: Allen Lane.
- Freedland, J. (1995) 'The Death of Liberal America', *Guardian* 2, 31 January.
- Gibson, J.W. (1994) *Warrior Dream: Violence and Manhood in Post-Vietnam America*. New York: Hill and Wang.
- Gilmour, I. (1992) *Riot, Risings and Revolution: Governance and Violence in Eighteenth Century England*. London: Pimlico Press, Hutchinson.
- Gould, R.W. and Waldren, M.J. (1986) *London's Armed Police*. London: Arms and Armour Press.
- Greenwood, C. (1972) *Firearms Control: A Study of Armed Crime and Firearms Control in England and Wales*. London: Routledge.
- Griffiths, W.I. (1994) 'Putting Robbers Out of Business', *Criminal Justice Matters*, ISTD, No. 17, Autumn.
- Harding, R. (1979) 'Firearms Use in Crime', *Criminal Law Review*, 765-774.
- Harkavy, R.E. (1994) 'The Changing International System and the Arms Trade', in Harkavy, R. and Neuman, S. (eds) *The Arms Trade: Problems and Prospects in the Post-Cold War World*, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Sept, Vol. 535.
- Hay, D. (1975) 'Poaching and the Game Laws on Cannock Chase', in D. Hay et al. (eds), *Albion's Fatal Tree: Crime and Society in 18th Century England*. London: Allen Lane.
- Hayek, F. (1976) *The Mirage of Social Justice*. London: Routledge.
- Home Office (1973) *The Control of Firearms in Great Britain: A Consultative Document*. Green Paper, Cmnd. 5297, HMSO.
- Hellman, J. (1986) *American Myth and the Legacy of Vietnam*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Hoare, M.A. (1980) *The Pattern of Experience in the Use of Firearms by Criminals and the Police Response*. MSc. Thesis, Cranfield.
- Jacobs, J. and Sanders, A. (1986) 'Should Police Be Armed?', *New Society*, 11 July.
- Karp, A. (1994) 'The Rise of Black and Gray Markets', in Harkavy, R. and Neuman, S. (eds) *The Arms Trade: Problems and Prospects in the Post-Cold War World*, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Sept, Vol. 535.
- Keirnan, V.G. (1967) 'Foreign Mercenaries and Absolute Monarchy', in Aston (Ed.) *Crisis in Europe: 1560-1660*. New York: Anchor Books.

- Kiernan, V.G. (1988) *The Duel in European History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kennett, L. and Anderson, J.L. (1975) *The Gun in America: The Origins of a National Dilemma*. New York: Greenwood Press.
- Kidron, M. and Smith, D. (1983) *The War Atlas: Armed Conflict - Armed Peace*. London: Pan Books.
- Kleck, G. (1991) *Point Blank: Guns and Violence in America*. New York: Aldine De Gruyter.
- Kleck, G. (1995) 'Using Speculation to Meet Evidence: Reply to Alba and Messner', *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 11(4).
- Larson, E. (1994) *Fatal Passage*. New York: Crown Publishers.
- Letwin, W. (1983) 'The Case Against Equality', in Letwin, W. (ed), *Against Equality: Readings on Economic and Social Policy*. London: Macmillan.
- Little, C.B. and Sheffield, C.P. (1983) 'Frontiers and Criminal Justice: English Private Prosecution Societies and American Vigilantism in the 18th and 19th Centuries', *American Sociological Review*, 48, December: 796-808.
- Mann, M. (1986) *The Sources of Social Power, Vol. 1*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McCaghy C.H. and Cernkovitch, S.A. (1987) *Crime in American Society*. 2nd ed. New York: Macmillan.
- McDowell, D. and Loftin, C. (1983) 'Collective Security and the Demand for Legal Handguns', *American Journal of Sociology*, 88(6).
- Malcolm, J.L. (1994) *To Keep and Bear Arms: The Origins of an Anglo-American Right*. Harvard University Press.
- Mestrovic, S. (1993) *The Barbarian Temperament: Towards a Post-Modern Critical Theory*. London: Routledge.
- Morris, N. and Hawkins, G. (1970) *The Honest Politician's Guide to Crime Control*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Morrison, S. and O'Donnell, K. (1994) *Armed Robbery: A Study in London*. Occasional Paper 15. Oxford: University of Oxford, Centre for Criminological Research.
- Morgan, R. (1989) *The Demon Lover: On the Sexuality of Terrorism*. London: Mandarin Books.
- Murray, D.R. (1975) 'Handguns, Gun Control Laws and Firearm Violence', *Social Problems*, 23(1), October.
- National Commission On the Causes and Prevention of Violence (1969) *Final Report: To Establish Justice, To Insure Domestic Tranquility*. Washington DC: US Government Printing Office.
- Nozick, R. (1974) *Anarchy, State and Utopia*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Pearson, G. (1983) *Hooligan: A History of Respectable Fears*. London: Macmillan.
- Pick, D. (1993) *War Machine: The Rationalisation of Slaughter in the Modern Age*. Yale University Press.
- Raynor, R. (1992) *Los Angeles*. Cambridge: Granta.
- Sanders, W.B. (1994) *Gangbangs and Drive-bys: Grounded Culture and Juvenile Gang Violence*. New York: Aldine De Gruyter.
- Sherrill, R. (1973) *The Saturday Night Special: And Other Guns With Which Americans Won the West, Protected Bootleg Franchises, Slew Wildlife, Robbed Countless Banks, Shot Husbands Purposely and by Mistake, and Killed Presidents - Together with the Debate Over Continuing Same*. New York: Charterhouse.
- Shubert, A. (1980) 'Private Initiative in Law Enforcement', in Bailey, V. (ed.) *Policing and Punishment in 19th Century Britain*. London: Croom Helm.

- Silver, A. (1967) 'The Demand for Order in Civil Society', in Bordua D. (ed), *The Police, Six Sociological Essays*. New York:Wiley.
- Silverman, J. (1994) *Crack of Doom*. London: Headline Books, Hodder.
- Skogan, W.J. (1978) 'Weapon Use in Robbery', in J. Inciardi and A. Pottiger (eds), *Violence and American History*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Slotkin, R. (1992) *Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth Century America*. New York: Athaneum.
- Sweeney, J. (1994) 'Day of the Undead', *Observer Life Magazine*, 1 May.
- Tilly, C. (1989) 'Collective Violence in European Perspective', in T.R. Gurr (ed), *Violence in America, Vol. 2 Protest, Rebellion, Reform*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Thompson, E.P. (1975) *Whigs and Hunters: The Origin of the Black Act*. London: Allen Lane.
- Tonso, W.R. (1982) *Gun and Society: The Social and Existential Roots of the American Attachment to Firearms*. University Press of America.
- Vergara, J.L. (1994a) 'Fortress Mentality', *New Statesman and Society*, February.
- Vergara, J.L. (1994b) 'American Graffiti', *New Statesman and Society*, 18 November.
- Vergara, J.L. (1995) *The New American Ghetto*. New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.
- Waddington, P.J. (1988) *Arming an Unarmed Police: Policy and Practice in the Metropolitan Police*. London: The Police Foundation.
- Waddington, P. (1991) *The Strong Arm of the Law*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Waldren, M. (1994) 'Arming the Police: An Historical Appraisal', *Criminal Justice Matters*, ISTD, No. 17, Autumn.
- Weiss, R. (1978) 'The Emergence and Transformation of Private Detective Industrial Policing in the United States, 1850-1940', *Crime and Social Justice*, No. 9, Spring/Summer.
- Williams, J.S. and McGrath, J.H (1978) 'A Social Profile of Urban Gun Owners', in J. Inciardi and A. Pottiger (eds), *Violence and American History*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Wright, J.D. and Marston, L.L. (1975) 'The Ownership of the Means of Destruction: Weapons in the United States', *Social Problems*, 23(1).
- Wright, J.D., Rossi, P.H. and Daly, K. (1983) *Under the Gun: Weapons, Crime and Violence in America*. New York: Aldine.
- Zimring, F.E. (1985) 'Violence and Firearms Policy', in L. Curtis (ed), *American Violence and Public Policy*. Yale University Press.
- Zimring, F.E. (1991) 'Firearms, Violence and Public Policy', *Scientific American*, November.
-

About the author

[Peter Squires](#) lectures in criminology and allied topics in the Department of Community Studies at the University of Brighton. His research interests include crime prevention, community safety, CCTV, firearms, crime and gun control, and citizenship and social security.

Copyright information

Copyright this article © Peter Squires 1998.
Copyright this volume © The British Society of Criminology 1998.
Pages of the journal may be downloaded, read, and printed. No material should be altered, reposted, distributed or sold without permission. Further enquiries should be made to the British Society of Criminology.