

## The use of Guns for Protection Against Criminals

The use of guns for protection against criminals warrants detailed analysis. It is argued that guns deter crime, but my reading of that literature is that such advocates “cherry-pick” data to prove their contentions. Even if I am wrong re deterrence here, the fact is that a gun is not, in general, an effective crime deterrent, given current laws re citizen responsibility in gun use. Professionals, including police and even our military in combat, are subject to extensive post-action review, not only by serious objective experts, but also by the plaintiff’s bar. Consequently, many professionals are loath to use their weapons even when the situation clearly warrants such use.

Moreover, a gun is a tool. As is true of any tool, effective use of a gun requires constant practice and maintenance. Professionals recommend firing at least 100 rounds/month under supervised conditions, and adequate maintenance after each session (more than a few criminals and others are derisively called “Lefty” after firing a gun not adequately maintained). And the fact is that very few amateur gun users can accurately hit a targeted person in the heat of the moment. Most are more likely to miss—but still the bullet will travel, perhaps damaging another person(s) and/or property. And firing the gun will provoke investigation resulting in possible criminal and/or civil lawsuits.

Yet people should be able to defend themselves. Thinking “[Out-Of-The Box \[TOOTB\]](#)” here, consider the proposal presented in the following Attachment: to train and license citizens willing to bear/use non-lethal weapons? If a significant percentage of the population were to go “armed” in this way, publicly so identify themselves, and in appropriate circumstances actually use these weapons, criminals would be deterred. Mistakes in use would not be lethal or seriously wounding, and active citizen participation in protecting society would be increased.