# Case neg – amit’s aff

## 1 – CP

#### CP Text: The 50 States of the United States will implement Operation Ceasefire, an inner city gun violence initiative that initiates dialogue between high-risk gun offenders and their community leaders, provides financial and social support for those willing to reform, and cracks down on any violence afterwards.

#### Solves the aff – it’s a community-centric method that has empirically decreased local gun violence.

**Beckett ’15:** [Lois Beckett, ProPublica reporter covering politics, big data and information privacy issues, “How the Gun Control Debate Ignores Black Lives”, ProPublica, 2015]

These insights led a group of Boston police, black ministers and academics to try a new approach in 1996. Since group dynamics were driving the violence, they decided to hold the groups accountable. The plan was simple: Identify the small groups of young men most likely to shoot or be shot. Call them in to meet face-to-face with police brass, former gang members, clergy and social workers. Explain to the invitees that they were at high risk of dying. Promise an immediate crackdown on every member of the next group that put a body on the ground — and immediate assistance for everyone who wanted help turning their lives around. Then follow up on those promises. The results of Operation Ceasefire were dramatic. Soon after Boston held its first meeting — known as a call-in — on May 15, 1996, homicides of young men plummeted along with reports of shots fired. The Rev. Jeff Brown, one of the ministers who worked on the project, remembers people were outside more, barbecuing in the park. At Halloween, kids were able to trick-or-treat on the streets again. The team behind the effort quickly started getting calls from other cities — even other countries — about how to replicate what became known as the Boston Miracle. With the support of the Justice Department under Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush, many cities tried the strategy and some got dramatic results. Stockton saw a [42 percent reduction](https://www.crimesolutions.gov/ProgramDetails.aspx?ID=51) in monthly gun homicides over several years. Indianapolis experienced a [34 percent drop](https://www.crimesolutions.gov/ProgramDetails.aspx?ID=65) in monthly homicides. Lowell, Massachusetts, saw gun assaults fall by [44 percent](http://www.campbellcollaboration.org/lib/project/96/). A 2012 review of the existing research evidence found that [seven of eight cities](http://www.campbellcollaboration.org/lib/project/96/) that had rigorously implemented Ceasefire and similar strategies had seen reductions in violence. Other cities have tried Ceasefire, or half-tried it, and then abandoned it. The strategy requires resources, political buy-in, and ongoing trust between unlikely partners. The effort in Boston had “black and Latin and Cape Verdean clergy working with white Irish Catholic cops in a city that had a history of race relations leading up to that point that was abysmal,” Brown said. “It was really a shift in behavior, in the way we did business.”

#### Gun bans won’t work in urban centers because the need to eat outweighs every penalty – only Ceasefire has a proven track record.

**Constantino ’15:** [Bobby Constantino, adjunct professor of criminal justice at St Joseph's College, “We’ve Turned Our Back on a Proven Method to Curtail Gun Violence”, The Guardian, 2015]

Despite these outcomes, Boston police [discontinued](http://scholar.harvard.edu/files/cwinship/files/losing_faith.pdf?m=1360039491) the Ceasefire meetings in January 2000. Homicides [skyrocketed](http://blackstonian.com/20yearhomicidereport/monthyear.html) to 69 in 2001, and up to 75 in 2005. When it became clear that our police stings and aggressive crackdowns – max bail, max jail was our motto in court – weren’t working, I quit my job as a prosecutor in the Roxbury neighborhood of Boston and started a [program](http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/06/06/paying-for-their-crimes-again/) that was modeled after Ceasefire across the street from the courthouse. The guys in my program – mostly former gang members – told us that, when they carried guns, it was because they were hustling for money and in constant danger of getting robbed or shot. We could’ve passed laws with 100-year minimums, outlawed every type of gun (and Boston [tried](https://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/2013/02/04/gun-crimes-increase-massachusetts-despite-tough-gun-laws/XjlDQLZlUDvsf3KS8PqyGK/story.html)), but it wouldn’t have made the slightest difference to our participants because no penalty outweighed the need to eat, pay rent and live. So we tried a different approach. We helped young men with arrest records pay their court debts, which researchers had [determined](https://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/legacy/publications/Criminal%20Justice%20Debt%20Background%20for%20web.pdf) were a major impediment to rehabilitation, and we helped them apply for jobs. In no time most of them were working in the mainstream economy. Two weeks after the New York Times ran the[story](http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/06/06/paying-for-their-crimes-again/?_r=0) that featured one of our participants, Carlos, his neighborhood was [raided](http://www.suffolkdistrictattorney.com/boston-police-suffolk-prosecutors-announce-%E2%80%9Coperation-tanglewood%E2%80%9D/) in a drug sting and the police made 21 arrests. Carlos wasn’t one of them. He’d been working and steering clear of illicit income for months. Recently another one of our guys, “Suade”, messaged on Facebook that he had just graduated from college. “3s to The Clapham Set”, he wrote, 3s meaning respect for our program because it had helped him land a job. Sadly, TCS went the way of Ceasefire, and it wasn’t only Boston that axed such programs. Ceasefire’s funding was [cut](http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2007-09-21/news/0709210238_1_anti-violence-budget-veto-cuts) in Chicago in 2007, and [again](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/chicago-drops-ceasefire-from-anti-violence-strategy/) in 2013. In Baltimore this May, after the city had its most violent [month](http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/maryland/crime/blog/bal-may-2015-baltimores-deadliest-month-in-15-years-sg-storygallery.html)since the 1970s, Leana Wen, the city’s health commissioner, had to write a [plea](http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/opinion/oped/bs-ed-wen-safe-streets-20150606-story.html) begging the public for funding. Incredibly, though shootings citywide were up 83%, and funding cuts and suspension of staff and services were looming, in three of the gun hotspots where Ceasefire was operating in Baltimore you would have been forgiven for thinking there was no gun violence outbreak at all. According to the Baltimore City health department [website](http://health.baltimorecity.gov/safestreets), Mondawmin hadn’t had a gun homicide in over a year. Cherry Hill had not one shooting in the month of May. Same in Park Hill. It’s hard to put a finger on why cities like Baltimore nevertheless [spend](http://www.wbaltv.com/news/maryland/i-team/baltimore-crime-costs-taxpayers-more-than-1b-a-year/24416504) $400m on police, $5.7m on police[misconduct](http://data.baltimoresun.com/news/police-settlements/), and [$1.5m](http://policeandcommunity.org/pdfs/Archives/2012/Archives-Alternatives/2012_EffectsBaltimoreSafeSt_Webster.pdf) on Ceasefire when the data shows that shootings were up 83% in police-only hotspot areas and nonexistent in Ceasefire areas. In 2014 in Boston, when shootings jumped 27%, the city [allocated](http://www.cityofboston.gov/budget/fy14.asp) a similar ratio, spending $300m on police salaries and $1m on its own equivalent of Ceasefire employees, which the city today calls streetworkers. A concerted push to scale Safe Streets in Baltimore and Ceasefire in Chicago alone could save as many as 800 American lives annually. Over 20 years, that’s more than 16,000 lives in just two cities. If we are to believe the true purpose of gun control advocacy is to end gun violence and save lives, then gun control advocates must get serious about embracing what the evidence shows is the best way to do this. Not only will lobbying cities and states to fully fund and scale Ceasefire-like programs save thousands of lives, it will also be much easier than trying to get background checks, assault weapon bans and other regulations past the NRA and through Congress. Refusing to save so many lives robs the gun control movement of its credibility and sends a powerful message that some American lives matter, and others don’t.

This takes-out your black nihilism framing – black men don’t own guns because they see no value in their life – but because it’s the only way to preserve that value.

## 2 - Elections DA

#### Hillary wins the election against trump – but there’s cause for concern.

Heer 4/27: (Jeet Heer, senior editor at the New Republic who has published in a wide array of journals including The New Yorker, The Paris Review, and VQR, “Why Hillary Clinton Should Fear Donald Trump.” New Republic. April 27, 2016//FT)

With Hillary Clinton’s strong performance on Tuesday night, the Democratic primaries are effectively over. Barring an unforeseen catastrophe, Clinton will be the Democratic nominee. And it’s increasingly likely that her opponent will be Donald Trump, who won a clean sweep of five states on Tuesday and only seems to be getting stronger. Both parties must now gear themselves for a Clinton-Trump match-up in the fall. Clinton indicated as much in her victory speech last night. As in earlier speeches, she made a play of Trump’s name and his penchant for racism, declaring, “Love trumps hate.” This slogan is an early clue as to how Clinton will frame the election, presenting herself as an inclusive advocate of national unity and Trump as an avatar of prejudice and divisiveness. Yet such an election poses unique problems that go beyond normal politics, and Clinton’s team may not yet appreciate how difficult this fight will be. If winning the presidential election were all that mattered, Trump would be Clinton’s dream opponent. The Democratic front-runner struggles with poor approval ratings—55.6 percent unfavorable, according to Huffington Post’s aggregation of the polls—which means she needs to compete against someone who is even less popular than her. Trump fits that bill handsomely, standing at 63.6 percent unfavorability. Furthermore, Trump’s racism and misogyny are likely to motivate the very voters that Clinton most needs to attract: people of color, single women, and young people. And not surprisingly, in head-to-head polls, Clinton enjoys a hefty lead over Trump, even as she trails behind the less-polarizing John Kasich and enjoys a significantly smaller lead (of roughly 5 percentage points) over Ted Cruz.

#### The AFF is political suicide – a gun costs her the presidency

Scher 15: (Bill Scher. “Will Any Presidential Candidate Support Banning Handguns?” CommonDreams. October 03, 2015.)

Politicians generally avoid proposing handgun bans because the position doesn’t fit into the frame of exempting “responsible gun owners” from new regulations. No one needs an assault rifle to hunt or to protect themselves. But plenty of Americans keep handguns thinking that it will protect them from harm. Politicians are loathe to advocate that the government “take their guns away.” However, the reality is, as physicist David Robert Grimes put it, “actually owning and using a firearm hugely increases the risk of being shot.” Of course, this is a political impossibility for the foreseeable future. The current Republican Congress won’t even pass an expansion of background checks, and a previous Republican Congress allowed the Clinton-era assault weapons ban to expire. A handgun ban also could run afoul of the Supreme Court, as it is currently constituted. But will any presidential candidate be willing to push the envelope, shake up the debate, and put a handgun ban on the table? It’s unlikely to be Sen. Bernie Sanders. Gun control is pretty much the only area where Sanders, long-time representative of rural hunting state, could be classified as a moderate. He opposed background checks in 1993, though supported them in 2013. He once supported a law protecting gun manufacturers from lawsuits, but he also voted for the assault weapons ban and supports closing the so-called gun show loophole. His rhetoric on the subject involves a bit of triangulation, “I think that urban America has got to respect what rural America is about, where 99 percent of the people in my state who hunt are law abiding people.” It’s unlikely to be Hillary Clinton. While she is stressing gun control in her campaign — a rare opportunity for her to get to Bernie’s left — she is a pragmatist at heart. Democrats for years have been careful to avoid sounding like “gun grabbers,” skirting the gun control issue so they can be competitive in states with high gun ownership like Colorado, Iowa and Nevada. In fact, if Democrats had not pursued this strategy, arguably Barack Obama never would have become president. For Clinton to push the issue now is shift left from where Obama was rhetorically in 2008 and 2012. But what’s on the table are provisions like “universal background checks, cracking down on illegal gun traffickers, and keeping guns out of the hands of domestic abusers and stalkers.” A handgun ban is not in the cards. But what about former Gov. Martin O’Malley? He too is pushing gun control hard, laying out a multi-pronged strategy to reduce gun violence, including universal background checks and a national gun registry. (An O’Malley Super PAC even ran a negative ad against Sanders regarding guns.) Yet he hasn’t gone as far as banning handguns. O’Malley, languishing near zero percent in the polls, is a candidate in need of a breakout issue, one that would animate base voters and distinguish himself from the pack. Merely proposing a handgun ban certainly wouldn’t make it become law anytime soon. But it would refocus the debate on the actual source of most of our senseless gun deaths.

#### Consistent with path trends with Gun Control.

Antle 12/3 (W. James, staff @ Washington Examiner, “Democrats aren't afraid to be anti-gun anymore”, http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/democrats-arent-afraid-to-be-anti-gun-anymore/article/2577508)

Democrats reacted swiftly and angrily to the mass shooting in San Bernardino, Calif. All three Democratic presidential candidates weighed in, as did most of the party's congressional leadership. Anger is an understandable reaction to learning that innocents have been gunned down. So is fear. But Democrats from President Obama and Hillary Clinton to Nancy Pelosi and Harry Reid weren't afraid of renewing calls for gun control when they renewed those calls on Wednesday. That wouldn't always have been the case. No, the debate over guns never ended and liberal Democrats were always more likely to call for stricter laws in safe Democratic districts in blueish areas with relatively few gun owners. Some Democratic leaders believed that gun control measures like the assault weapons ban, signed into law by President Bill Clinton, helped Republicans gain control of Congress. When the ban expired a decade later, Democrats tried to extend it didn't fight as hard as one might expect. It lapsed. Many Democrats also thought the primary campaign against Bill Bradley pushed 2000 presidential nominee Al Gore too far to the left on guns. The stance cost Gore Arkansas, West Virginia and his home state of Tennessee. If he had carried any one of those states, he would have won the presidency even without Florida's hanging chads. Former Gore national spokesman Doug Hattaway went so far as to say "there's not a potent pro-gun control constituency in national elections." The top progressive candidate for the 2004 Democratic presidential nomination was Howard Dean, who had tended to oppose gun control as governor of gun-friendly Vermont. Dean's campaign for the White House faltered, but he did become chairman of the Democratic National Committee. When Reid became the Senate Democratic leader, he was still regarded as a sometime ally of gun rights activists. The National Rifle Association reportedly contemplated a Reid endorsement as late as 2010. None of this stopped Reid from becoming the top Democrat in the Senate. In 2006 and 2008, even gun-control liberals like Chuck Schumer and Rahm Emanuel recruited pro-gun Democrats to run for Congress in districts where gun regulations were a political loser. Jim Webb, a relatively pro-gun Democrat, was the darling of the liberal netroots when he ran for Senate in Virginia. Democrats still prefer euphemisms like "commonsense gun safety laws" to the phrase "gun control," and like vague calls to "end gun violence" even better. Nevertheless, with each mass shooting event during the Obama administration, the party's politicians grow more assertive in their calls for firearms restrictions. Bernie Sanders hasn't gotten the same Vermont benefit of the doubt on guns as Dean. His occasional votes against gun control and brief alliance with the NRA during his first successful congressional race are significant barriers to his efforts to consolidate liberal support. Martin O'Malley appears to be running against the NRA more than Clinton. And Clinton has led the charge against guns. The new Democratic consensus appears to be that Republicans and the gun lobby are the only obstacles to a respite from tragedies like Sandy Hook and San Bernardino. Obama frequently describes theses shootings as a policy choice. The specific proposals Democrats generally endorse tend to be modest, but the repeated contentions that America's high rate of private gun ownership is what distinguishes it from other less violent industrialized democracies suggests more radical solutions. Countries like Australia that have passed more sweeping gun bans are often held up as examples the United States could or should follow. Gun control is the near-universal Democratic response to high-profile shootings. It is also likely to play a big role in the Democrats' response to an uptick in homicides in some cities. The debate is only partly about firearms policy. It's also a culture war issue. Obama was recorded talking about bitter people who cling to guns and religion. Liberals appear to hope that disarming largely law-abiding red-state gun owners (along with Sanders' progressive gun-toting constituents) will reduce the supply of guns in high-crime blue cities like Chicago, which already have tough gun laws on the books. For Democrats, the obvious political risk is that gun owners will mobilize and vote heavily Republican in the 2016 elections. This could produce an outcome in the presidential race similar to Gore's defeat. It could also hurt Democrats in down-ballot races, where they are already struggling.

#### GOP win causes extinction from warming.

Ferner 1-25 --Cites Noam Chomsky, MIT professor emeritus of linguistics Matt Ferner (national reporter). “Noam Chomsky Says GOP Is 'Literally A Serious Danger To Human Survival’.” Huffington Post. January 25th, 2016. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/noam-chomsky-gop\_us\_56a66febe4b0d8cc109aec78

Noam Chomsky, the noted radical and MIT professor emeritus, said the Republican Party has become so extreme in its rhetoric and policies that it poses a “serious danger to human survival.” “Today, the Republican Party has drifted off the rails,” Chomsky, a frequent critic of both parties, said in an interview Monday with The Huffington Post. “It’s become what the respected conservative political analysts Thomas Mann and Norman Ornstein call ‘a radical insurgency’ that has pretty much abandoned parliamentary politics.” Chomsky cited a 2013 article by Mann and Ornstein published in Daedalus, the journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, analyzing the polarization of the parties. The authors write that the GOP has become “ideologically extreme, scornful of facts and compromise, and dismissive of the legitimacy of its political opposition.” Chomsky said the GOP and its presidential candidates are “literally a serious danger to decent human survival” and cited Republicans' rejection of measures to deal with climate change, which he called a “looming environmental catastrophe.” All of the top Republican presidential candidates are either outright deniers, doubt its seriousness or insist no action should be taken -- “dooming our grandchildren,” Chomsky said. "I am not a believer," Donald Trump, the Republican presidential front-runner, said recently. "Unless somebody can prove something to me, I believe there’s weather." Trump isn’t alone. Although 97 percent of climate scientists insist climate change is real and caused by human actions, more than half of Republicans in Congress deny mankind has anything to do with global warming. "What they are saying is, let's destroy the world. Is that worth voting against? Yeah," Chomsky said in a recent interview with Mehdi Hasan on Al Jazeera English's "UpFront." The policies that the GOP presidential candidates and its representatives in Congress support, Chomsky argued, are in “abject service to private wealth and power,” despite “rhetorical posturing” of some, including House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-Wis.). GOP proposals would effectively raise taxes on lower-income Americans and reduce them for the wealthy. Chomsky advised 2016 voters to cast their ballots strategically. He said the U.S. is essentially “one-party” system -- a business party with factions called Republicans and Democrats. But, he said, there are small differences between the factions that can make a “huge difference in systems of enormous power” -- like that afforded to the president. “I’ve always counseled strategic voting, Chomsky said. "Meaning, in a swing state, or swing congressional district, or swing school board, if there is a significant enough difference to matter, vote for the better candidate -- or sometimes the least bad.” Chomsky said if he lived in a swing state, he’d vote for Democratic front-runner Hillary Clinton. By no means should this be viewed as an endorsement of Clinton. Chomsky has been a vocal Clinton critic, saying her presidency would resemble that of President Barack Obama, who Chomsky has condemned for using drone strikes to kill individuals the president deems worthy of execution. In an ideal world, Chomsky might vote for Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), who Chomsky has called an "honest and committed New Dealer" who has “the best policies,” despite some criticisms. Regardless of who wins the Democratic nomination, Chomsky told Al Jazeera he'd cast his general election vote "against the Republican candidate” because there may be dire consequences to a GOP victory. “The likely candidates are, in my opinion, extremely dangerous, at least if they mean anything like what they are saying,” Chomsky said. “I think it makes good sense to keep them far away from levers of power.”

#### Warming causes extinction

McCoy ’14: (Dr. David McCoy et al., MD, Centre for International Health and Development, University College London, “Climate Change and Human Survival,” BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL v. 348, 4—2—14, doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/bmj.g2510>, )

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has just published its report on the impacts of global warming. Building on its recent update of the physical science of global warming [1], the IPCC’s new report should leave the world in no doubt about the scale and immediacy of the threat to human survival, health, and well-being. The IPCC has already concluded that it is “virtually certain that human influence has warmed the global climate system” and that it is “extremely likely that more than half of the observed increase in global average surface temperature from 1951 to 2010” is anthropogenic [1]. Its new report outlines the future threats of further global warming: increased scarcity of food and fresh water; extreme weather events; rise in sea level; loss of biodiversity; areas becoming uninhabitable; and mass human migration, conflict and violence. Leaked drafts talk of hundreds of millions displaced in a little over 80 years. This month, the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) added its voice: “the well being of people of all nations [is] at risk.” [2] Such comments reaffirm the conclusions of the Lancet/UCL Commission: that climate change is “the greatest threat to human health of the 21st century.” [3] The changes seen so far—massive arctic ice loss and extreme weather events, for example—have resulted from an estimated average temperature rise of 0.89°C since 1901. Further changes will depend on how much we continue to heat the planet. The release of just another 275 gigatonnes of carbon dioxide would probably commit us to a temperature rise of at least 2°C—an amount that could be emitted in less than eight years. [4] “Business as usual” will increase carbon dioxide concentrations from the current level of 400 parts per million (ppm), which is a 40% increase from 280 ppm 150 years ago, to 936 ppm by 2100, with a 50:50 chance that this will deliver global mean temperature rises of more than 4°C. It is now widely understood that such a rise is “incompatible with an organised global community.” [5]. The IPCC warns of “tipping points” in the Earth’s system, which, if crossed, could lead to a catastrophic collapse of interlinked human and natural systems. The AAAS concludes that there is now a “real chance of abrupt, unpredictable and potentially irreversible changes with highly damaging impacts on people around the globe.” [2] And this week a report from the World Meteorological Office (WMO) confirmed that extreme weather events are accelerating. WMO secretary general Michel Jarraud said, “There is no standstill in global warming . . . The laws of physics are non-negotiable.” [6]

#### Disad turns case

#### A] GOP victory is likely to role-back progressive reforms like universal health care that help black communities– also can decide next supreme court justice which multiplies our impacts

#### B] Climate change disproportionately affects low-income families and people of color in America

Frosch et al [Rachel Morello-Frosch, Ph.D., MPH | Manuel Pastor, Ph.D. | James Sadd, Ph.D. | Seth B. Shonkoff, MPH. The Climate Gap: inequalities in How Climate Change Hurts americans & How to Close the Gap. Published by the USC Dornsife School, May 20009. https://dornsife.usc.edu/assets/sites/242/docs/The\_Climate\_Gap\_Full\_Report\_FINAL.pdf]

What we used to think was tomorrow’s climate crisis is here today. Heat waves, wildfires and floods are making headlines more often. What hasn’t made headlines—yet—is the climate gap: the disproportionate and unequal impact the climate crisis has on people of color and the poor. Unless something is done, the consequences of America’s climate crisis will harm all Americans—especially those who are least able to anticipate, cope with, resist and recover from the worst consequences. This analysis is of California, which in many ways is a microcosm of the entire United States. Climate change is an issue of great importance for human rights, public health, and social fairness because of its profound consequences overall and the very real danger that poor neighborhoods and people of color will suffer even worse harms and hazards than the rest of Americans. This “climate gap” is of special concern for California, home to one of the most ethnically and economically diverse populations in the country. The climate gap means that communities of color and the poor will suffer more during extreme heat waves. For instance, African Americans in Los Angeles are nearly twice as likely to die from a heat wave than other Los Angeles residents, and families living below the poverty line are unlikely to have access to air conditioning or cars that allow them to escape the heat. The climate gap means that communities of color and the poor will breathe even dirtier air. For example, five of the smoggiest cities in California also have the highest densities of people of color and low-income residents. These communities are projected to suffer from the largest increase in smog associated with climate change. The climate gap means that communities of color and the poor will pay more for basic necessities. Low-income and minority families already spend as much as 25 percent of their entire income on just food, electricity and water—much more than most Americans. The climate gap is likely to mean fewer job opportunities for communities of color and the poor. The climate crisis may dramatically reduce or shift job opportunities in sectors such as agriculture and tourism, which predominantly employ low-income Americans and people of color. This report—an analysis and synthesis of available data—explores disparities in the impacts of climate change and the abilities of different groups to adapt to it. It also offers concrete recommendations for closing the climate gap, starting with insuring that climate solutions don’t leave anyone behind.

## Case

### Framing

#### Consequences matter

#### A] Prefer SPECIFIC evidence over broad root cause explanations

PRICE ’98 (RICHARD PRICE is a former prof in the Department of Anthropology at Yale University. Later, he moved to Johns Hopkins University to found the Department of Anthropology, where he served three terms as chair. A decade of freelance teaching (University of Minnesota, Stanford University, Princeton University, University of Florida, Universidade Federal da Bahia), ensued. This article is co-authored with CHRISTIAN REUS-SMIT – Monash University – European Journal of International Relations Copyright © 1998 via SAGE Publications – http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/~courses/PoliticalScience/661B1/documents/PriceReusSmithCriticalInternatlTheoryConstructivism.pdf)

One of the central departures of critical international theory from positivism is the view that we cannot escape the interpretive moment. As George (1994: 24) argues, ‘the world is always an interpreted “thing”, and it is always interpreted in conditions of disagreement and conflict, to one degree or another’. For this reason, ‘there can be no common body of observational or tested data that we can turn to for a neutral, objective knowledge of the world. There can be no ultimate knowledge, for example, that actually corresponds to reality per se.’ This proposition has been endorsed wholeheartedly by constructivists, who are at pains to deny the possibility of making ‘Big-T’ Truth claims about the world and studiously avoid attributing such status to their findings. This having been said, after undertaking sustained empirical analyses of aspects of world politics constructivists do make ‘small-t’ truth claims about the subjects they have investigated. That is, they claim to have arrived at logical and empirically plausible interpretations of actions, events or processes, and they appeal to the weight of evidence to sustain such claims. While admitting that their claims are always contingent and partial interpretations of a complex world, Price (1995, 1997) claims that his genealogy provides the best account to date to make sense of anomalies surrounding the use of chemical weapons, and Reus-Smit (1997) claims that a culturalist perspective offers the best explanation of institutional differences between historical societies of states. Do such claims contradict the interpretive ethos of critical international theory? For two reasons, we argue that they do not. First, the interpretive ethos of critical international theory is driven, in large measure, by a normative rejection of totalizing discourses, of general theoretical frameworks that privilege certain perspectives over others. One searches constructivist scholarship in vain, though, for such discourses. With the possible exception of Wendt’s problematic flirtation with general systemic theory and professed commitment to ‘science’, constructivist research is at its best when and because it is question driven, with self-consciously contingent claims made specifically in relation to particular phenomena, at a particular time, based on particular evidence, and always open to alternative interpretations. Second, the rejection of totalizing discourses based on ‘big-T’ Truth claims does not foreclose the possibility, or even the inevitability, of making ‘small-t’ truth claims. In fact, we would argue that as soon as one observes and interacts in the world such claims are unavoidable, either as a person engaged in everyday life or as a scholar. As Nietzsche pointed out long ago, we cannot help putting forth truth claims about the world. The individual who does not cannot act, and the genuinely unhypocritical relativist who cannot struggles for something to say and write. In short, if constructivists are not advancing totalizing discourses, and if making ‘small-t’ truth claims is inevitable if one is to talk about how the world works, then it is no more likely that constructivism per se violates the interpretive ethos of critical international theory than does critical theory itself.

#### B] Intent and means-based frameworks reflect privilege and decenter oppressed voices

Utt ’13: Jamie Utt is a writer and a diversity and inclusion consultant and sexual violence prevention educator, “Intent vs. Impact: Why Your Intentions Don’t Really Matter,” July 30, 2013

Imagine for a moment that you’re standing with your friends in a park, enjoying a nice summer day. You don’t know me, but I walk right up to you holding a Frisbee. I wind up – and throw the disc right into your face. Understandably, you are indignant. Through a bloody nose, you use a few choice words to ask me what the hell I thought I was doing. And my response? “Oh, I didn’t mean to hit you! That was never my intent! I was simply trying to throw the Frisbee to my friend over there!” Visibly upset, you demand an apology. But I refuse. Or worse, I offer an apology that sounds like “I’m sorry your face got in the way of my Frisbee! I never intended to hit you.” Sound absurd? Sound infuriating enough to give me a well-deserved Frisbee upside the head? Yeah. So why is this same thing happening all of the time when it comes to the intersection of our identities and oppressions or privileges? **Intent v. Impact** From Paula Deen to Alec Baldwin to your annoying, bigoted uncle or friend, we hear it over and over again: “I never meant any harm…” “It was never my intent…” “I am not a racist…” “I am not a homophobe…” “I’m not a sexist…” **I cannot tell you how often I’ve seen people attempt to deflect criticism about their oppressive language or actions by making the conversation about their intent. At what point does the “intent” conversation stop mattering so that we can step back and look at impact? After all, in the end, what does the intent of our action really matter if our actions have the impact of furthering the marginalization or oppression of those around us?** In some ways, this is a simple lesson of relationships. If I say something that hurts my partner, it doesn’t much matter whether I intended the statement to mean something else – because my partner is hurting. I need to listen to how my language hurt my partner. I need to apologize. And then I need to reflect and empathize to the best of my ability so I don’t do it again. But **when we’re dealing with the ways in which our identities intersect with those around us – and, in turn, the ways our privileges and our experiences of marginalization and oppression intersect – this lesson becomes something much larger and more profound.** This becomes **a lesson of justice.** What we need to realize is that **when it comes to people’s lives and identities, the impact of our actions can be profound and wide-reaching. And that’s far more important than the question of our intent. We need to ask ourselves what might be or might have been the impact of our actions or words. And we need to step back and listen when we are being told that the impact of our actions is out of step with our intents** or our perceptions of self. Identity Privilege and Intent For people of identity privilege, this is where listening becomes vitally important, for **our privilege can often shield us from understanding the impact of our actions.** After all, as a person of privilege, **I can never fully understand the ways in which oppressive acts or language impact those around me**. What I surely can do is listen with every intent to understand, and I can work to change my behavior. Because **what we need to understand is that making the conversation about intent is inherently a privileged action.** The reason? **It ensures that you and your identity (and intent) stay at the center of any conversation and action while the impact of your action or words on those around you is marginalized.** So if someone ever tells you to “check your privilege,” what they may very well mean is: “**Stop centering your experience and identity in the conversation by making this about the intent of your actions instead of their impact**.” That is: Not everything is about you. “What They Did” vs. “What They Are” The incredible Ill Doctrine puts it well when he explains the difference between the “What They Did” conversation and the “What They Are” conversation, which you can watch here. In essence, the “intent” conversation is one about “what they are.” Because if someone intended their action to be hurtful and racist/sexist/transphobic/pickyourpoison, then they must inherently be racist/sexist/transphobic/pickyourpoison. On the other hand, **the “impact” conversation** is one about “what they did.” For you, it **takes the person who said or did the hurtful thing out of the center and places the person who was hurt in the center. It ensures that the conversation is about how “what they did” hurts other people and further marginalizes or oppresses people.** And it’s important for people to understand the difference. Just because you did something sexist doesn’t mean that you are sexist. Just because you said something racist doesn’t mean that you are racist. When your actions are called into question, it’s important to recognize that that’s all that is being called into question – your actions, not your overall character. Listen. Reflect. Apologize. Do Better. It doesn’t matter whether we, deep down, believe ourselves to be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_-ist or whether we intended our actions to be hurtful or \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_-ist. It.Doesn’t.Matter. If the impact of our actions is the furthering of oppression, then that’s all that matters. So we need to listen, reflect, apologize, and work to do better in the future. What does that look like? Well, to start, we can actually apologize. I don’t know about you, but I am sick of hearing the ““I am sorry your face got in the way of my Frisbee! I never intended to hit you” apologies. Whether it’s Paula Deen weeping on TV or Alec Baldwin asking us to simply trust that he’s not a “homophobe,” those are not apologies. That’s why I was incredibly inspired and relieved to see a major organization do it well when Kickstarter apologized and took full responsibility for their role in funding a creepy, rapey seduction guide. They apologized earnestly and accepted the role they played in something really terrible. hey pledged to never allow projects like this one to be funded in the future. And then they donated $25,000 to RAINN. At the interpersonal level, we can take a cue from Kickstarter. **When we are told that the impact of our action, inaction, or words is hurtful and furthers oppression, we can start by apologizing without any caveats. From there, we can spend the time to reflect in hopes of gaining at least some understanding (however marginal) of the harmful impact. And we can do our best to move forward by acting more accountably**.

#### C] Holistic review of evidence confirms change isn’t zero sum – proves blackness isn’t ontological

Leroy Clark, Professor of Law, Catholic University Law School, “A Critique of Professor Derrick A. Bell's Thesis of the Permanence of Racism and His Strategy of Confrontation”, 73 Denv. U.L. Rev. 23

Professor Bell treats the post-1960s claims of progress as an illusion: discrimination simply became more covert, but equally efficient. n69 The facts, however, viewed with a holistic perspective, largely refute this claim. n70¶ The most thorough analysis of black-American status since Gunnar Myrdal's An American Dilemma in 1944, is A Common Destiny--Blacks and American Society. n71 The report covers the period from 1940 through 1986, and is more comprehensive than the studies Professor Bell relied on in recent law review articles.¶ A Common Destiny answers Professor Bell's central question in Faces:¶ Contemporary views of the status of black-white relations in America vary widely. Perspectives range from optimism that the main problems have been solved, to the view that black progress is largely an illusion, to assessments that the nation is retrogressing and moving toward increased racial disparities. To some observers, the present situation is only another episode in a long history of recurring cycles of apparent improvement that are followed by new forms of dominance in changed contexts: the level of black status changes, it is said, but the one constant is blacks' continuing subordinate social position. To other observers, the opposite is correct: long-run progress is the dominant trend. n72¶ A Common Destiny, however, concludes that the overwhelming majority of black-Americans made substantial progress since 1940:¶ Over the 50-year span covered by this study, the social status of American blacks has on average improved dramatically, both in absolute terms and relative to whites. The growth of the economy and public policies promoting racial equality led to an erosion of segrega- tion and discrimination, making it possible for a substantial fraction of blacks to enter the mainstream of American life. n73¶ Just five decades ago, most black Americans could not work, live, shop, eat, seek entertainment, travel where they chose. Even a quarter century ago--100 years after the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863--most blacks were effectively denied the right to vote. . . . Today the situation is very different. n74¶ The Committee acknowledged that "the great gulf that existed between black and white Americans in 1939 . . . has not closed," because one-third of blacks "still live in households with incomes below the poverty line." n75 Yet the study reported that 92% of blacks lived below the poverty line in 1939. n76 A 60% drop in poverty is an astounding improvement, by any measure, and is an even faster movement out of poverty than that of the white public that was also suffering from the ravages of the economic depression of the 1930s. n77 Some reduction of black poverty occurred when blacks secured higher paying jobs in defense industries during World War II. But the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act brought a significant reduction in racial employment discrimination. By 1984, blacks had $ 9 billion more per year in real income, adjusted for inflation, than they would have had if they had remained arrayed throughout the occupational spectrum as they were before the Act. n78 A new black economic elite developed through movement into higher paying employment in the private sector and away from employment in government, the clergy, and civil rights organizations; this new elite should sustain their progress and finance opportunities for their young. n79¶ The number of black elected officials increased from a few dozen in 1940 to 6,800 by 1988, and the number of black public administrators went from 1% in 1940 to 8% in 1980. n80 No white elected official has openly supported racial segregation since Governor Wallace in the early 1960s, a testament, in part, to the substantial increases in black voter registration and voting, due to the Voting Rights Acts of 1957, 1960, and 1965. n81¶ One could also show decreases in racial segregation in education, housing, and other aspects of American life, coupled with the virtual disappearance of racial exclusion in public accommodations--all due to enforcement of the new legislation. It is true, racial discrimination has not been totally eradicated. n82 But, Peter F. Drucker summarizes:¶ In the fifty years since the Second World War the economic position of African-Americans in America has improved faster than that of any other group in American social history--or in the social history of any country. Three-fifths of America's blacks rose into middle class incomes; before the Second World War the figure was one twentieth. n83¶ I doubt that Professor Bell believes that racial discrimination should have totally disappeared. But what, then, accounts for Professor Bell's statements that "the civil rights gains, so hard won, are being steadily eroded"; that it has been "more than a decade of civil rights setbacks in the White House, and in the courts"; n84 and that the civil rights movement is "a movement now brought to a virtual halt"? n85¶ Professor Bell was not looking at the total sweep of black progress since the 1960s, but was dismayed by the hostility towards--or lack of support for--civil rights displayed during the twelve years of the Reagan and Bush administrations. n86 Ex-president Jimmy Carter appointed a record number of black attorneys to the federal courts. n87 Reagan and Bush returned to the old style, appointing few minorities and women to the federal bench. Further, their appointees often proved unsympathetic to the arguments of civil rights organizations. n88 Reagan and Bush were the only presidents who opposed passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and the only presidents who vetoed civil rights legislation in the 20th century. n89 They also used subtle, and sometimes not so subtle, "racial codes" to covertly organize whites to break the Democratic party's hold on the presidency, especially in the South. n90¶ Even given this executive branch hostility to civil rights, the Congress, the branch of government much more vulnerable to the electorate, consistently and successfully opposed or reversed actions that undermined civil rights. Congress amended and improved the Voting Rights Act in 1982. n91 Congress overrode the veto of one of the most popular presidents in modern times, Reagan, and passed the Civil Rights Restoration Act in 1986. n92 The enforcement machinery of the Fair Housing Act, prohibiting racial discrimination in the sale or rental of housing, was substantially improved by amendment in 1988. n93 A bill barring discrimination in employment and public accommodations for the disabled, a disproportionate number of which are blacks, passed in 1990. n94¶ The major "setbacks," to which Professor Bell refers, were several United States Supreme Court cases which limited the scope of statutes prohibiting discrimination in employment, or which created proof problems for plaintiffs. n95 Congress passed a bill in 1991 which reversed all of the adverse decisions by the Court. n96 This history of Congressional repudiation of executive and judicial hostility to civil rights and, indeed, the extension of civil rights to new areas, is not noted in either of Professor Bell's two books. n97¶ Why, if society is as irremediably racist as Professor Bell alleges, can Congress, which constantly sounds out the public, confidently pass this wide range of pro-civil rights legislation? The answer is that the overwhelming majority of white Americans underwent attitude changes in the last thirty years, generally relinquishing crude or unadulterated racial prejudice. A majority of whites no longer believe in the racial inferiority of blacks, and believe blacks should not be discriminated against in employment, schools, and access to public and private accommodations. n98 Professor Bell's books contain no mention of the extensive opinion poll data show[s]ing less racial prejudice. Indeed, his books, especially Confronting Authority, portray the white public as massively, and often incomprehensibly and stupidly, committed to racism.

### Black Determination

#### I will beat this aff with a single card—Blacks don’t like the plan, and in fact disfavor it at higher rates than whites

Johnson ’13 (Nicholas Johnson is professor of Law at Fordham Law School, “Firearms Policy and the Black Community: An Assessment of the Modern Orthodoxy,” Connecticut Law Review Vol. 45 No. 5 July 2013, <http://connecticutlawreview.org/files/2013/10/6-Johnson.pdf>) OS

Other studies focusing specifically on Black attitudes show that a significant cohort of Blacks favors prohibition or other strong limits on the criminal subculture but disfavor blanket prohibition that would impede self-defense by trustworthy people. A study by Brennan and Lizotte, found that Blacks disfavored gun bans at higher levels than whites, even though they favored measures like permits and registration at levels higher than whites. This comports again with the intuition that many people who fear of violence will want guns to protect themselves and also favor laws promising to keep guns from criminals. This is just a snapshot of the social science. I do not claim that it is dispositive. But it does confirm the intuition that Black criminality might drive Black demand for lawfully owned guns just as readily as it fuels support for the supply control policies of the modern orthodoxy. This suggests a diversity of attitudes about firearms policy that is underrepresented by Black political establishment and obscured by overwhelming Black allegiance to the Democratic Party.

#### This outweighs their evidence— It’s a holistic survey, not just of D.C —way more direct than any of their evidence could hope to be—it’s specific to blanket prohibitions on guns and not just gun control, etc.

#### Blacks cannot be forced to put their lives in the hands of white law – self-defense is a right.

Curry and Kelleher 15, Tommy J. Curry AandM prof and Max Kelleher “Robert F. Williams and Militant Civil Rights: The Legacy and Philosophy of Pre-emptive Self-Defense”, Radical Philosophy Review, 10 Mar 2015, FT

Contrary to the popular imagination, “When Robert F. Williams seriously questioned the concept of non-violence over a decade ago he was a lone voice with very little support. He posted this question during the early part of the Martin Luther King era that had started with the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955; the historic decision of the Supreme Court on school segregation announced that previous year had set in motion the possibility that Black Americans were now on the road to full citizenship. All of them did not indulge in this illusion, knowing that it would take more than court decisions to change their condition.”55 Black citizenship was illusory. As Williams said “To us there was no Constitution . . . the only thing left was the bullet.”56 Throughout Negroes with Guns, Williams describes the normalized violence and the death of Black people during the Civil Rights movement which inspired him to create a philosophy of armed resistance. Contrary to the popular ideas of our day, desegregation had failed. Throughout the 1950s and the early 1960s, Black Americans were being killed, brutally raped, and lynched. The moral plea of King did not singularly arrest the death of Black people. This demanded a response other than appealing to the murderers of Blacks and their courts and laws for justice. Williams recognized that white supremacy and the rule of law were inextricably woven together such that the supposed rights guaranteed to Blacks by the Constitution, and the then recent Brown v. Board of Education decision would always be denied. Negroes with Guns was written as a response to this violation and is rooted in the recognition that “In civilized society the law serves as a deterrent against lawless forces that would destroy the democratic process. But where there is a breakdown of the law, the individual citizen has a right to protect his person, his family, his home and his property. To me this is so simple and proper that it is self-evident.”57

### Solvency

#### The war on drugs is declining –sentencing reform and new state laws prove.

Engel ’14, (PAMELA ENGEL, reporter for Business Insider's politics section, covering domestic politics and foreign policy. She previously worked for the Associated Press, “The Decline Of The War On Drugs, In One Map,” Business Insider. Apr. 3, 2014//FT)

The U.S. has been gradually moving away from the war on drugs, which started in the '70s and has led to prisons overflowing with drug offenders on long sentences. A map from Pew Research Center (see right) shows how states have overwhelmingly been easing drug laws over the past few years, even in traditionally conservative areas. Easing drug laws includes lowering penalties for drug possession charges, shortening mandatory minimums, and providing alternatives to the traditional criminal justice system such as drug courts. Many states were forced to cut their budgets after the economic collapse in 2008, so legislators eased drug laws in part to cut prison costs. And lately, reforming drug policy has been a bipartisan effort. Attitudes of Americans have also shifted in recent years — in a Pew study, 67% of people said government should focus more on treating people who use illegal drugs, and only 26% said prosecution should be the focus. This differs drastically from 25 years ago, when Americans thought law enforcement should be tough on drug offenders and 73% of Americans favored a mandatory death penalty for "major drug traffickers. By many accounts, the war on drugs has been a failure. It has cost the U.S. more than $1 trillion and drugs are no less prevalent today than they were when the drug war started.

#### Criminalizing possession replaces the war on drugs with the war on guns.

Gourevitch ’15: (Alex Gourevitch, assistant professor of political science at Brown University. "Gun Control’s Racist Reality: The Liberal Argument against Giving Police More Power." 24 June 2015. FT)

The dead are buried, the murderer apprehended, and the shock has started to wear off. Now comes the public reaction to the massacre in Charleston. Soon after the shootings at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Catolina, the first black president of the United States offered some thoughts on Dylan Roof’s racist attack. First and foremost, President Obama said, recent events were about how “innocent people were killed in part because someone who wanted to inflict harm had no trouble getting their hand on a gun.” The killings were also about a “dark chapter in our history,” namely racial slavery and Jim Crow. Obama only suggested practical action regarding the first issue, namely gun control. He did not consider that such measures will make the persistence of the second problem even worse. It is perhaps counterintuitive to say so but gun control responses to mass killings – whether racially motivated or otherwise – are a deep mistake. The standard form of gun control means writing more criminal laws, creating new crimes, and therefore creating more criminals or more reasons for police to suspect people of crimes. More than that, it means creating yet more pretexts for a militarized police, full of racial and class prejudice, to overpolice. As multiple police killings of unarmed black men have reminded us, the police already operate with barely constrained force in poor, minority neighborhoods. From SWAT to stop-and-frisk to mass incarceration to parole monitoring, the police manage a panoply of programs that subject these populations to multiple layers of coercion and control. As a consequence, more than 7 million Americans are subject to some form of correctional control, an extremely disproportionate number of whom are poor and minority. While it is commonly assumed that the drug war is to blame for all this, work by scholars like Benjamin Levin and Jeff Fagan demonstrates that already existing gun control efforts also play an important role. One of the most notorious areas of policing, the NYPD’s stop-and-frisk program, was justified as a gun control rather than a drug war measure. In the name of preventing violence, hundreds of thousands of poor minorities are subject to searches without probable cause each year. Further, a range of Supreme Court-authorized exceptions to standard Fourth Amendment protections against illegal search and seizure derive from a concern with gun violence. This invasiveness is a necessary feature of criminalized gun possession. After all, policing guns is just like policing drugs. Like drugs, there are a vast number of guns. Possession is far more widespread than can possibly be policed so decisions have to be made about where to devote resources. Furthermore, since possession itself is the crime, the only way to police that crime is to shift from actual harm to identifying and preventing risks. As legal scholar Benjamin Levin argues in a forthcoming piece “Searching for guns – like searching for drugs – can easily become pretextual, a proxy for some general prediction of risk, danger, or lawlessness.” In other words, there must be selective enforcement, where enforcement includes invasive searches based on existing prejudices about who is and isn’t dangerous. For example, as research by Jeff Fagan and Garth Davies shows, in the late 1990s, the NYPD used suspected weapons violations to justify numerous stops, even though these stops resulted in fewer arrests than stops for other crimes. And when it comes to individualized assessments of who is dangerous and worthy of punishment, every study shows steep, and unfounded, bias. Michelle Alexander, quotes a former U.S. attorney in her recent sensation, “The New Jim Crow,” saying the following: “I had an [assistant U.S. attorney who] wanted to drop the gun charge against the defendant [in a case which] there were no extenuating circumstances. I asked, ‘Why do you want to drop the gun offense?’ And he said, ‘He’s a rural guy and grew up on a farm. The gun he had with him was a rifle. He’s a good ol’ boy, and all good ol’ boys have rifles, and it’s not like he was a gun-toting drug dealer.’ But he was a gun-toting drug dealer, exactly.” This isn’t just a point about conscious and unconscious biases towards poor minorities – biases that some imagine can be removed with proper training. No matter how neutral the laws are, their enforcement must remain unequal and unfair. That is because the policing involved would never be tolerated if they affected politically influential groups to the same degree. These policing practices persist because they are disproportionately directed against marginal populations. Once individuals find themselves arrested gun control reappears as a reason for increasing punishment. Gun possession can be used to enhance sentences for other crimes and even functions as a kind of double punishment when that possession becomes the reason for also tacking on an extra criminal charge. Gun charges are also a part of the excessive and racially unequal over-charging practices that not only contribute to rising incarceration rates but also ends force numerous individuals away from trial and into plea bargains. Poor Blacks and Latinos are easily intimidated by charge-happy prosecutors into accepting plea deals, meaning they never see their day in court. Some even end up admitting to crimes they did not commit just to avoid the possibility of more severe punishments. More criminal gun laws would only feed this deeply unjust system. There is an unrecognized gap between the justification for gun control and its most likely effect. There is no reason to expect fair enforcement of gun control laws, or even that they will mainly be used to someone prevent these massacres. That is because how our society polices depends not on the laws themselves but on how the police – and prosecutors and courts – decide to enforce the law. Especially given how many guns there are in the U.S., gun law enforcement will be selective. That is to say, they will be unfairly enforced, only deepening the injustices daily committed against poor minorities in the name of law and order.

#### Guns would be both imported and produced.

Kates 82 – bracketed for language Don B. Kates Jr (practices law with O'Brien and Hallisey in San Francisco), "Gun control versus gun prohibition," American Bar Association Journal, September 1982//FT)

Nor is there any reason to think that even a national prohibition could pre vent the development of a illegal black market sufficient to serve both criminals and ordinary citizens. If, for instance, handguns were smuggled into this\* country at the rate at which federal officials estimate marijuana is, more than 20 million guns of the size used to kill John Lennon could be imported illegally in any year. (There are only 60 million legally owned handguns at present.) Moreover, any competent machinist can build a revolver or automatic pistol from pot metal for a fraction of what even the cheapest commercially produced handgun costs. Can it be doubted that there would be thousands of "entrepreneurs" willing to build $15 junk .45s and .38s for a 500 per cent profit at illegal black market sale? Of course, this type of gun would not fire more than a few hundred rounds and would be accurate only at close range. But that is adequate for a buyer who wants a gun only for murder, robbery, or self-defense.

#### Outweighs and turns the case.

Thompson ’14: (Heather Ann Thompson. “Inner-City Violence in the Age of Mass Incarceration: Harsh criminal-justice policies have thrown America's poorest urban communities into chaos.” The Atlantic, Oct 30 2014//FT)

According to one well-respected scholar, "high rates of black crime" continue to exist despite declining crime rates nationally because African Americans live in highly segregated and deeply impoverished neighborhoods. Not only does his work suggest that both segregation and poverty breed violence but, more disturbingly, that the ways in which poor blacks decide collectively and individually to protect themselves seems only to "fuel the violence," and gives it "a self-perpetuating character." Segregation and poverty are indeed serious problems today, and too many of America’s poorest all-black and all-brown communities also suffer a level of violence that, if one disregards the horrific killing sprees in places like Columbine, Seattle, or Sandy Hook, is largely unknown in whiter, more affluent neighborhoods. Whereas the violent crime rate in the mostly black city of Detroit was 21.23 per 1,000 (15,011 violent crimes) in 2012, that same year the virtually all-white city of Grosse Point, Michigan nearby reported a rate of only 1.12 per 1,000 (6 violent crimes). Notwithstanding such seemingly damning statistics, though, we have all seriously misunderstood the origins of the ~~almost-paralyzing~~ violence that our most racially-segregated communities now experience and, as troublingly, we have seriously mischaracterized the nature of so much of the violence that the residents of these communities suffer. To start, locating today’s concentrated levels of gun violence in hyper-segregation and highly concentrated poverty is quite ahistorical. As any careful look at the past makes clear, neither of these social ills is new and, therefore, neither can adequately explain why it is only recently that so many children of color are being shot or killed in their own communities. Indeed, throughout the twentieth century, racially-segregated communities have been the norm. Everything from restrictive covenants to discriminatory federal housing policies ensured that throughout the postwar period, neighborhoods in cities such as Detroit or Chicago would be either all white or all non-white and, until now, none of these segregated spaces experienced sustained rates of violence so completely out of step with national trends. To suggest, as both scholars and the media have, that the violence experienced by all-black or all-brown neighborhoods today stems in large part from their residential isolation is problematic for other reasons as well. It leads some to suspect that if people of color simply spent more time with white people, lived next to them, and went to school with them, they would be less violent—they would perhaps learn better ways to resolve disputes and deal with stress and anger. Again, though, history belies this logic. White Americans also have a long history of violence—not only when asked to share residential space with African Americans or even to treat them as equals in schools or on the job, but also when nary a person of color is near. From the lynching of blacks in the Jim Crow era to the crimes committed against African Americans every time they tried to move onto a white block after World War I and World War II, ugly incidents of white violence were both regular and unremarkable. Even among those who look just like them, whites historically have engaged in a variety of violent behaviors that would make many shudder—from their propensity to engage in brutal duels and to “eye gouge” their fellow whites in the decades before the Civil War, to their involvement in mass shootings in more recent years. Just as hyper-segregation doesn’t explain the violence that so many have to endure today in America’s inner city communities while still raising children, attending church, and trying to make ends meet, neither does highly-concentrated poverty. Because of their exclusion from virtually every program and policy that helped eventually to build an American middle class, non-whites have always had far less wealth than whites. From the ability to maintain land ownership after the Civil War, to the virtual guarantee of welfare benefits such as Social Security and FHA loans during the New Deal, to preferential access to employment and housing in the postwar period, white communities have always had considerably more economic advantage than communities of color. And yet, no matter how poor they were, America’s most impoverished communities have never been plagued by the level of violence they are today. But if neither racial segregation nor the racial poverty gap can account for the degree to which poor communities of color are traumatized today, then what does? What is altogether new is the extent to which these communities are devastated by the working of our nation’s criminal justice system in general and by mass incarceration in particular. Today's rates of incarceration in America's poorest, blackest, and brownest neighborhoods are historically unprecedented. By 2001, one in six black men had been incarcerated and, by the close of 2013, black and Latino inmates comprised almost 60 percent of the nation’s federal and state prison population. The numbers of incarcerated black women are also stark. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, young black women ages 18 to 19 were almost five times more likely to be imprisoned than white women of the same age in 2010. When President Lyndon B. Johnson passed the Law Enforcement Assistance Act in 1965—legislation which, in turn, made possible the most aggressive war on crime this nation ever waged—he was reacting not to remarkable crime rates but to the civil rights upheaval that had erupted nationwide just the year before. This activism, he and other politicians believed, represented not participatory democracy in action, but instead a criminal element that would only grow more dangerous if not checked. Notably, the national policy embrace of targeted and more aggressive policing as well as highly punitive laws and sentences—the so-called “War on Crime” that led eventually to such catastrophic rates of imprisonment—predated the remarkable levels of violence that now impact poor communities of color so disproportionately. In fact, the U.S. homicide rate in 1965 was significantly lower than it had been in several previous moments in American history: 5.5 per 100,000 U.S. residents as compared, for example, with 9.7 per 100,000 in 1933. Importantly, though, whereas the violent crime rate was 200.2 per 100,000 U.S. residents in 1965, it more than tripled to a horrifying 684.6 per 100,000 by 1995. Though mass incarceration did not originate in extraordinarily high rates of violence, mass incarceration created the conditions in which violence would surely fester. The quadrupling of the incarceration rate in America since 1970 has had devastating collateral consequences. Already economically-fragile communities sank into depths of poverty unknown for generations, simply because anyone with a criminal record is forever “marked” as dangerous and thus rendered all but permanently unemployable. Also, with blacks incarcerated at six times and Latinos at three times the rate of whites by 2010, millions of children living in communities of color have effectively been orphaned. Worse yet, these kids often experience high rates of post-traumatic shock from having witnessed the often-brutal arrests of their parents and having been suddenly ripped from them. De-industrialization and suburbanization surely did their part to erode our nation’s black and brown neighborhoods, but staggering rates of incarceration is what literally emptied them out. As this Pew Center of the States graphic on Detroit shows, the overwhelmingly-black east side of the Motor City has been ravaged by the effects of targeted policing and mass incarceration in recent years with one in twenty-two adults there under some form of correctional control. In some neighborhoods, the rate is as high as one in 16. Such concentrated levels of imprisonment have torn at the social fabric of inner city neighborhoods in ways that even people who live there find hard to comprehend, let alone outsiders. As the research of criminologist Todd Clear makes clear, extraordinary levels of incarceration create the conditions for extraordinary levels of violence. But even mass incarceration does not, in itself, explain the particularly brutal nature of the violence that erupts today in, for example, the south side of Chicago. To explain that, we must look again carefully and critically at our nation’s criminal justice system. The level of gun violence in today's inner cities is the direct product of our criminal-justice policies—specifically, the decision to wage a brutal War on Drugs. When federal and state politicians such as New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller opted to criminalize addiction by passing unprecedentedly punitive possession laws rather than to treat it as a public health crisis, unwittingly or not, a high level of violence in poor communities of color was not only assured but was guaranteed to be particularly ugly. This new drug war created a brand-new market for illegal drugs—an underground marketplace that would be inherently dangerous and would necessarily be regulated by both guns and violence. Indeed, without the War on Drugs, the level of gun violence that plagues so many poor inner-city neighborhoods today simply would not exist. The last time we saw so much violence from the use of firearms was, notably, during Prohibition. “[As] underground profit margins surged, gang rivalries emerged, and criminal activity mounted [during Prohibition],” writes historian Abigail Perkiss, “the homicide rate across the nation rose 78 percent…[and] in Chicago alone, there were more than 400 gang-related murders a year.” As important as it is to rethink the origins of the violence that poor inner city residents still endure, we must also be careful even when using the term “violence,” particularly when seeking to explain “what seems to be wrong” with America’s most disadvantaged communities. A level of state violence is also employed daily in these communities that rarely gets mentioned and yet it is as brutal, and perhaps even more devastating, than the violence that is so often experienced as a result of the informal economy in now-illegal drugs. This is a violence that comes in the form of police harassment, surveillance, profiling, and even killings—the ugly realities of how law enforcement wages America’s War on Drugs. Today, young black men today are 21 times more likely than their white peers to be killed by the police and, according to a recent ProPublica report, black children have fared just as badly. Since 1980, a full 67 percent of the 151 teenagers and 66 percent of the 41 kids under 14 who have been killed by police were African American. Between 2010 and 2012 alone, police officers shot and killed fifteen teens running away from them; all but one of them black. This is the violence that undergirded the 4.4 million stop-and-frisks in New York City between 2004 and 2014. This is the violence that led to the deaths of black men and boys such as Kimani Gray, Amadou Diallo, Sean Bell, Oscar Grant, and Michael Brown. This is the violence that led to the deaths of black women and girls such as Rekia Boyd, Yvette Smith, and 7-year-old Aiyana Stanley-Jones. And this is the violence that has touched off months of protests in Ferguson, Missouri just as it also touched off nearly a decade of urban rebellions after 1964. A close look at the violence that today haunts America’s most impoverished and most segregated cities, in fact, fundamentally challenges conventional assumptions about perpetrators and victims. America’s black and brown people not only don’t have a monopoly on violence, but, in fact, a great deal of the violence being waged in their communities is perpetrated by those who are at least officially charged with protecting, not harming, them. As residents of Ferguson well know, for example, in the same month that Michael Brown was shot to death by a police officer, four other unarmed black men were also killed by members of law enforcement. Indeed, the true origins of today’s high rates of violence in America’s most highly segregated, most deeply impoverished, and blackest and brownest neighborhoods—whoever perpetrates it—are located well outside of these same communities. Simply put, America’s poorest people of color had no seat the policy table where mass incarceration was made. But though they did not create the policies that led to so much community and state violence in inner cities today, they nevertheless now suffer from them in unimaginable ways.

### Substitution

#### Substitution effect – handgun ban would drastically increase homicides.

Kopel: Kopel, David B. Research Director, Independence Institute. “Peril or Protection: The Risks and Benefits of Handgun Prohibition” Saint Louis University Public Law Review, Volume 12. 1993. FT

If handguns were somehow removed from the hands of malfeasants, would the death toll actually increase? Some gun misusers would switch to knives (not much less deadly than small handguns), while others would switch to rifles and shotguns (much more likely to kill than handguns). If enough misusers switched from handguns to long guns, the death toll might therefore increase, or so the "substitution argument" goes. Dixon confronts the substitution argument carefully, and provides one of the most comprehensive critiques of substitution theory ever offered by a handgun prohibitionist. \*327 Dixon is right to take the substitution argument seriously. While handgun wounds are usually survivable, especially if the victim gets medical attention quickly, shotgun blasts at close range are much more likely to be fatal. The shotgun fires a large slug, or from six to more than sixty pellets, with one trigger squeeze. A single shotgun pellet, because it may be of a diameter equal to a small handgun bullet, can inflict nearly as much damage as a small handgun bullet. [177] Wound ballistics and firearms experts concur that at short range, a shotgun is by far the deadliest weapon. [178] Anti-prohibition writers such as David Hardy, Gary Kleck, and Don Kates have argued that a high level of substitution of long guns for handguns would occur in the case of a hypothetical American handgun ban. Dixon offers a careful rebuttal of their arguments, and concludes that (since he has placed the burden of proof on prohibition opponents) the case for a substitution effect has not been proven convincingly enough to overcome what he considers the strong evidence for handgun prohibition. Overlooked in the discussion of a substitution effect resulting from a hypothetical American handgun ban is non- hypothetical evidence from other countries. As Dixon showed earlier in his article, countries with more handguns per capita tend to have more handgun homicides per capita. [179] Switzerland, which has, by world standards, relatively lenient handgun laws, has more handgun homicides per capita than countries where handgun laws are tougher. [180] From the handgun density/handgun homicide correlation in Switzerland and other nations (as well as from other evidence detailed supra), Dixon concludes that handgun density strictly correlates with handgun homicide. [181] Let us \*328 assume that Dixon is right. In countries such as Australia and Canada, where handgun laws are much stricter than in Switzerland, the handgun homicide rate is lower than in Switzerland, but the total homicide rate is over 100 percent greater. [182] The reason cannot be that Australians and Canadians are more prone to want to kill somebody than the Swiss are - Dixon has explicitly assumed that human nature in developed countries is roughly similar everywhere. [183] So why then do Canada and Australia have more murders, even though they have stricter handgun laws, and fewer handgun murders? One plausible explanation is the substitution effect. A sufficiently large number of Australians and Canadians, unable to obtain handguns, do their shooting with rifles or shotguns; their victims die, whereas if they had been shot with handguns, many would have survived. Although some Australian and Canadian assailants, unable to obtain handguns, switched to less deadly weapons (such as clubs), the number of assailants who switched to rifles and shotguns was sufficiently large to increase the overall death toll. If we have plausible evidence to suggest that a substitution effect may have occurred in Australia and Canada, could a similar effect occur in the United States? [184] \*329 Dixon quotes research developed by Don Kates and Mark Benenson that if 30% of persons attempting homicide switched from handguns to long guns, while the other 70% switched to knives, total homicide would increase substantially. If 50% switched to long guns, the homicide rate could double, even if none of the persons switching to knives killed anyone. [185] A National Institute of Justice study of felons in state prisons found that 72% of the handgun criminals said they would switch to sawed-off shotguns if handguns became unavailable. [186] A 72% substitution rate would lead to an enormous multiplication of the current homicide rate, and Kleck expects that substitution would occur at about 70%.

### No compliance

#### We’ll quantify the impact.

Kopel 92 David B. (Director of the Firearms Research Project at the Independence Institute, a Denver, Colorado think-tank. He also serves as an Associate Policy Analyst with the Cato Institute in Washington, D.C., and as a techincal consultant to the International Wound Ballistics Association. J.D. 1985, University of Michigan Law School; B.A. Brown University, 1982. Kopel's book, THE SAMURAI, THE MOUNTIE AND THE COWBOY: SHOULD AMERICA ADOPT THE GUN CONTROLS OF OTHER DEMOCRACIES? was awarded the Comparative Criminology Prize by the American Society of Criminology's Division of International Criminology) “Banning Handguns?” Washington Post http://www.davekopel.org/2A/OpEds/OpEdBanGun.htm FT

But while homicides of all types would increase, America would find itself increasingly short of the prison space in which to confine the additional murderers. The drug war (which Senator Chafee enthusiastically supports) is overwhelming the nation's prisons, making it increasingly difficult to confine violent criminals for lengthy terms. In many large cities, the criminal justice system is collapsing under the immense volume of drug prosecutions. The Chafee war on handguns would make the war on drugs look small time. In California, only 20% of gun-owners obeyed a requirement that they register their semi-automatics. In New Jersey, fewer than 2% of owners of "assault weapons" have complied with the legal mandate to surrender their guns. While there are only a few million "assault weapon" owners, about a quarter of all households in the United States contain a handgun. Under the most optimistic compliance scenarios, 15-20% of American households would ignore the handgun ban. Possessing newly-illegal handguns, tens of millions of Americans would now be defined as felons, eligible for Senator Chafee's five-year federal prison term. The number of new "gun criminals" would be at least as large as the current number of "drug criminals."

# 2NR

## CP

### CP

#### CP solves case with external net benefits –

#### 1] Strong empirics across several inner-city communities and 8 states show Ceasefire has decreased both homicide rates and shootings – guarantee of assistance and threat of crack down motivate potential offenders from committing crime in the first place.

#### 2] The dialogic component – inviting high-risk individuals to communicate with the police and community leaders – counteracts the notion that gun violence is the only option and makes legal threats seem more real – that prevents the substitution effect caused by criminals feeling like they need to commit crime to survive.

#### 3] Only an urban-centric policy sends the message that the government cares about people of color – nationwide gun bans are effacing and have a perception of existing only to help white people – that’s Constantino 15.

#### Also, targeting specificity of the counterplan outweighs case – our evidence indicates only about 100 people in inner cities are actually at risk of committing homicides, so we avoid blanket punishments and criminalization without compromising efficacy.

### More Args

#### Most violence in inner cities is perpetrated by a few offenders who feel attacked by their community – only the dialogic component of the counterplan addresses this.

**Beckett ’15:** [Lois Beckett, ProPublica reporter covering politics, big data and information privacy issues, “How the Gun Control Debate Ignores Black Lives”, ProPublica, 2015]

Gun violence in America is largely a story of race and geography. Almost two-thirds of America’s more than 30,000 annual gun deaths are suicides, most of them committed by white men. In 2009, the gun homicide rate for white Americans was 2 per 100,000 — about seven times as high as the rate for residents of Denmark, but a fraction of the rate for black Americans. In 2009, black Americans faced a gun homicide rate of nearly 15 per 100,000. That’s higher than the gun homicide rate in Mexico. To liberals, gun violence among African-Americans is rooted in economic disadvantage and inequality, as well as America’s gun culture and lax gun laws. Conservatives, meanwhile, often focus on black “culture.” “The problem is not our gun laws,” a member of the Wall Street Journal editorial board [wrote last year](http://www.wsj.com/articles/political-diary-chicago-and-black-criminality-1404853317) about Chicago’s murder rate. “Nor is it our drug laws, or racist cops, prosecutors and judges. The problem is black criminality, which is a function of black pathology, which ultimately stems from the breakdown of the black family.” Lost in the debate is that even in high-crime cities, the risk of gun violence is mostly concentrated among a small number of men. In Oakland, for instance, crime experts working with the police department a few years ago found that about 1,000 active members of a few dozen street groups drove most homicides. That’s .3 percent of Oakland’s population. And even within this subgroup, risk fluctuated according to feuds and other beefs. In practical terms, the experts found that over a given stretch of several months only about 50 to 100 men are at the highest risk of shooting someone or getting shot. Most of these men have criminal records. But it’s not drug deals or turf wars that drives most of the shootings. Instead, the violence often starts with what seems to outsiders like trivial stuff — “a fight over a girlfriend, a couple of words, a dispute over a dice game,” said Vaughn Crandall, a senior strategist at the California Partnership for Safe Communities, which did the homicide analysis for Oakland. Somebody gets shot. These are men who do not trust the police to keep them safe, so “they take matters into their own hands,” he said. It’s long-running feuds, Crandall said, that drive most murders in Oakland. Men involved in these conflicts may want a safer life, but it’s hard for them to put their guns down. “The challenge is that there is no graceful way to bow out of the game,” said Reygan Harmon, the director of Oakland Police Department’s violence reduction program.

#### CP avoids politics and incarceration – criminalizing solutions only feed to prison pipeline.

**Constantino ’15:** [Bobby Constantino, adjunct professor of criminal justice at St Joseph's College, “We’ve Turned Our Back on a Proven Method to Curtail Gun Violence”, The Guardian, 2015]

The many [calls](https://wecanendgunviolence.org/) for gun control that have followed from this year’s mass shootings [ignore](https://www.propublica.org/article/how-the-gun-control-debate-ignores-black-lives) the fact that there are already programs proven to reduce gun violence in the US. Not only are such programs far more successful at saving lives than any combination of background checks, regulations and assault weapons bans, they also don’t invite opposition from gun rights advocates, second amendment groups and the powerful lobbying arm of the National Rifle Association. But rather than expand the programs proven to work, municipalities constantly cut funding in the face of evidence that doing so is a bad idea. Much like today, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, innocent Americans started losing their lives to [gun violence](http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/htus8008.pdf). Beloved [gang prosecutors](https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2015/09/25/paul-mclaughlin-gang-prosecutor-murdered-west-roxbury-recalled-friends/RON4JgxWDo1GKfTxVca7FP/story.html), [eight-year-olds](https://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2004/08/05/pair_plead_guilty_get_10_years_in_1994_slaying/) sorting Halloween candy, [little girls](http://www.nytimes.com/1988/08/29/us/boston-community-mourns-a-drug-feud-s-victim-11.html) sitting on mailboxes – the carnage was indiscriminate, ruthless. There was national outrage, and [calls](http://www.usnews.com/opinion/articles/2014/05/09/its-time-for-prison-reform-and-an-end-to-mandatory-minimum-sentences) for firearm bans and strict mandatory minimum sentencing guidelines. In response, jurisdictions all over the country passed get-tough gun laws, gang ordinances, three-strikes laws and school zone violations – laws that caused our prison population to explode. In 2002, when the shooting epidemic began to subside, the National Institute of Justice published a [study](https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/190351.pdfhttps:/www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/190351.pdfhttps:/www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/190351.pdf) showing that all of those get-tough laws had virtually no preventative impact on gun violence.

#### **Solves gun culture locally.**

**Mandell and Llorente ’10:** [MEREDITH MANDELL AND ELIZABETH LLORENTE, Staff Writers, “ A two-front war on violent crime”, North Jersey News, 2010]

Dr. Gary Slutkin, a professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago, said it is important for cities to crack down on the culture that fuels gun violence — a sense of fear and a perception that to have a gun is the only way to gain respect. "Violence is socially learned and the social expectations of peers keep it going," said Slutkin, who started a CeaseFire program in Chicago in 1995. "They'll follow their friends to the edge of the cliff." But Slutkin contends that police sweeps like Paterson's seed resentment and distrust that undermine progress. In Chicago, Slutkin organized a program almost entirely handled by community members to gain the trust of people in the community who might be reluctant to turn to police. The efforts paid off. A 2008 U.S. Department of Justice report found significant declines in retaliatory gang homicides and other shootings in eight Chicago neighborhoods where CeaseFire was active. Shootings declined 17 percent to 24 percent in various areas. In another model, a program begun in Boston in the mid-1990s by David Kennedy, a professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, relies heavily on aggressive policing. Police went door-to-door with ministers to meet residents; they participated in "call-ins" where detectives and prosecutors personally warned gang members of the severe consequences of continued violent behavior, then they offered young people alternatives to street life, such as job-training opportunities. The Justice Department reported that those interventions led to a 63 percent drop in monthly youth homicides in Boston, a 32 percent decrease in shots fired and a 25 percent decrease in monthly gun assaults. But then Chicago and Boston officials cut funding for the programs. Slutkin suggested a link between the funding cuts and Chicago's homicide rate, which began climbing again. And Boston's CeaseFire strategy weakened when city officials shifted funding to homeland security efforts and stopped day-to-day community policing efforts

## Elections

### Elections

#### Hillary wins the election now but Democrats underestimate the threat that Trump poses – any issue that flips her favorability ratings dooms her campaign – that’s Heer 4/27.

#### Two reasons plan helps Trump – 1] handgun bans are politically damning for politicians because of the broad perception that handguns are useful for self-defense and the large gun-owning population – it’s distinct from just gun control and 2] Democrats get blamed because they’re the only party that has advocated for gun restrictions – plan forces gun owners to mobilize and vote Republican in the election, which swings the result – that leads to a Gore-style loss for the Dems – that’s Scher and Antle.

#### GOP win causes climate regression -

### K

#### Consistent with path trends with Gun Control.

Antle 12/3 (W. James, staff @ Washington Examiner, “Democrats aren't afraid to be anti-gun anymore”, http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/democrats-arent-afraid-to-be-anti-gun-anymore/article/2577508)

Democrats reacted swiftly and angrily to the mass shooting in San Bernardino, Calif. All three Democratic presidential candidates weighed in, as did most of the party's congressional leadership. Anger is an understandable reaction to learning that innocents have been gunned down. So is fear. But Democrats from President Obama and Hillary Clinton to Nancy Pelosi and Harry Reid weren't afraid of renewing calls for gun control when they renewed those calls on Wednesday. That wouldn't always have been the case. No, the debate over guns never ended and liberal Democrats were always more likely to call for stricter laws in safe Democratic districts in blueish areas with relatively few gun owners. Some Democratic leaders believed that gun control measures like the assault weapons ban, signed into law by President Bill Clinton, helped Republicans gain control of Congress. When the ban expired a decade later, Democrats tried to extend it didn't fight as hard as one might expect. It lapsed. Many Democrats also thought the primary campaign against Bill Bradley pushed 2000 presidential nominee Al Gore too far to the left on guns. The stance cost Gore Arkansas, West Virginia and his home state of Tennessee. If he had carried any one of those states, he would have won the presidency even without Florida's hanging chads. Former Gore national spokesman Doug Hattaway went so far as to say "there's not a potent pro-gun control constituency in national elections." The top progressive candidate for the 2004 Democratic presidential nomination was Howard Dean, who had tended to oppose gun control as governor of gun-friendly Vermont. Dean's campaign for the White House faltered, but he did become chairman of the Democratic National Committee. When Reid became the Senate Democratic leader, he was still regarded as a sometime ally of gun rights activists. The National Rifle Association reportedly contemplated a Reid endorsement as late as 2010. None of this stopped Reid from becoming the top Democrat in the Senate. In 2006 and 2008, even gun-control liberals like Chuck Schumer and Rahm Emanuel recruited pro-gun Democrats to run for Congress in districts where gun regulations were a political loser. Jim Webb, a relatively pro-gun Democrat, was the darling of the liberal netroots when he ran for Senate in Virginia. Democrats still prefer euphemisms like "commonsense gun safety laws" to the phrase "gun control," and like vague calls to "end gun violence" even better. Nevertheless, with each mass shooting event during the Obama administration, the party's politicians grow more assertive in their calls for firearms restrictions. Bernie Sanders hasn't gotten the same Vermont benefit of the doubt on guns as Dean. His occasional votes against gun control and brief alliance with the NRA during his first successful congressional race are significant barriers to his efforts to consolidate liberal support. Martin O'Malley appears to be running against the NRA more than Clinton. And Clinton has led the charge against guns. The new Democratic consensus appears to be that Republicans and the gun lobby are the only obstacles to a respite from tragedies like Sandy Hook and San Bernardino. Obama frequently describes theses shootings as a policy choice. The specific proposals Democrats generally endorse tend to be modest, but the repeated contentions that America's high rate of private gun ownership is what distinguishes it from other less violent industrialized democracies suggests more radical solutions. Countries like Australia that have passed more sweeping gun bans are often held up as examples the United States could or should follow. Gun control is the near-universal Democratic response to high-profile shootings. It is also likely to play a big role in the Democrats' response to an uptick in homicides in some cities. The debate is only partly about firearms policy. It's also a culture war issue. Obama was recorded talking about bitter people who cling to guns and religion. Liberals appear to hope that disarming largely law-abiding red-state gun owners (along with Sanders' progressive gun-toting constituents) will reduce the supply of guns in high-crime blue cities like Chicago, which already have tough gun laws on the books. For Democrats, the obvious political risk is that gun owners will mobilize and vote heavily Republican in the 2016 elections. This could produce an outcome in the presidential race similar to Gore's defeat. It could also hurt Democrats in down-ballot races, where they are already struggling.