



Tactical Talk

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“Courage is Resistance to fear, mastery of fear—not absence of fear.”

—Mark Twain

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“You’re black. You cannot eat in this restaurant.”

“No, you are gay. You may not enter this establishment.”

“Sorry, Jews are not allowed here.”

How long do you think a restaurant would be allowed to operate if its official policy was one of racial, gender, or religious discrimination?

“No. You have chosen to obtain a carry permit and be responsible for your family’s safety. You are not welcome here.” What’s the difference?

There are now 45 out of 50 states in the U.S. which have handgun carry permits. Only a tiny handful of those states, including Tennessee, prohibit carry by licensed individuals in restaurants that serve liquor. The vast majority of the states, including both Arkansas and Mississippi, recognize the fundamental difference between a “bar” and a “restaurant”, and only prohibit carry in bars. How on earth does the fact that someone several tables away from me is having a glass of wine with his dinner strip me of my right to defend my life on that restaurant’s parking lot? It does not. By the way, the parking areas outside your favorite restaurants are among the most likely places for you to be robbed, car-jacked, or otherwise assaulted.

Once again there is a bill in the Tennessee General Assembly to remedy this injustice. Under this bill, it would *still* be illegal to drink and carry a pistol, as it should be. The main stumbling block to getting this bill passed has been opposition from the Tennessee Restaurant Association. Any restaurant owner could still post his individual restaurant as a gun free zone, but it would be up to him to take the heat for doing so. I urge you to contact your state representatives and get this matter addressed this session, before they adjourn for the year.



LEVEL III HANDGUN CLASS

Saturday—Sunday, February 21-22, 2004

9:00 a.m. -1:00 p.m.

Lessons from Real Life

A few days ago I had a visit from one of our students who was involved in a fatal shooting last year. To protect his privacy, we'll go by his first initial, K. K is doing well, and has adjusted well after his experience. He shared some thoughts that may be helpful to you.

K was parked at a truck stop in Mississippi, pumping gas for his vehicle. Another man pulled up at an adjacent pump, and exited his vehicle. For no apparent reason, the man approached K and began verbally abusing him. K told the man he wanted no trouble, just go away. The man went back to his vehicle and got a sap (a weighted flexible club) and struck K with it. As K turned away from the blow, he was hit again on the back of the head. This blow dropped him to his knees, with the man standing behind him. K drew his Beretta 8045 from under his shirt, and fired three rounds behind him, holding the gun around his side. At that point the assailant ran off across the parking lot, collapsing some distance away. Although he had a gash on the back of his head, K had the presence of mind to ask a nearby witness to wait for police, and tell someone else to call the police. When the police arrived, K had his gun holstered and his ID and permit in hand. The assailant died, and the Grand Jury returned a No True Bill against K, ruling the death a justifiable homicide. Here are some important points:

1. You can't pick the time or place. K was minding his own business pumping gas when attacked. Fortunately, he had his gun on.
2. Violence can be completely random and unprovoked. The dead suspect turned out to have a long history of violent assaults against others. He apparently was mentally unstable.
3. Don't expect "Hollywood" reactions if you are forced to shoot someone. After three rounds of .45 Hydra-Shok to the chest, this attacker ran 25 yards before collapsing face up in the parking lot.
4. Think about these issues in advance and have a plan. K was able to remain calm and avoid danger from responding police, who may only know there has been a shooting and that an armed "suspect" is on the scene. You must keep your wits.
5. Don't let fear of the criminal justice system or of lawsuits paralyze you into inaction. One more blow of that sap may have ended K's life. At least in our part of the country, legitimate self defense is still a basic human right.



Rangemaster Upcoming Courses

DEFENSIVE KNIFE

Steve Moses, of Dallas, Texas, will be returning to Rangemaster on Saturday, **April 17th**, for a one day Defensive Knife Course. Steve taught this course at Rangemaster last year, and the students were very pleased with the training. Steve is a Texas peace officer who has studied the martial arts and knife fighting extensively, as well as being a very talented firearms instructor. This course has very little classroom training. Most of the day will be spent sparring, learning simple but highly effective techniques for deploying a folding knife in self defense. There are very few times/places when you can't have a pocket knife, and Steve can teach you how to use one effectively in self defense. Cost is only **\$150.00**.

COMBATIVE PISTOL

This is our very intensive two-day handgun course. Details can be seen at **Rangemaster.com**. Some dates/places coming soon:

March 6-7, Tac Pro Shooting Center near Dallas, Texas

March 27-28, South River Gun Club near Atlanta, Georgia

April 17-18, FOP Range Birmingham, Alabama

May 1-2, Shootrite Academy Huntsville, Alabama

June 26-27, Palo Alto Gun Club near Baton Rouge, Louisiana

COMMENTARY

Skeptic Gives Guns a Shot

The firearms issue looks a little different from behind the trigger.

By Diana Wagman

Guns are bad. All my life, it's been that simple. At my son's preschool, if a child pointed a banana and said "bang," he was admonished to "use the banana in a happier way." As far as I was concerned, the 2nd Amendment gave us the right to protect ourselves against invading armies, not the right to buy a gun and keep it under our beds.

So what would make someone like me change my mind? I met this gun enthusiast. As research for my new novel, I asked him many questions, all the while voicing my disgust. My character might use a gun, but I never would. "Come to the range," the gun guy said. "I'll teach you to shoot."

I expected a dungeon full of men missing teeth and wearing T-shirts decorated with Confederate flags. Instead, I found a sunny, wood-paneled lobby and guys who looked like lawyers on their lunch break.

The man behind the counter was as pleasant as a grandfather from Central Casting. "What would it take for me to buy a gun?" I asked him. He explained the California laws, some of the most stringent in the country. I would have to wait 10 days — the "cooling off" period. There would be federal and local background checks. I'd have to take a safety class. I'd have to buy a childproof lock. I couldn't purchase an assault weapon. I couldn't buy more than one handgun per month. Of course, he said, if I didn't want to wait, I could drive 10 minutes and buy an Uzi illegally out of someone's car.

When my guide arrived, he gave me a choice of handguns. I went with the .357 magnum — I recognized the name — and a traditional target with a red bull's-eye. I couldn't imagine shooting at one shaped like a man.

First lesson, respect your firearm. I got a little talk about how powerful it was. I learned how to hold it. To load it. And finally to fire it. It was terrifying. The gun was so heavy, I couldn't keep it steady. It took both index fingers to pull the trigger, and then there was a flash of flame, a loud crack, a substantial kick. It was much harder than it looked in the movies. I occasionally hit the target, but I also managed to obliterate the metal hanger that held it.

I have to admit: I loved it. I had a fantastic time. The power of that gun for me, a 5-foot, 3-inch woman, was immediately, shockingly seductive. The thrill when I hit the bull's-eye (once) was as great as making a perfect tennis shot. I felt like I was playing a careful game of darts in a small, alcohol-free bar.

Later, I was surprised to discover that some of my closest friends owned guns. People I never would have suspected confessed that their guns made them feel protected. Still, most of my friends thought handguns should be outlawed, completely, in every circumstance.

I no longer was so sure. I did some research — there are countless testimonials about guns saving someone's life. I looked into shooting as a sport. I spoke to a woman who had found a wounded deer and shot it, ending its agony. I changed my mind: Guns aren't bad.

Which leaves gun violence. At least in California, we don't need more laws — we just need to enforce the ones we have. What else?

The answer has to be education: teaching people to deal with anger, to solve problems, offering them brighter futures, but also Gun 101. Maybe if teenagers were given computer-generated pictures of their own bodies, post-gunshot wounds, it would help them understand the enormity of firing a weapon. Maybe if everyone spent an afternoon at the shooting range, forced to follow the rules, they would respect the power of a gun.

I confess, I don't know exactly how to solve the problem, but at least now I know I don't know. Firing guns as a sport is great fun. Having a gun because it makes you feel safer seems understandable. Changing the way people behave? If you thought gun control was a distant dream ... it could take centuries.

Meanwhile, my 15-year-old has asked me to take him shooting. And I've agreed.

Novelist and screenwriter Diana Wagman is the author of "Bump" (Carroll & Graf, 2003) and "Skin Deep" (University of Mississippi Press reprint, 2001).

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Annual Ronald McDonald House Charity Machinegun Shoot

Each February, as part of Rock 103's Radiothon to raise money for the Ronald McDonald House, we conduct an evening of fun and excitement here at Rangemaster. The House provides a supportive, caring, family environment for parents who are struggling to cope with the life-threatening catastrophic illness of their child at St. Jude's Hospital nearby. This allows the families to stay with their kids as they undergo treatment, and it's one of the most worthwhile causes you can support.

On Friday night, February 20th, from 6:00 to 10:00 PM, we'll host our annual machinegun shoot. We will have a variety of exotic weapons on hand, including submachineguns, assault rifles, an elephant gun, and other rare and exotic guns. In return for a small donation, you can actually fire these guns, that otherwise you'll only see in the movies. We guarantee you'll have a great time, while helping those who really need your help. Last year we raised \$11,000 in one evening, and we hope to surpass that this year. Come on out!

*Cartoon
of the
Month*

