

“people who own guns are stiupid”

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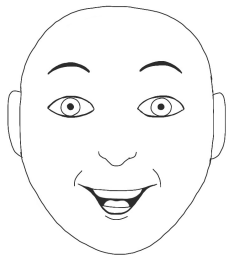
this version: Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2018    23:29

## NECESSARY reads

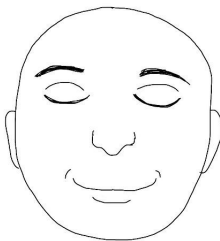
- ◇ <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/02/us/california-far-north-identity-conservative.html>
- ◇ <http://www.city-journal.org/html/oldest-divide-14042.html>



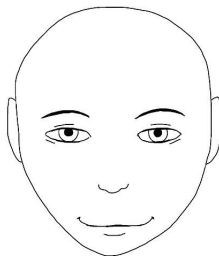
Figure



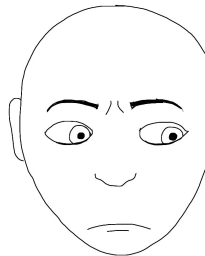
(a) ecstatic



(b) adored



(c) adoring



(d) embarrassed

## what is it?

- ◇ “people who own guns are stupid” say some progressive liberals
- ◇ the statement appears to be partially or even mostly moral
  - ie there seems to be some righteousness/superiority implied
  - liberals/progressives seem emotional and belief-based in such statements
- ◇ i'll try to argue that there is a problem here
- ◇ (for record: i'm actually against guns, too)

## why? in this class?

- ◇ exciting! guns and discussions about them are exciting!
- ◇ and one of the key problems also for development is that we are divided
- ◇ if we can compromise, understand, trust, development would be better!
- ◇ LIT: <http://righteousmind.com>  
<https://markmanson.net/not-giving-a-fuck>

## being right and superior

- ◇ feeling virtuous, righteous, pure, moral, and superior can be dangerous
- some of the greatest evils committed by such people both on left and right
- eg the attitude is used to motivate genocides

- ◇ argument building follows passion and intuition, not reason!
  - progressive liberals on guns, too—more passion and intuition than reason
- ◇ we're all biased!
- ◇ one guy thinks guns are bad, the other thinks they're good
  - say one from rural Jersey, one from urban Jersey
- ◇ and then they both set out to find arguments to support it
  - sure the rural guy's argument has less academic merit, but...

## **a serious problem with academics!**

- ◇ think we know better, even things we don't study!!
- ◇ like if you're an expert in one area, you think you are one in all areas!
- ◇ how many of you study guns? and yet you sound like experts on the issue
- ◇ why? because you have some expertise in some other area
- ◇ it's one thing to have an opinion
- ◇ another thing to absolutely sure you are right
- ◇ and yet doubt is necessary for science and progress
- ◇ do you even allow a possibility that you may be wrong?
- ◇ if not, then is it belief or science?



## anecdotal evidence, stereotyping

- ◇ similar statements, and you think only one is true!
- ◇
- ◇ an undocumented immigrant killed someone: a significant number of undocumented immigrants are criminals
- ◇ a gun was used to commit a crime: a significant number of guns are used to commit a crime
- ◇ same fallacies!! but you just see one depending on which side you're on
- ◇ what about this: residential swimming pools kill more babies than guns (Freakonomics)

## smart educated: no guns; stupid uneducated: guns

- ◇ doesn't it just confirm complain of rural simple folks:
  - urban educated elites feel superior and right to tell rural uneducated how they should live their lives:
- ◇ <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/02/us/california-far-north-identity-conservative.html>
- ◇ <http://www.city-journal.org/html/oldest-divide-14042.html>
- ◇ <http://inthesetimes.com/rural-america/entry/20605/rural-urban-divide-donald-trump-stereotypes-hillbilly-re>

## easier to be positive than normative

- ◇ are guns good or bad? tough to say!
  - see a philosopher or a priest
- ◇ but if we want to increase public safety, we should increase gun control

<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/hicrc/firearms-research/gun-threats-and-self-defense-gun-use-2>