Fear as a predictor of firearm ownership and concealed weapons permits in Clark County, Nevada

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FEAR AS A PREDICTOR OF FIREARM OWNERSHIP
AND CONCEALED WEAPONS PERMITS
IN CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirement for the

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Master of Arts

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Nov 14, 2000

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ABSTRACT

Fear as a Predictor of Firearm Ownership and Concealed Weapons Permits in Clark County, Nevada

by

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This study is specific to Clark County, Nevada. Two relationships, the relationship between fear and gun possession [defined in terms of firearms registration] and the relationship between fear and the issuance of concealed weapons permits, were posited. Data for the number of registered firearms and issued concealed weapons permits were obtained from the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department Firearms Detail and CCW Detail. Criminal incidents involving firearms in public areas that appeared to be random in nature [stranger to stranger violence] were gathered through an archive search of Nevada’s largest newspaper servicing Clark County, the Las Vegas Review-Journal.

Statistical analysis established that there is no significant relationship between fear and firearms possession, as well as no relationship between fear and the issuance of concealed weapons permits. When assessing the impact of particularly tragic incidents
and controlling for seasonal trends, however, a significant relationship between fear and gun ownership does emerge. The relationship between fear and concealed weapons permits remains insignificant, even with these added controls.
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CHAPTER 1

LITERATURE REVIEW

Fear

The number of publicly violent events involving firearms has exploded in the past three years. Incidents involving firearms violence in schools, restaurants, and businesses are now common. While social scientists have been intrigued by questions of who possess firearms and for what reasons, satisfactory explanations of this behavior have not been found and studies continue to address these issues. Questions regarding public perceptions of fear and how fear impacts the possession of firearms are now beginning to be addressed.

In 1976 Williams and McGrath attempted to assess the nature of gun ownership by considering variables such as victimization and political orientation. Prior to this time victimization was not considered when addressing the ownership of firearms. Williams and McGrath posited the following five hypotheses:

1. Victims of crime will more likely own guns than will non-victims;

2. Persons who express fear will be more likely to own guns than will persons who do not;
3. Liberalism will be negatively related to gun ownership, while conservatism will be positively related to gun ownership;
4. Violence proneness will be positively related to gun ownership; and
5. Pessimists will be less likely to own guns than will non-pessimists.

From these hypotheses, they identified a series of questions intended to link the above variables to gun ownership. The authors found that three of the five hypotheses received strong statistical support, one was weakly supported, and the other indicated a negative correlation.

The three supported hypotheses suggest that as liberalism increases, gun ownership decreases; as violence proneness increases so does gun ownership [violence proneness measured as support for the death penalty, harsh sentences for criminals, and those prone to employ physical force or punish individuals assumed to be guilty of a criminal offense]; and the likelihood of gun ownership decreases as pessimism increases. Although the relationship between gun ownership and pessimism seems to be counter-intuitive, the authors suggest that the pessimist adopts a “what is the use” attitude and thus refrains from purchasing firearms. Williams and McGrath found that the relationship between victimization and gun ownership was a weak one, while the relationship between fear in the neighborhood and gun ownership was negative. In other words, contrary to what one might expect, those with the most perceived fear were the least likely to own guns. Williams and McGrath explain this result by speculating that fear and pessimism are related. While the study finds a negative relationship between gun ownership and
education/occupation, there was no control for economic status and the economic inability to purchase a gun was not evaluated.

In response to findings made by the President’s Commission on Law Enforcement, Gallup Polls and National Victimization Surveys of the Department of Justice, Clemete and Kleiman (1977) attempted to identify reliable predictors of fear of victimization. They considered five variables: sex, race, age, socioeconomic status, and community size. Clemente and Kleiman established that gender and city size are the most reliable predictors of fear, while age and race appeared to be less significant than previous researchers had supposed. Finally, income and education did not appear to be meaningful predictors of fear.

DeFronzo (1979) attempted to determine the nature of the relationship between the fear of crime and handgun ownership through the estimation of a non-recursive path model. Drawing on data collected in the 1973, 1974, 1976, and 1977 General Social Surveys conducted by the National Opinion Research Center, DeFronzo was able to suggest that, “the presence of handguns in the home had the independent effect of reducing the tendency to fear criminal victimization.” However, the author found that the fear of crime had no significant effect on handgun ownership. Ultimately, he was able to conclude that, “[t]hese findings consequently, provide no support for the popular belief that the fear of criminal victimization acts independently to increase the ownership of handguns in the population.”

Other studies assessing the relationship between gun ownership and fear of crime offer mixed, often contradictory results. Smith (1980) found a negative relationship
between fear of crime and attitudes concerning gun control. Tyler and Lavrakes (1983) concluded that there is no relationship between fear of crime and attitudes about gun control. They further established that views pertaining to gun control are not linked to ideological orientation. Zimring and Hawkins (1987) concluded that most gun owners kept firearms for self-defense. This behavior could imply that fear of crime influenced the decision to keep firearms and affected the purchaser's attitude toward gun control. However, this was not specifically proven.

Bankston and Thompson (1989) argue that substituting carrying a gun for gun ownership as the dependent variable of interest provides greater insights into perceived risk and fear of crime. The results suggest that crime-specific variables such as fear of criminal victimization do not directly influence the tendency to carry a gun, although there were minor indirect effects from such variables. Rather, the most important direct influences on carrying a gun were age, gender, and the belief that the presence of a gun is an effective deterrent to crime.

A comprehensive review of Criminal Justice Abstracts, Expanded Academic ASAP, PAIS International, and Sociological Abstracts did not reveal any studies concerning attitudes and behaviors toward gun control and fear conducted between 1989 and 1998. A possible conclusion is that other topics were explored during this time frame.

Heath, Weeks and Murphy (1999) examined how attitudes toward guns and fear of crime interrelate in three separate studies. In the first study, focus groups comprised of Introductory Psychology students identified eight domains within the construct "gun
control attitudes.” The eight domains encompass Constitutional Rights, NRA Slogans, Attitudes toward Toy Guns, Opinions about Gun Registration, Opinions about Gun Bans, Use of Gun for Personal Protection, Guns on TV, and Possible Foreign Threat. From these domains, a questionnaire of 73 items was generated and designed to elicit a variety of attitudes surrounding guns generally and their use, possession, and control.

The results of the first study identified nine main factors which the authors grouped into two subtypes: Socio-cultural Indices and Personal Indices. Factors identified in the Socio-cultural Indices include an American Heritage scale, Safety scale, Gun Ban scale, Gun Control Scale and NRA scale. The Personal Indices elicited a Responsibility scale, Protection scale, Illegal Gun scale and Personal Defense scale. Many of the original items fell out of the analysis because of identical responses which indicated no variance.

In the second study, the authors examined whether the factors identified by the construct “Gun Control Attitudes” related to demographics and the fear of crime. Undergraduates were requested to complete a shortened version of the “Gun Attitudes Questionnaire” distributed in Study 1. Seven of the nine sub-scales identified above were significantly related to fear of crime even after variance such as gender, personal experience with firearms and the risk of crime were taken into account. According to the authors, “[i]n all instances, high fear of crime was associated with positive attitudes toward gun control.”

The third study consisted of random telephone interviews in the Chicago area. Based on the data from the two previous studies, that the nine factors demonstrated
similar relationships with the crime variables in Study 2, the authors shortened the telephone survey to the 20 items that had loaded most strongly on the factors in Studies 1 and 2. Also considered in this study were time spent viewing television and frequency of reading newspapers. The hypothesis in Study 3 was that media exposure would lead to fear of crime and a distorted view of gun victimization, which, in turn, would influence attitudes toward gun control. The authors point out that there were no significant paths passing through the media variables but as they predicted in the hypothesis, fear of crime and the distorted view of gun victims do relate to gun attitudes. The results of the study indicate that age, race and gender all relate to newspaper readership, but that readership does not relate to any of the other variables. Television viewing is also unrelated to any of the other variables. While the authors could not find any significant relationships among any of the media variables, they conclude that, "[m]ore fearful people endorse gun control more, and people whose stereotypes of gun victims match the media image support gun control more."

While attempting to discover what types of people apply for and carry concealed weapons, Schwaner, Furr, Negry and Seger (1999) considered what demographic factors are related to applying for a concealed weapons permit and whether or not certain lifestyles lead to gun ownership and concealed weapons permits. The authors considered five demographic variables: age, gender, household size, education and income. They also considered one intervening variable, heavy drinking. The authors expressed interest in evaluating the effect lifestyle choices had on decisions to carry concealed weapons and determined that those prone to heavy drinking were more apt to be vulnerable, victims of
violent crime, and in more need of "self-help." They determined that self-help could be exhibited by carrying a concealed weapon.

Using bivariate analysis, they concluded that the three variables of young age, gender (male) and heavy drinking strongly correlate with obtaining a concealed weapon license. The multi-variate analysis showed correlations among all demographic variables except income. Heavy drinking had both direct and indirect effects. From the data, the authors concluded that heavy drinkers were more likely to want concealed weapons permits and that individuals with low incomes who were heavy drinkers were more likely to plan to seek licenses.

Unfortunately, the authors were unable to determine whether or not fear had an impact on the desire to apply for a concealed weapons permit. The authors recognize that the demographic and lifestyle factors could lead to the necessity of deterring victimization attempts; however, they were unable to assess whether or how perceptions of fear also influenced decisions to carry concealed weapons. They do conclude, "lifestyles and everyday routines related to demographic characteristics were factors in plans to purchase license to carry concealed firearms."

The sample population for this study was drawn in the South and thus the general application of its findings may be limited to that region as several studies have highlighted the distinct differences between individuals of southern heritage and others throughout the United States with regard to firearms (Reed 1971; Gastil 1971 and Young 1986).
Impacts from the Media

The media play an important role in influencing public perception generally. It has long been recognized that the media, whether by television, newspaper or radio, affect public perceptions on all issues. Several recent studies, in addition to the one mentioned previously, have explored whether or not television viewing affects attitudes about gun control. The results are mixed.

Heath and Gilbert (1996) examine the relationship between the media and fear. They begin by summarizing the bulk of research done on this topic. A previous study concludes that at least some television programming is correlated with fear of crime for at least some viewers (Bryant, Carveth and Brown 1981). With respect to newspapers, however, there appears to be no link between fear of crime and readership. Earlier studies attribute this to specific characteristics newspaper readers tend to possess, such as higher educations, high incomes and residence in safer neighborhoods. The ultimate conclusion that Heath and Gilbert reach is not very insightful: “[t]he message is clear. Media messages do not affect all of the people all of the time, but some messages affect some of the people some of the time.”

Other studies that assess media, fear, and firearms conclude that television’s impact on fear levels has eroded so as to be virtually non-existent because the effects of television viewing are complex and influenced by programming [news versus drama], willingness of the viewer to believe what is happening, the extent of justice displayed, and the viewers’ personal level of fear about crime before viewing takes place (Doob and
McDonald 1979 and Hughes 1980). Newspapers, on the other hand, have always been considered to have minimal impacts in terms of increasing fear.

It is also important to assess how the television medium presents issues related to firearms and gun control. Two studies indicate a bias against firearms in media coverage. MediaWatch, a media watchdog organization, examined all gun control policy stories for two years on four major network evening shows: ABC’s World News Tonight, CBS Evening News, CNN’s The World Today and NBC Nightly News. Three morning broadcast programs were also considered: ABC’s Good Morning America, CBS’s This Morning, and NBC’s Today. From July 1, 1995, to June 31, 1997, there were 244 gun policy stories. Those favoring gun control outnumbered stories opposing gun control by 157 to 10. Seventy-seven stories were considered neutral. Analyzing the results of the MediaWatch study, Otero, (1999) found this approximates a 16:1 ratio in favor of gun control. Otero further argues that this ratio is not indicative of an unbiased media.

Others also contend that the press is biased in its coverage of firearms. William R. Tonso (2000) suggests not only does the press generally know very little about guns, but they are not interested in becoming informed. His basic premise asserts that the press would rather misrepresent categories of firearms and conduct sloppy journalism with regard to firearms issues in an attempt to shape policy toward gun control, than try to understand the history, classification, and differences among the different firearms. Although he concentrates on the media’s misunderstanding of “assault weapons,” Tonso does point out instances in which NBC and CNN misrepresented the difference between machine guns and semi-automatic weapons.
Movements—Million Mom March

Although firearms possession has always been controversial, there is growing concern within society about who possesses firearms and how firearms are used. In an attempt to mobilize concerned mothers, a grassroots movement known as the “Million Mom March” was mobilized. Mothers afraid of losing their children to firearm violence were asked to unite in Washington, D.C., in May 2000, to form the Million Mom March. While the movement fell short of one million, about 750,000 women showed up in support. The demonstrators made their agenda clear: licensing of gun owners or buyers; registration of handguns; gun and ammunition purchase limits; and adoption and enforcement of strong child access prevention (CAP) laws. Smaller rallies were held around the nation so that those who could not protest in D.C. could participate. About 250 people showed up at the Las Vegas rally.

Media response to the Million Mom March was mostly favorable. The New York Times was supportive of the activities in its article, “The Power of Mother’s Marching,” May 15, 2000. The editorial desk for the Times reported, “[t]he marchers offered a sound agenda. . .” and, “[t]he hands that rock the nation’s cradles have the potential to rock its political institutions— but only if they keep rocking hard.”

The L.A. Times was also complementary in its May 15, 2000, article, “Real Legacy May be Guns’ New Stigma.” Writing for the L.A. Times, Faye Fiore suggested that the Million Mom March movement is “as much a social movement as a political one.” Fiore also predicted, “. . . the real legacy of Sunday’s march may be a growing
stigmatization of firearms that did not exist before—a sense that guns could go the way of cigarettes and alcohol as vices that, when used irresponsibly, are a badge of ignorance.”

In Las Vegas, however, response to the Million Mom March was not as positive. A Las Vegas Review-Journal columnist, Steve Sebelius, wrote in his article, “There’s no magic bullet,” May 16, 2000, that even if the protest had resulted in more gun control legislation, “there would still be gun violence in America.” While he thinks that the proposals put forth, such as background checks, waiting periods, licenses, safety courses and trigger locks, are not wrong, he feels they will not help much. Sebelius’ bottom line is, “[t]he Second Amendment guarantees the right to own guns... [t]he tragedies of the mothers who marched Sunday who have lost children to gun violence could only be made worse by the false hopes that another law will keep it from happening again.”

A few days later, Vin Suprynowicz, the assistant editorial page editor of the Las Vegas Review-Journal, wrote a particularly scathing column entitled, “Moms distract attention from de facto ban.” Suprynowicz argues that the purpose of the Million Mom March was, “a partisan put-up job, intended to manufacture a November election issue out of thin air” and that the networks failed to “point out the Second Amendment guarantees the right of each individual American to own a machine gun without being charged a fee or made to apply for any ‘permit’ no matter how many ‘moms’ don’t like it.”

Supreme Court Cases Concerning the Second Amendment

There has been very little said about the Second Amendment, both by the courts and by academicians. In the past ten years, media coverage of mass killings and horrific
crimes has escalated as have calls for the prevention of future tragedies. However, the basis of any long term practical solution rests within the meaning of the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution. The Supreme Court has chosen to interpret aspects of the Second Amendment only four times in the past two hundred years.

Beginning with *U.S. v. Cruikshank*, 92 U.S. 542 (1876), the Supreme Court held that there is no absolute individual right to bear arms and that the second amendment applies to the federal government only. In *Presser v. Illinois*, 116 U.S. 252 (1886), the Supreme Court ruled that individual militias do not have the right to organize. Six years later in *Miller v. Texas*, 153 U.S. 535 (1894) the Supreme Court reaffirmed that states have the ability to prohibit the carrying of dangerous weapons. Because the *Cruikshank*, *Presser* and *Miller v. Texas* cases were decided before the Supreme Court used the judicial construct known as incorporation, there is significant scholarly agreement that those holdings are no longer applicable.

In *Miller v. U.S.*, 307 U.S. 174 (1939), the Supreme Court clearly stated that individuals possess an individual right to carry firearms if it is in connection with service in a militia. However, the arms must have “some reasonable relationship to the preservation or efficiency of a well regulated militia. . . .” Even though *Miller v. U.S.* was decided after the Supreme Court began using the doctrine of incorporation, the Second Amendment has never been held to be binding upon the states. In other words, the Second Amendment has not yet been incorporated (Halbrook 1989 and Walsh 1994).

As a result, more recently, district and circuit courts have been the setting for cases.
involving the Second Amendment and the lower federal courts have become the decision-makers, setting the standard for what limitations, if any, should be applied.

Significant District Court Cases

**U.S. v. Emerson** (1999) was the first case in several years that provided the courts with an opportunity to examine the Second Amendment and what rights it affords.

*Emerson* involved a petition for divorce and an application by Mrs. Emerson for a temporary restraining order, in the 119th District Court of Tom Green County, Texas, against Mr. Emerson. The purpose of the restraining order was to force Mr. Emerson to maintain the financial status quo of the prior union with a provision prohibiting him from making threatening communications or actual attacks upon Mrs. Emerson. There was no evidence that Mr. Emerson was violent or attempted any attacks upon Mrs. Emerson. Mr. Emerson appeared pro se before the court. The district court failed to inform Mr. Emerson that while under a restraining order, he would be subject to federal criminal prosecution under 18 U.S.C.S. § 922(g)(9) for simply possessing a firearm. Mr. Emerson was subsequently indicted for the possession of a firearm while under a restraining order.

Mr. Emerson argued that the Second Amendment guarantees him the personal right to bear arms and that his constitutional rights had been violated. The federal district court agreed with him and specifically held:

1. the federal statute violated the Second Amendment, and
2. the federal statute violated defendant’s Fifth Amendment due process rights to be subject to prosecution without proof of knowledge that he was violating the statute.
Particularly noteworthy is the court’s exhaustive research in analyzing the state of the Second Amendment. The court took into consideration the individual rights and collective rights approaches to analyzing the Second Amendment. The court also evaluated English History, the colonial right to bear arms, the ratification debates of the Constitution, and legislative history on the drafting of the Second Amendment in an attempt to ascertain the intent of the framers of the Constitution and Bill of Rights. The court also consulted the written works of legal scholars (Halbrook 1984; Levinson 1989 and Van Alstyne, 1994).

In U.S. v. Henson (1999), the defendant sued under the same federal statute for the same reasons. The only significant factual difference is that the defendant in this case is a convicted felon. What is significant about this case is that the district court in West Virginia came to exactly the opposite conclusion the Emerson court did. The holding in Henson is that the Second Amendment does not confer an individual right to bear arms, but rather the right is a collective one. The court further holds that defendant in this situation was on notice of his loss of the right to bear arms and therefore neither his Second Amendment right nor his Fifth Amendment rights have been violated.

The significance of the difference in holdings does not lie in the facts, but rather in the two district courts approaches to the Second Amendment. Both district courts hold the same amount of authority, yet differed significantly in their legal applications of the Second Amendment. A review of Shepard’s Citations, a legal index that tracks the dispositions of cases through the legal system, shows that neither U.S. v. Emerson or U.S. v. Henson has been overrule or appealed.
In yet another case involving Section 922(g)(8), U.S. v. Spruill, the court summarily dismissed the Second Amendment challenge that U.S. v. Emerson and U.S. v. Henson struggled with. The manner in which the court chose to handle the Second Amendment is significant because the string of cases that follow Spruill do not even mention the Second Amendment claim. Thus, the Spruill Court effectively transformed the major legal issue involving Section 922(g)(8) from a Second Amendment issue into a due process claim under the Fifth Amendment. The Spruill Court specifically states,

“No Circuit Court of Appeals has yet dealt with a Second Amendment challenge to Section 922(g)(8). While the appellate courts are still silent on the specific topic, there is considerable debate, as a general matter, about whether the Second Amendment guarantees an individual right to bear arms or a collective right on the part of the State to arm a militia.”

After reviewing the legal position of the various Circuit Courts, the Spruill Court found that five Circuit Courts of Appeal have determined that the Second Amendment protects only a collective right. Relying on those decisions, the court concluded the majority of Circuit Courts protect only a collective right and held, “the Second Amendment does not prohibit the federal government from imposing some restrictions on private gun ownership.”

Although various district and circuit courts have expressed a preference for a collective rights approach to the Second Amendment, U.S. v. Emerson has not been overruled. Therefore, two different legal standards regarding the Second Amendment remain. As currently interpreted in the Northern District of Texas, the Second Amendment provides an individual right to possess a firearm, the 8th circuit also supports
this analysis. However, in West Virginia and those states within the 6th and 10th circuits the Second Amendment provides a collective right, one granted by the state, instead.

Gun Control Generally

While violent events involving firearms increases, clarity in the debate concerning gun control becomes more elusive. Glen Otero, a pro gun ownership writer, (1999) attempts to debunk “Ten Myths About Gun Control.” Five of the ten myths are specifically relevant to gun control attitudes [the other myths pertain to public health and social concerns]. They are Myth 1, Myth 6, Myth 8, Myth 9 and Myth 10. Myth 1 states “the proliferation of guns in this country is responsible for an increase in the violent crime rate.” While explaining why this myth continues to abound, Otero compares criminological studies comparing violent crime and private gun ownership. Otero asserts that they have found, “no significant positive effect of gun ownership on the violent crime rate. Some studies actually find a negative relationship.” He continues to explain that studies that do find a causal relationship between gun ownership and homicide have failed to take into account the reverse relationship, i.e. that high crime rates may have stimulated higher gun ownership, not the reverse.

Myth 6 suggests “few people actually use guns for self-defense.” In 1993, the first survey to measure defensive gun use was formulated. The survey estimates that between 1988-1993, civilians used guns in self-defense 2.2-2.5 million times per year, saving between 240,000-400,000 lives each year.” According to Kleck and Kates, “the estimated number of defensive gun uses is three to four times that of illegal guns uses.”
Myth 8 claims “you, and your family and friends are 43 times more likely to be shot by a gun kept in the home than is a criminal intruder.” Otero contends that the way in which the benefits of gun ownership must be measured is not in deaths but in lives saved. Otero continues to rebut the study that promotes the 43:1 probability that innocent death will occur. The author does not cite the study nor does he mention it by name. He further illustrates problems with the study in terms of the representative sample.

Myth 9 contends “ordinary citizens (non-police, non-military) cannot effectively use firearms for self-defense and are more likely to get injured using a gun for self-defense than not.” According to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) database, “guns are the most effective weapon and means of self-defense in thwarting robbery and assault. When using a gun in self-defense, 83 percent of robbery victims and 88 percent of assault victims were not injured.”

Myth 10 argues “law-abiding citizens cannot be trusted to safely carry concealed weapons in public.” Otero references the study conducted by Lott and Mustard which suggests that concealed handguns in the hands of the public deter violent crime and do not significantly increase gun-related accidents. Urban counties adopting right-to-carry laws saw the most benefits, in terms of decreased crime, as did women and minorities, according to the Lott and Mustard study. Nevertheless, there has been considerable controversy surrounding the Lott and Mustard study and several academicians have criticized it.

One caveat regarding Otero’s myths, and his article in general, is that the author relies heavily upon the work of Gary Kleck and John R. Lott, Jr. Both sources are well
recognized for their pro gun biases. Despite the obvious bias in Otero’s article, there does not appear to be an attempt, on the author’s part, to use a variety of sources, for his contentions.

In an attempt to intellectualize the debate surrounding gun control, McDonald (1999) conducted an economic study on gun control, based on two different economic models. In the first model, McDonald asserts that law-abiding citizens require guns as a response to crime and that criminals demand guns because potential victims may be armed. According to this model, gun control policy would be ineffective in abating crime because of the negative effect such policies have on gun ownership for self-protection. He also asserts that concealed weapons laws would also act to decrease crime.

In the second model, McDonald examines the assumption that law-abiding citizens demand guns partly in response to guns owned by criminals. He shows that increases in usual crime control methods may be ineffective or reversed by reducing the guns owned by the law-abiding citizens. Nevertheless, he does allow for a corollary to possibly hold true, that a reduction in guns in criminals may lead to a further reduction in firearms possession by law-abiding citizens. McDonald fails to address how to effectively prevent criminals from obtaining firearms in the first place.

Because the firearms violence at Columbine High School in Denver, Colorado, has become a national tragedy, it is a rallying point for both pro and anti gun control advocates. Significant study of that event has taken place and efforts have been made to assess public attitudes about both the tragedy and firearms possession. In response to several polls measuring attitudes concerning gun control conducted in the aftermath of
the Columbine tragedy, Witt (1999) attempts to analyze whether or not public opinion concerning gun control has changed in response to Columbine. Witt concludes, “Americans express reasonably strong support for gun-control laws and they have pretty much done so for a decade . . . . The Gallup Poll found two-thirds of the public (66 percent) calling for stricter gun control laws in late April, with 25 percent saying no change is needed. That’s not a lot different from the 68 percent/25 percent split in a 1991 Gallup Poll.” Ultimately Witt concludes that politicians have other motivations for voting than simple poll results.

Gary Kleck (1999) argues that politicians make bad policy decisions based upon the fear gun violence inspires. He concludes, “[u]nfortunately, frightened people often favor actions that make them feel better over those that would actually make them safer, if the sanctions can be implemented quickly and easily and are touted as producing results immediately.”

“Colorado After Columbine: The Gun Debate,” (State Legislatures, 2000), discusses the fallout in the Colorado Legislature on the issue of gun control. The article also included a study conducted by Talmey-Drake Research and Strategy, Inc. which found that public opinion concerning firearms legislation did not change as a result of the shootings at Columbine. “Support for allowing more concealed weapons permits was 66% in Colorado two months before the shootings. A poll taken less than a month after Columbine showed little or no decline in that support. It showed 65 percent supporting looser concealed carry laws. Banning handguns enjoyed the support of only 16 percent of
Coloradans before the shootings and 18 percent after.” Denver pollster Floyd Ciruli found that Columbine did not sway legislators either.

A recent study of state firearm laws, Gun Control in the United States: A Comparative Survey of State Firearm Laws, (Open Society Institute’s Center on Crime, Communities & Culture and the Funders’ Collaborative for Gun Violence Prevention, 2000), concludes that the current philosophy of attempting to enforce firearms laws as opposed to enacting new legislation is detrimental because current firearms laws are inadequate. The study ranked each state on a scale of 1-100 based on the types of laws the state legislature had enacted. Points were awarded on the basis of 30 criteria grouped into six categories: registration of firearms, safety training, regulation of firearms, safe storage and accessibility, owner licensing, and litigation and preemption. City and county regulations were not taken into consideration. Points were taken away if the state minimum age for gun purchases or possession fell below federal standards. Points were also deducted for state preemption of local ordinances and for bans on lawsuits against the gun industry. Therefore, a negative score was possible. State scores ranged from -10 to 76. Most states clustered around 0-18. Nevada was ranked 23rd with a score of 0.

According to this survey, current legislation in most states regulating the control of firearms is woefully inadequate. Despite the fact that several criteria were carefully selected, the actual scoring procedure was not discussed. The survey merely stated that a certain number of points were to be awarded for each category without explaining how many points were to be awarded and for what reasons. Therefore it is impossible to ascertain how the individual points were awarded to each particular state.
Nevertheless, a review of current Nevada laws can provide some insight as to why Nevada rated such a low score. However, the following conclusions are merely guesswork. Currently the only county in the state of Nevada that requires licensing of firearms is Clark. Because the legislature has chosen not to regulate firearms uniformly throughout Nevada, the surveyors must have considered Nevada deficient with regard to this criterion. Safety training was also considered important. Currently there is no requirement for firearms safety training unless an application for carrying a concealed weapon is filed. In so far as regulation of firearms is concerned, the surveyors felt background checks were important. Nevada complies with the Brady background requirement and has a three day waiting period for possession of a newly registered firearm but does not impose more stringent state background checks. In terms of safe storage and accessibility, there are currently no regulations or requirements to be complied with in the State of Nevada. Owner licensing was also an important criterion. Again, only Clark County has any type of registration requirement. Bans on litigation and pre-emption of litigation were considered as severe limitations for effective gun control policy. On April 14, 1999, the Nevada State Assembly passed legislation prohibiting local governments from suing gun manufacturers. A month later, May 17, 1999, the Nevada State Senate also approved the legislation. However, Nevada’s right to sue gun manufacturers is still retained through the Office of the State Attorney General. The survey deemed any limitations on the right to sue a drawback and probably scored Nevada accordingly.
Attitudes Toward Fear and Firearm Possession in Nevada

Despite its lively history and penchant for legalizing societal taboos, Nevada has been classified as a state with middle-of-the-road gun laws in two recent surveys: “Gun Laws Across the Nation,” (State Legislatures, 2000) and Gun Control in the United States: A Comprehensive Survey of State Firearm Laws, (Open Society Institute’s Center on Crime, Communities & Culture and the Funder’s Collaborative for Gun Violence Prevention, 2000).

Since recent surveys indicate the legislature in Nevada neither endorses gun control because it does not seek to extensively regulate firearms in the State of Nevada, nor does it allow unfettered access to firearms, analyzing column content from major Nevada newspaper columnists is important. Because the media have the ability to influence public opinion, calculating the level of media support on issues concerning firearms is important. For this purpose, editorial-opinion articles written by staff members of the Las Vegas Review-Journal, the largest newspaper in Nevada, with the bulk of its circulation occurring in Clark County, have been examined. Though another newspaper, Las Vegas Sun, also has a circulation in Clark County, it does not have as many subscriptions, does not have as extensive an archive, does not report as extensively on firearms, and has not conducted any surveys on firearm possession similar to those found in the Review-Journal.

Two major columnists for the Las Vegas Review-Journal, Vin Suprynowicz and John Smith, support an individual right to possess firearms and write about it in their columns. In response to an e-mail received as a result of the Columbine tragedy, Vin
Suprynowicz wrote a column defending the right of citizens to carry firearms, "Debating who are the real 'militant freaks,'" April 15, 1999. He writes, "... as a member of the unorganized militia (as are all adult, able-bodied Americans), I would still use my weapons to defend your rights, your property, and the safety of your family, even after you have condemned me, vilified me, and voted to strip me of my God-given right to self-defense." He continues the article by suggesting that to take away all firearms generally would result in great travesty, using Stalin, Hitler, Mao and Pol Pot as examples.

Las Vegans have experienced several instances of crime perpetrated with firearms. In the past four years, specific instances of "thrill killing" have taken place three times. Thrill killing is a homicide in which multiple stranger-victims are killed for an unidentified reason or no reason at all. After the most recent "thrill kill" in Las Vegas, [Zane Floyd gunned down five people, four of whom died, in Albertson's, a local grocery store] Glenn Puit, a Las Vegas Review-Journal staff writer, attempted to assess the level of fear, if any, felt by Las Vegans. In his article, "Survey: Gun sales increasing since grocery store shooting," June 24, 1999, Puit reports the results of an informal survey of Las Vegas gun dealers. Puit's contention was that public fear would be manifested in increased guns sales. His informal survey indicated guns sales increased by as much as forty percent after the Albertson's incident. Puit also discovered that many of the new customers specifically mentioned the Albertson's shooting as the reason for purchasing a weapon. According to Puit, interviews with firearms instructors revealed a heightened interest in obtaining concealed weapons permits. Puit's interview with a Las Vegas Metropolitan police officer allegedly revealed that requests for concealed weapons
permits jumped to over sixteen per day after the Albertson’s shooting compared to a previous average of five or six per day.

The Albertson’s shooting took place June 5, 1999. While 2,361 firearms were registered the month of May, the month of June saw an increase of 217 additional firearms registrations for a total of 2,578 registrations. Firearms registrations decreased to 2,257 in July. These numbers tend to support the Las Vegas Review-Journal study. Puit’s claim of a 40% increase appears to be inflated, however, based on the data obtained from the Las Vegas Police Department, Firearms Detail. Furthermore, there is no information that shows the number of registrations that were denied, how many guns were brought to Nevada from other states and were not registered, and the number of illegally obtained firearms for this time frame. Issued concealed weapons permits also increased immediately after the Albertson’s shooting but not as significantly as firearms registrations did. In June 130 concealed weapons permits were issued, 3 denied, 7 revoked and 3 suspended. This represented an increase of 20 permits issued over May, in which 110 concealed weapons permits were issued, 0 denied, 4 revoked and 0 suspended. Again, the number of permits issued in July decreased to 117, 3 denied, 1 revoked and 4 suspended. These numbers also tend to support the Review-Journal survey.

A few months later, two separate incidents involving firearms violence occurred in casinos on the Las Vegas Strip. Although these incidents were not random because the killers knew their victims, journalists attempted to assess perceptions of fear among tourists. The first incident occurred November 11, 1999, at the Golden Gate Casino when a blackjack dealer was shot on the casino floor by a former boyfriend. The second
situation began with two men arguing at the Stardust Sportsbook. The argument escalated and one of them shot and killed the other. Immediately after the second incident, David Mirhadi, a Las Vegas Review-Journal staff writer attempted to interview several tourists to determine what level of fear existed among the tourists. In his February 10, 2000, article, “Visitors say they feel safe despite incidents on the Strip,” Mirhadi admits many tourists declined to comment, but those who did “said they consider the Strip a safe place for those who are careful.”

An October 3, 1999, article in the Las Vegas Review-Journal, “Both sides firing over gun control,” focused on the current concerns over gun laws and whether or not new legislation is necessary. The primary motivation behind the concern is the random acts of violence that are occurring nationally. Some lawmakers have proposed new tougher gun registration and regulation laws as a possible solution. However, an increasing number of academicians are suggesting the enforcement of current laws over enacting new ones. The article demonstrates the ease with which statistics concerning gun violence and statistics identifying the prosecution of gun violations can be manipulated. Advocates of gun possession point to reductions in the number of cases brought to court to buttress their position that current legislation is not being enforced while those in the judicial system point out the “flaw” in their logic. Frannie Forsman, a federal public defender in Las Vegas argues, “It’s like saying because you don’t have the prosecutions, the crime must have occurred.” Federal prosecutors claim they now convict a higher percentage of offenders with stronger sentences than before. While the gun lobby is accused of distorting information, anti-gun proponents do not leave a trustworthy impression either.
Another Las Vegas Review-Journal article in November 1998, “Self-Defense or Self-Destruct?,” probes the question as to why people make firearm purchases. Within a six week time frame, three instances occurred in which alleged assailants were killed by Las Vegans using firearms in self-defense. John Smith wrote a column, empathizing with Thomas Gaule and his decision to repel two home invaders that ultimately resulted in the death of the two burglars, “Maybe the jury was right, but put yourself in shooter’s place,” March 20, 1999. Gaule was accosted by a stun gun and assaulted in his home by two burglars. In retaliation, Gaule retrieved his shotgun and fired at his attackers. One died in his driveway, the other he chased for 500 yards while continuing to fire the shotgun. The jury found that the time it took Gaule to chase the burglar was ample time to reflect upon his actions. Criticizing the jury’s decision to convict Gaule of voluntary manslaughter and awaiting the motion for a new trial, Smith writes, “it’s hard to know how the court will rule. It’s even harder to imagine acting more rationally if you were Thomas Gaule.”

Because of the increase in the use of self-defense to repel would-be invaders, John Przybys of the Review-Journal interviewed an owner of a local gun store, Ron Montoya, who speculated, based on the 17 year operation of his current facility, “that media coverage of incidents involving the use of guns for self-defense does not tend to cause spikes in sales to first-time buyers. The enactment of legal restrictions on gun ownership or sales is more apt to do that . . . .”

Discussing fear-induced purchases, Montoya went on to say, “. . . the closest thing he’s seen to a fear-induced increase in gun sales to first-time buyers occurred
around the time of the L.A. riots in 1992, although that was very, very short lived . . . about a day.” There is some merit to Montoya’s proposition that legal restrictions are more likely to induce first-time purchasers than are fear-related incidents. It seems logical that if an opportunity to possess a firearm is foreclosed, those considering the purchase but hesitant to follow through would be motivated to complete the purchase before the ability to do so has been eliminated.

Overall, the questions of who purchases and possesses firearms and for what reasons seem largely unanswered. Writings on the subject are fraught with bias on both sides. Much of the data are contradictory, particularly with respect to fear as an indicator for firearms possession. What has become obvious is that firearms possession is occurring; violence involving firearms is increasing; and the debate between gun control activists and those favoring firearms possession is remains fairly heated despite or perhaps because of tragedies involving random acts of firearms violence such as Columbine. The purpose of examining the relationship between firearms purchases and incidents of public violence in Clark County, Nevada, is to assess public behavior [purchasing or not purchasing a firearm] immediately after significant acts of public violence occur. It is hoped that this exercise will help better explain the relationship between gun ownership and fear.
CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

Research Questions

Public violence involving firearms has become widespread and many communities have suffered its effects. As violent events have turned tragic, many communities have felt all too keenly the effects of random violence. Las Vegas is not immune to such tragedies. In June of 1999, Zane Floyd opened fire in a local grocery store and killed four of the five people he shot. Using random acts of public violence as an indicator for fear, it is hypothesized that the purchase of firearms is positively affected by such incidents of public violence.

Methods

The data used in determining the number of handguns registered were obtained from the statistics kept by the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, Firearms Detail (Firearms Detail). Firearms Detail obtains its data via applications for handgun registration in Clark County. Clark County is currently the only county in Nevada that has mandatory registration requirements and only handguns with a barrel length of eighteen inches or less must be registered. There is no registration requirement for any
other firearm. This mandatory registration requirement is Clark County Ordinance 12.04.110.

In Clark County handguns can be registered in two ways. The first method, and by far the most common, is at the point of sale at a firearms dealer’s place of business. A “D form” is completed showing specific information about the firearm purchased, demographic and identifying information about the purchaser, the date of sale, and delivery of the firearm. Any purchaser of a handgun in Clark County must complete the application for gun registration at the time of purchase. Once the form is completed and the handgun delivered, the application for registration is then forwarded to Firearms Detail where all registration records for firearms are kept. Clark County Ordinance 12.04.110, passed in 1965, requires that the application for firearms registration be forwarded to Metro Firearms Detail within twenty-four hours of owner possession of the firearm. A detailed search into the minutes of the county commission meeting did not reveal any useful information. There is no substantive history on the ordinance and no specific intent for the ordinance was expressed.

At the present time the Nevada State Legislature has chosen not to regulate the possession of firearms, generally, in any significant way, preferring instead to defer to Clark County Ordinances. Nevada Revised Statute 244.364 reserves the right to regulate firearms for the Nevada Legislature, but allows the legislature to defer to existing county ordinances. Section 12 of the Clark County Ordinances deal with firearms. The most significant ordinance, 12.04.110 requires firearm registration within 24 hours of possession. The rest of the ordinances proscribe locations for concealed weapons and
establish penalties for wrongful discharge, improper use of firearms, and other inappropriate activities.

The most significant legislation regulating firearms in Nevada, NRS §202.3653-3687, concerns the obtaining of concealed weapons permits. Within those sections, the eligibility requirements for obtaining a concealed weapons permit are listed, as are disapproved locations for carrying a concealed weapon. Although Assembly Bill 166, 1999, claims the intent of the legislation was to expand the number of locations concealed weapons could be carried, the legislation is prohibitive. Other sections dealing with improper discharge, forfeiture, types of weapons and penalties for minors who possess firearms and other regulatory requirements are located in the sections to which they are most applicable.

Once firearms registrations applications are completed, retail gun dealers forward the registration applications to Metro on a daily basis. Dealers have an incentive to see that the applications are received by Metro on a timely basis as Clark County Ordinance 12.04.100 places responsibility for the applications on the gun dealers. The aim of Firearms Detail is to have the registration completed with the Police Department and entered into their computer data base within thirty-six hours from the time the firearms purchase occurs. On an occasional basis, time delays do occur when some of the smaller gun dealers “hold” the registrations by waiting a week or two before forwarding them. Metro believes that these smaller dealers wait until they have several registrations to forward at once rather than sending one or two everyday. Metro attempts to deter this problem by communicating directly with the gun dealers when registrations are received.
late. There do not appear to be any problems with the accuracy of the information or completeness of the applications for registration of a firearm as the forms are simple, basic and a federal background check requiring the same information is run previously to owner possession of the firearm.

In terms of the federal background check, Nevada complies with the Brady Bill requirements in which the purchaser's name is submitted to National Instant Criminal Background Check System [NICS] to establish that the purchaser is allowed to possess a firearm. Under Brady, persons who have been committed to an institution, are addicted to illegal substances, are illegal aliens, or are subject to restraining orders because of domestic violence are prohibited from firearms possession. Until the background check has been completed, the terms of the Brady Bill prohibit actual possession. Thus, in Clark County, Nevada, purchasers of firearms at retail store are denied access to a newly purchased firearm for 36 hours [Clark County Ordinance 12.04.080].

The second method for registering a firearm in Clark County is to go directly to a police station and register the handgun there. In this case, an "A form" is completed. The same information is required except that in place of the date and delivery time of the firearm, the previous owner is simply identified.

While the registration application asks for name, social security number, date of birth, race, sex, physiological details, address, citizenship, driver's license number, and address; the firearms detail only logs the number of approved applications for firearms purchase and possession. No data detailing the number of denied applications were available. Data on the number of registered firearms in Clark County are readily
available since January 1995. Computerized records are available from January 1998 to the present. All original applications for registration of firearms are kept by Firearms Detail in the numerical sequence stamped on the form. However, as over 20,000 registration applications are received each year, the sheer volume of the information makes it impossible to collect additional information. Due to the confidential nature of the information contained on the forms, access to obtain further information was not granted.

In July 1999, the Firearms Detail began to keep the data in terms of the originating entity. In spreadsheet format it is possible to see where the application for registration was sought for Form A: Firearms Detail, Las Vegas Metro Police Department, North Las Vegas Police Department, Henderson Police Department and Mesquite Police Department. For Form D registrations areas include: Las Vegas Dealers, North Las Vegas Dealers, Henderson Dealers, Laughlin Dealers, Boulder City Dealers, and Mesquite Dealers.

Data regarding concealed weapons permits were collected from Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, CCW Detail (CCW Detail). Concealed weapons permits require applicants to attend an approved basic firearm course, taught by a certified instructor authorized to teach the course; completion of the application for concealed firearm permit; and payment of $99 in fees. Once issued, the permit is valid for five years. After five years, renewal may be granted upon attendance of an approved firearm course taught by a certified instructor authorized to teach the course; completion of the application for concealed firearm permit; and payment of $64 in fees. Four
statistical categories are enumerated: permit issued, permit denied, permit revoked, and permit suspended.

In February of 1995, the State Legislature enacted legislation allowing for concealed weapons. Senator Lawrence E. Jacobsen, from rural Nevada, sponsored this legislation because of growing concerns about the ability to self-protect by the citizenry. Senator Jacobsen became an enthusiast for self-protection when his own life was threatened while he was the Speaker of the Assembly. Senator Jacobsen’s concerns resulted in Senate Bill 299. Testimony from the committee, while voluminous, evidenced that uniformity of concealed carrying requirements throughout Nevada was a weighty concern for the legislature as prior to this legislation each county determined its own concealed firearms carrying criteria. A vast majority of the legislators supported the legislation. The Senate passed the bill on June 16, with a vote of 19 yeas and 2 nays. The Assembly finally passed the legislation on July 1, with 37 supporting votes while 5 disapproved.

In 1997, the legislation was amended. However, the changes were technical in nature and did not substantively affect the legislation. In 1999, the legislature chose to amplify the legislation by expanding the locations where concealed weapons can be carried and adopting reciprocity requirements so that other states’ concealed weapons permits can be recognized in Nevada. There was overwhelming support for these measures as well. In the Senate, 19 of 21 legislators approved the changes. In the Assembly, there was unanimous support [40 yeas, 0 nays].
As of October 1995, CCW Detail began keeping records on a categorical basis. Data are kept on a monthly basis and are sparse. The only statistics available are the number of permits issued, denied, revoked or suspended each month. The sparsity of the data prevent analysis in terms of gender, age or race. Nevertheless, the monthly cumulative numbers of weapons registration and concealed weapons permits will allow comparison between discrete events and numbers of weapons and permits. Therefore, it will be possible to see if there is an increase in the purchase of firearms after specific incidences of public violence.

Because of the mandates of Clark County Ordinances that firearms applications for the registration of weapons be delivered to Metro within twenty-four hours, the information the data are based upon is timely. Those who work in the data collection section of the Firearms Detail have expressed that all firearms registered are included in the numbers recorded for that month, thus there is no fluidity of recording from one month to the next. The problem with smaller dealers “holding” applications appears to be corrected by their monthly record keeping methods and enough time has passed that the statistics used for this study would have been corrected.

Initially, the data appear to increase as incidents of public violence are recorded and then decrease to normal levels. Further analysis is required to determine whether or not the increases in applications for firearms registrations are significant.

Variables

The independent variable is public violence involving firearms. Public violence involves homicides in which stranger-victim(s) are killed for an unidentified reason or for
no reason at all. The dependent variables are the number of weapons purchased on a monthly basis in Clark County, Nevada, and the number of applications for concealed weapons permits sought on a monthly basis in Clark County, Nevada.

The dependent variable in this study is limited to legal guns sales. The purpose for this limitation is to track the perception of the general public. It is assumed that the public is generally law-abiding and willing to submit to the current regulations and registration requirements involved with the purchase of firearms in the State of Nevada. Data involving ownership of firearms by individuals who refuse to register, use firearms illegally, for illegal purposes, or obtain firearms through illegal means are not available for study and are therefore outside the realm of the independent variable.

Data Analysis

The proposed measurement for the independent variable, public violence, is to be determined by the number of incidences involving public violence occurring on a monthly basis in Clark County, Nevada, as reported by the Las Vegas Review-Journal and the Las Vegas Sun between January 15, 1997, and December 31, 1999. The time period is restricted for two reasons: first, data for random violent events is not available before January 15, 1997, because the archives of the Las Vegas Review-Journal and the Las Vegas Sun newspapers were established on that date. Currently, neither the Las Vegas Review-Journal nor the Las Vegas Sun grant public access to their print archives. Second, the ending of the millennium gives the study a natural boundary for ending the analysis of the data.
Public violence is measured in terms of an event that occurs in places the general public frequents, such as a business or government building, in which occupants of that location are threatened with physical harm or death by a stranger. The number of publicly violent incidents that occurred were recorded on a daily basis for each month for the period of analysis. It was therefore possible to compare violent events involving firearms on a monthly basis with the number of handgun registrations and applications for concealed weapons permits to determine if there is a correlation.

Co-Variation

It is expected that as public violence increases, the acquisition of firearms and concealed weapons permits will also increase. Despite the sparsity of the data, the hypothesis is relevant to understanding and assessing the role that fear plays in the decision to possess firearms and/or seek a concealed weapons permit. The methodology employed is straightforward: if fear is a predictor of the decision to purchase a firearm or seek a concealed weapons permit, it is expected a positive relationship between the two variables will emerge. Thus, the number of firearms registrations and concealed weapons permits should rise immediately after random public violent events involving firearms occur.

If the number of registered firearms and the number of issued concealed weapons permits remains the same, fear may not play a significant role in influencing decision-making regarding firearms and random public violent events may have no effect on such decisions. No change in behavior regarding the purchase of firearms or desire to obtain
concealed weapons permits may indicate that violent crime involving firearms has no adverse effect on individuals generally.

A negative relationship between fear and the registration of firearms or issuance of concealed weapons permits, would tend to indicate that fear is not a predictor of who chooses to possess firearms, and that random public violent crime may tend to discourage the ownership of firearms and the desire to obtain a concealed weapons permit.
CHAPTER III

FINDINGS

Analysis of the Data

In assessing the data two relationships were initially determined to be important: the correlation between the number of registered firearms and the number of random public violent events and the correlation between the number of concealed weapons permits applied for and the number of random public violent events. The data for both relationships was analyzed in monthly intervals over three years [January 1997-December 1999]. When appropriate, data were averaged in attempt to provide clarity to the posited results. When discovered, seasonal trends in the data were controlled for in an attempt to establish a more complete review of the data.

Firearms Correlations

Using a scatterplot graph, the number of firearms registered each month for the three years was plotted along the y axis, while the number of random public violent events occurring on a monthly basis over the three year period was plotted along the x axis. In this context the data did not suggest a significant relationship of any kind between the two variables. The Pearson correlation shows a statistically insignificant negative relationship, confirming the analysis of the scatterplot data.
Figure 1. Scatterplot of Firearms Registered vs Events reported in the same month

Table 1. Correlation of Firearms Registered vs Events reported in the same month

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Firearms Registered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In an attempt to establish more clarity, a 30 day lag of events was plotted to allow a more fluid time period to be considered. Again, the data did not suggest a statistically significant relationship between the two variables. The data confirm there is no trend.

![Scatterplot of Firearms Registered vs Events reported in the prior month](image)

**Figure 2.** Scatterplot of Firearms Registered vs Events reported in the prior month

The 30 day lag of events did establish a slightly positive relationship between the variables, .078. However, this relationship is not statistically significant, no true relationship between the variables was established and it does not appear that fear is a valid indicator of why individuals choose to possess firearms.
Table 2. Correlation of Firearms Registered vs Events reported in the prior month

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>Firearms Registered</th>
<th>Events (lag 30 days)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.658</td>
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<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, a 60 day lag of events was plotted to confirm whether or not a correlation between the variables could be established. This time, the data validated that there is no significant relationship between the two variables. A scatterplot reaffirmed the lack of any trend in the data. The Pearson correlation shows a slightly negative relationship, -.076; nonetheless it is not meaningful enough to be considered statistically significant.

Table 3. Correlation of Firearms Registered vs Events reported for two prior months

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>Firearms Registered</th>
<th>Events (lag 60 days)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>-.076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 3. Scatterplot of Firearms Registered vs Events reported for two prior months

Concealed Weapons Permit Correlations

The same measuring analysis for firearms registrations was utilized to measure the nature of the correlations between concealed weapons permits issued and the number of random public violent events. The data on permits issued for concealed weapons is kept in monthly intervals. Random public violent events were also numbered on a monthly basis. A scatterplot was employed to ascertain the nature of this relationship. The number of concealed weapons permits issued was plotted along the y axis while the
number of random public violent events was plotted on the x axis. The scatterplot did not reveal much of a correlation and emphasized the lack of a trend of any kind in the data.

![Scatterplot of Concealed Weapons Permits Issued vs Events reported in the same month](image)

**Figure 4.** Scatterplot of Concealed Weapons Permits Issued vs Events reported in the same month

The Pearson correlation reveals a slight positive relationship between the variables, .083. However, the relationship is not statistically significant. It is interesting to note that while the relationship between firearms registrations and events is weakly negative, the relationship between concealed weapons permits and events, superficially at least, appears to be the opposite.
Table 4. Correlation of Concealed Weapons Permits Issued vs Events reported in the same month

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>Concealed Weapons Permits Issue Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An attempt to establish a stronger relationship was made by adjusting the data for random public violent events with a 60 day lag. Several requirements must be complied with in order to apply for a concealed weapons permit, some of which include training and background checks. Because of the inherent nature of a time delay involved with training and background checks, analyzing the data for concealed weapons permits on a thirty day time frame may not yield accurate results. According to CCW Detail, the average time frame for obtaining a concealed weapons permit is ninety days. However, it is not uncommon for Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department to issue permits within a 30 to 60 day time frame if there is no backlog. Thus allowing for a more fluid period of time in which to analyze the data is not only reasonable, but helpful as well. The scatterplot reaffirmed the lack of any significant correlation between the variables and no discernable trend. The Pearson correlation affirmed a negative relationship between the number of concealed weapons permits issued and the number of random public violent events. However the correlation at -.103 remains statistically meaningless.
Figure 5. Scatterplot of Concealed Weapons Permits Issued vs Events reported for two prior months

Table 5. Correlation of Concealed Weapons Permits Issued vs Events reported for two prior months

Correlations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Concealed Weapons Permits Issue</th>
<th>Events (lag 60 days)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>-0.561</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.561</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Seasonal Trends

Unable to establish any weighty relationship between the variables and finding no discernable trends when analyzing the relationships between the variables, an attempt to find seasonal trends in the data was employed. While analyzing the data for firearms registrations, the number of registered firearms was plotted against a time series of three years [January 1997-December 1999]. The resulting graph clearly shows that there is a seasonal trend for the registration of firearms.

![Seasonal Trend of Firearm Registrations](image)

**Figure 6.** Seasonal Trend of Firearm Registrations.
Beginning in November of each year, continuing through January, there is a clear increase in the number of firearms registered, thus confirming that purchases are more likely to occur around the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. According to Firearms Detail, firearms are a popular Christmas gift item in Nevada. There is also an overall decrease in the number of firearms registrations from February to October. Based on that trend, another graph, Figure 7, was plotted to further explore the data. This graph averages the total for each month over the three year time frame and displays a mean for each month. The data clearly validate the trend in the earlier assessment.

![Figure 7. Three Year Mean of Firearm Registrations](image-url)
There is a significant increase generally for all years around the November to January time frame, with a rapid decreases in February and April and steady decreases August, September, and October. This same method of analysis was applied to the concealed weapons permits data. The data for concealed weapons permits [plotted as a monthly mean for the three years] reveals that applications for CCW permits tend to decrease as firearms registrations increase. In comparing the two graphs, it is clear that there is no relationship between firearms registrations and applications for concealed weapons permits.

![Graph](image)

**Figure 8.** Three Year Mean of Concealed Weapons Permits Issued

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While there is a slight increase in the number of concealed weapons permits sought in November and December, there is a notable decrease from January to February. That decrease is followed by the largest increase in March-April and the most substantial decrease occurring by the end of April. Some of the disparity may be accounted for by taking into consideration new casino openings during this time frame. While not all casinos have visibly armed security guards on the casino floor, there are armed security personnel present. Casino openings for major resorts [those catering to out-of-state tourists, that have large numbers of available rooms, and are located on the Strip] occurred on a frequent basis during the data set time frame.

Frequencies Occurring in Firearms Registration Data

The data for the variables were also assessed by plotting the mean, median and standard deviation for the firearms data set over the three year period. A mean of 2324 and a median of 2257 emerged. The standard deviation was 251. For the most part, the data were evenly distributed. However, one month, December 1999, was significantly separated from the data. In December 1999, 3123 firearms were registered. The z-score for this month was 3.18 for a significance of three times the standard deviation. This result is particularly interesting because it illustrates a link between fear [the fear of Y2K] and firearms possession [registration]. However, the fear is probably more appropriately described in terms of protection of property [residence or deterrence against possible looting] rather than as a protection of the person [concealed weapons permits decreased during this time frame].
Due to the significance level of the increase in firearm registration in December 1999, the possibility that data for that month were skewing the overall results of the data was considered. A new frequency, filtering out December 1999, was obtained. In this analysis the mean was 2303, the median was 2256 and the standard deviation was 214; hence the unusually high firearms registration activity of December 1999 did affect the overall data. This time the data fell evenly across the distribution curve.
Statistically assessing the unique behavior [registering more firearms] associated with the uncertainty surrounding the ending of the millennium and Y2K shows that when events happen that cannot be controlled, people tend to behave differently. Following this logic, new questions regarding uniqueness of random public violent events began to surface. For example, do individuals have a tolerance level for violence and might a particular event with dramatic circumstances cause individuals to behave against the norm? This question led to a different statistical analysis of the original hypotheses.
Unique Random Violent Events

The data obtained clearly confirm that there is no correlation between firearms registrations and the random public violent events selected for the study. The data also verify that there is no relationship between issued concealed weapons permits and the random public violent events selected. However, while analyzing the random public violent events selected for the study that occurred between January 1997 to December 1999 time period, one random publicly violent event was much more dramatic than any of the others. This event, as previously mentioned, occurred in June 1999 when Zane Floyd gunned down five people, four of whom died, in Albertson’s. Local media extensively covered the tragedy and Glenn Puit, a Las Vegas Review-Journal staff writer, attempted his own informal survey of Las Vegas gun dealers. Puit claimed his survey indicates guns sales increased by as much as forty percent after the Albertson’s incident. Puit also contended that a heightened interest in obtaining concealed weapons permits resulted from the shooting [according to Puit’s article, requests for concealed weapons permits jumped to over sixteen per day after the Albertson’s shooting compared to a previous average of five or six per day].

Utilizing the data obtained from Firearms Detail and CCW Detail to determine the relationships between fear and firearm registration and fear and concealed weapons permits, attempts were made to establish the statistical relevance of Puit’s contentions. Relying on the frequency data for firearms filtering out December 1999 to establish the mean 2303, median 2256 and the standard deviation 214 for the previous six years, the data for June 1999 were analyzed. In June of 1999, 2578 firearms were registered and a
z-score computed. The z-score for June 1999 was 1.29, only one standard deviation from
the mean and not particularly statistically significant. When a distribution curve was
plotted, the data remained within normal distribution levels.

However, when seasonal trends were controlled for, the data became much more
statistically important. Comparing only the summer months of May, June, and July and
recalculating the frequencies showed that when compared with only the summer months
of the past three years, the activity with regard to firearms registration was significantly
significant. Computing the frequency for the summer months of May, June, and July
yielded a mean of 2267, a median of 2221 and a standard deviation of 151.

Figure 11. Frequencies for Firearms Data, Seasonal Trends Controlled
Comparing the firearm registrations for June 1999 against the mean yielded a z-score of 2.06. Now two standard deviations within the mean, the data results are much more statistically significant. When a standard distribution curve was plotted for only the summer months, June 1999 fell outside of the normal range of distribution. Therefore, the hard data obtained from Firearms Detail, statistically supports Mr. Puit’s informal survey.

Attention was then given to Mr. Puit’s second contention that concealed weapons permits also increased as a result of the Zane Floyd tragedy. In assessing the frequency, seasonal trends were controlled for and only the data for the summer months; May, June, and July, were analyzed. Comparing the data for concealed weapons permits within this parameter revealed a mean of 119, a median of 117 and a standard deviation of 36.

Specific examination of June 1999 revealed that 130 concealed weapons permits were issued, only slightly higher than the mean and not statistically significant. After plotting the data for summer months along a distribution curve, June 1999 fell roughly in the center. Surprisingly, two unexpected months, May 1997 and July 1998, fell outside the normal distribution curve. A possible explanation for the rise in concealed weapons permits in May 1997, could be due to a particularly horrific random publicly violent event that occurred during that month. On May 13, 1997 some children at a Las Vegas park sprayed a man in his car with a high powered squirt gun. Apparently irritated, the man went home and returned to the park with a firearm. At least 40 children were playing at the park when he began firing the firearm. An armed bystander returned fire and managed to subdue the man. No children were injured. However, statistical analysis of
the fear and concealed weapons permits relationship, does not support this explanation. Furthermore, by law, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department can take up to four months to issue concealed weapons permits. Because of the inherent time delay in the process, it is doubtful that the increase in concealed weapons permits for this month is directly attributed to the May 13, 1997 event.

![Diagram of concealed weapons permits issued with statistical measures: mean = 119, N = 9.00, Std. Dev = 35.57.]

**Figure 12.** Frequencies for Firearms Data, Seasonal Trends Controlled

The increased number of concealed weapons permits in July 1998 cannot be specifically attributed to a random public violent event as only one criminal event...
involving firearms fitting the criteria for this study occurred in the preceding three months. Another possible explanation accounting for such a significant increase in the number of concealed weapons permits for May 1997 and July 1998 could be hiring increases at the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department. Metro has increased hiring over the past three years, primarily as a response to increased growth in Clark County. Unfortunately, hiring increases are difficult to document and the time delay Metro has in issuing the permits [120 days] makes analysis of this proposition impossible. In any case, the data do not support Mr. Puit's claims that concealed weapons permits tripled immediately after the Albertson's incident.

Although the attempt was made to establish a relationship between fear and an increase in registered firearms and concealed weapons permits, the data simply do not support such a relationship. After controlling for one time events such as Y2K and seasonal trends, it is possible to establish a relationship between fear and increases in registered firearms when a random public violent event so astonishing that an entire community is affected occurs. Even then there continues to be no relationship between fear and increases in concealed weapons permits.
CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS

Discussion of Results

As is indicated in other studies, fear as a predictor or indicator of gun possession is difficult to measure. None of the data gathered supports the hypothesis that fear generally inspires the purchase of firearms. Fear does not appear to influence decisions to obtain weapons permits either. What does emerge is that a tolerance to violence must exist. The threshold level of that violence is unknown and not addressed by this study. However, it appears that if an event is unusual enough, if it is random enough, if it exposes vulnerability enough and if it is devastating enough, fear may motivate firearms purchases. It also appears that fear, on any level, does not motivate individuals to seek concealed weapons permits.

The data for this study was limited in form, availability and content. The current record keeping practices at Firearms Detail and CCW Detail is limited, minimal, and rudimentary. Other than straight numbers, little identifying information is kept; therefore sophisticated statistical manipulation of the data was foreclosed. Another significant limitation in the data is that egregious violent events such as the Albertson’s shooting are not common occurrences and thus the number of random public violent events meeting the criteria for the study were few in number.
The data also confirms that those who seek firearms do not also seek concealed weapons permits, further reinforcing the data that fear and concealed weapons permits are not significantly linked. The data further suggest that there is a larger safety concern for protecting property such as a residence. This is affirmed by the statistically significant increase in the purchase of firearms that occurred in December 1999 in anticipation of Y2K. The need to protect the person, as evidenced by seeking a permit to carry a concealed firearm, does not appear to be as strong.

The conclusions from this study mirror the findings of previous studies. Specifically, the Williams and McGrath (1976) study in which they found that the relationship between victimization and gun ownership was weak, while the relationship between fear in a neighborhood and gun ownership was negative. This study also supports the findings of DeFronzo (1979) in which he concluded that the fear of criminal victimization acts does not increase the ownership of handguns in the population. When analyzing the Albertson's tragedy as a discrete event, the results of this study also support the first of Puit's two contentions: that fear and increased gun sales were related.

However, the second claim that requests for concealed weapons permits increased 3 times above normal levels was not substantiated by the raw data nor was there statistical support for his contention. Indeed, the experience of a local gun dealer in Las Vegas was validated when he expressed that the only time in the past 17 years he has witnessed anything close to fear-induced first time buyer purchases occurred in 1992 during the L.A. riots. He concluded that even those fear induced purchases were short-lived, lasting about one day.
Conclusions and Recommendations for Further Study

The insight to be gained from this study is that fear is not a valid or useful predictor of why people possess firearms or seek concealed weapons permits. The data collected for this study reveal that there is no statistically significant correlation between firearms purchases and the desire to obtain a concealed weapons permit. It is therefore necessary to explore the nature of other components involved in the purchase of firearms.

The decision to purchase a firearm or carry a concealed weapon is complex and unclear. While numerous studied have attempted to measure a variety of factors that could contribute to firearm purchases, valid, reliable indicators remain elusive. Perhaps exploring the effects victimization, gender, lifestyle, recreational pursuits, age, legislation, lawlessness and why people carry concealed weapons would be useful. Exploring the differences between first-time firearms purchases and those who own more than one firearm may also be insightful.

While recognizing that generalized fear, measured as a random public violent event, is not a valid predictor of firearms purchases, possibly specific fear or victimization influences the decision to purchase a firearm. More study concentrating on the victimization of first-time firearms purchasers may be useful. Gender may also be specifically linked to a decision to purchase firearms. Previous studies have indicated that women are more likely than men to purchase firearms for protection. Because women tend to be more susceptible to violent crime than men, gender may be important as a predictor of future firearms purchases.
Lifestyle may be a useful indicator. Those who are most likely to need “protection,” such as single women, persons who reside in low-income neighborhoods, or persons who frequent or reside in high-crime areas, may be more prone to purchase firearms than those who are not affected by these particular lifestyle concerns. Lifestyle may affect firearms purchases in other ways as well. Individuals who reside in rural areas, enjoy the outdoors or hunting might be more likely to purchase firearms than those who enjoy other pursuits.

Assessing personal hobbies or recreation may be helpful as well. There are numerous gun clubs, shooting galleries and gun shows that attempt to foster an interest in firearms. In fact, in Nevada, just outside Clark County, a facility devoted exclusively to firearms and weaponry is currently under development. Superficially it appears that recreational pursuits could influence the decision to purchase firearms.

Age may have an impact on a decision to obtain a firearm. Firearms seem to be a symbol of power in our society. Firearms are also a tangible source of power in our society. Police departments, security guards and protection details use firearms to deter potential threats. Adolescents who may feel powerless could utilize firearms to gain power and attention. There have been several incidents in the past three years of minors obtaining firearms and committing horrific acts of violence. This particular indicator would be hard to analyze and assess as minors are not allowed to legally purchase or possess handguns. However, in some states they can possess rifles and shotguns.

A particularly interesting potential indicator is how legislation, proposed as well as passed, affects the decision to purchase a firearm. The rights, if any, stemming from
the Second Amendment are unclear. Perhaps the perception that the ability to possess a firearm will be foreclosed by new legislation becomes the motivation for first-time purchasers to obtain firearms. Maybe legislation that significantly restricts the ability or right to possess a firearm is worrisome and individuals act to preserve current rights. A fear of lawlessness may help explain why individuals purchase firearms. In Clark County, Nevada, preparation for Y2K included purchasing firearms as shown by the data. Fear of a breakdown in order and the failure of government services such as police protection may help explain the motivation behind some firearm purchases.

Finally, attempting to determine why people carry concealed firearms may explain why some firearms are purchased. Although there was no significant relationship between firearms purchases and obtaining a concealed weapons permit established in this study, the two variables can still be related. Consideration of variables other than fear may result in different conclusions. Determining the requirements and demands of different professions may be worthwhile. Police officers have a greater likelihood of carrying a concealed weapon than would a cashier at BurgerKing. Looking past the obvious requirements to carry firearms that particular professions have, other professional may choose to carry weapons as well. For example, judges, legislators, doctors, lawyers, private investigators and others may have valid reasons for obtaining firearms.
APPENDIX I

GUN REGISTRATION FORM A
# A000067602

LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

GUN REGISTRATION

GUN INFORMATION

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OWNER'S SIGNATURE

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APPENDIX II

GUN REGISTRATION FORM D
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LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT
GUN REGISTRATION

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APPENDIX III

CONCEALED WEAPON PERMIT APPLICATION
LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT
APPLICATION FOR CONCEALED FIREARM PERMIT
GENERAL INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

1. INITIAL APPLICATION
   A. Training
      1. Applicant must complete an Approved Basic Firearm Course, taught by a certified instructor who is authorized to provide this service. If there is a question about the course eligibility, contact LVMPD CCW Detail.
   B. Completion of Application
      1. Completely fill out application. MUST BE PRINTED IN BLACK INK OR TYPED.
      2. Be sure to include any other names ever used under "ALIASES.*
      3. List all residences in the last 10 years (with "ALIASES"), including present address.
      4. If you were born in another country you will need proof of legal residency.
      5. If you are mailing your application, have your signature notarized. If you are bringing your application to our office, wait for a Firearms Detail employee to witness your signature.
      6. Include a copy of your Nevada Driver’s License or Identification card. Make certain your address is correct with DMV. You may have a mailing address, but DMV needs to also have the location where you reside. If you have a driver’s license from another state you must surrender that license to DMV and obtain a Nevada Driver’s License.
      7. Include a copy of the front and back of your LVMPD Gun Registration Card for the weapons on your application.
   C. Fees
      1. A $60 investigation fee is required at the time of application, made payable to LVMPD. The $60 fee can be in the form of a personal check, money order or cashier's check. CASH WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.
      2. A $39 fingerprint processing fee is required at the time of fingerprinting. This fee must be in the form of a money order or cashier's check ONLY. This fee should be made payable to Nevada Highway Patrol.

Submit this application in person to the location listed below:

Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
Concealed Firearms Detail
400 East Stewart Avenue
Las Vegas, Nevada 89101-2984
(702) 229-3996

2. RENEWAL APPLICATION
   A. Training
      1. Applicant must complete an Approved Basic Firearm Course, taught by a certified instructor who is authorized to provide this service. If there is a question about the course eligibility, contact LVMPD CCW Detail.
   B. Completion of Application
      1. Complete application as stated above.
   C. Fees
      1. A $25 renewal fee is required at the time of the renewal application. This fee must be in the form of a personal check, money order or cashier’s check. CASH WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.
      2. A $39 fingerprint processing fee is required at the time of fingerprinting. This fee must be in the form of a money order or cashier’s check ONLY. This fee should be made payable to Nevada Highway Patrol.
   D. Time Limit
      1. If a permittee fails to renew by the expiration date, the renewal fee will include an additional $15 non-refundable late fee.
ADD ITIONAL FEES
A. Duplicate Permit
   1. A $15 fee is required to replace a lost, stolen or destroyed permit. A police report must also be filed.

B. Change of Weapon
   1. A $25 fee is required to add or change a weapon on the permit.

4. ELIGIBILITY
   A. You are not eligible for a permit to carry a concealed firearm if any of the following apply to you:
      1. If you are not a resident of Clark County and at least 21 years of age.
      2. If you do not provide the required documentation to demonstrate competence with a firearm.
      3. If you have an outstanding warrant for your arrest.
      4. If you have been judicially declared incompetent or insane.
      5. If you have been admitted to a mental health facility.
      6. If you have habitually used intoxicating liquor or a controlled substance to the extent that your normal faculties are impaired.
      7. If you have been convicted of a crime involving the use, or threatened use, of force or violence, including misdemeanors, within the last 3 years.
      8. If you have been convicted of a felony.
      9. If you have been convicted of a crime involving domestic violence or stalking, or you are currently subject to a restraining order or other order for protection against violence.
     10. If you are currently on parole or probation.
     11. If you have been, within the preceding 5 years, subject to any requirements imposed by a court.
     12. If you have made a false statement on any application.
     13. If you are subject to a court order for child support and are not in compliance with that order.
     14. If you have been discharged from the Armed Forces under dishonorable circumstances.
     15. If you are not lawfully admitted into the United States.

5. ISSUANCE OF PERMIT
   Upon approval of your application, your permit will be mailed to you. If your application is denied, you may seek judicial review of the denial by filing a petition in District Court.

6. CHANGE OF ADDRESS
   Under the Concealed Weapons law, you are required to notify this office, in writing, if you change your address. You will be subjected to a $15 penalty if you fail to do so.

7. CARRYING OF PERMIT
   Your concealed firearms permit is good for the entire State of Nevada. For specific prohibited locations, refer to NRS 202.3673.

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NOTICE THE APPLICANT IS ADVISED:

1. That this application is an official document and that any misrepresentation or failure to reveal requested information may be deemed sufficient cause for refusal or revocation of a Permit to Carry a Concealed Firearm.

2. That it is the responsibility of the Applicant to familiarize himself/herself with the provisions of the Statutes, Ordinances, Rules and Regulations pertaining to the privilege of carrying a concealed firearm, and in particular with the provisions of Sections 202.280, 202.290, 202.320, 202.350, and 202.360 of Nevada Revised Statutes, City of Las Vegas, Clark County Ordinances.

3. Any Permit granted shall be effective for five (5) years, to expire on the applicant's birthday of the fifth year. Requests for renewal must be made thirty (30) days prior to the expiration date.
# LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

APPLICATION FOR CONCEALED FIREARM PERMIT

**PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT IN BLACK INK**

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1. Are there currently any outstanding warrants for your arrest?  
   - Yes  
   - No

2. Have you ever been judicially declared mentally incompetent or insane?  
   - Yes  
   - No

3. Have you ever been admitted to a mental facility?  
   - Yes  
   - No

4a. During the 5 years immediately preceding the date of this application, have you been convicted of driving under the influence of alcohol or controlled substance in this or any other state?  
   - Yes  
   - No

4b. During the 5 years immediately preceding the date of this application, have you habitually used intoxicating liquor or narcotics to the extent that your normal faculties were impaired?  
   - Yes  
   - No

5. During the 5 years immediately preceding the date of this application, have you ever been committed for treatment of the abuse of alcoholic beverages in this or any other state?  
   - Yes  
   - No

6. During the 5 years immediately preceding the date of this application, have you ever been committed for treatment of a crime related to controlled substance in this or any other state?  
   - Yes  
   - No

7. During the 3 years immediately preceding the date of this application, have you ever been convicted of a crime involving the use or threatened use of force or violence punishable as a misdemeanor?  
   - Yes  
   - No

8. Have you ever been convicted of a felony in this state or any other state?  
   - Yes  
   - No

9. During the past 5 years preceding this application, have you been subject to any requirements imposed by a court as a condition to the court's withholding the entry of judgment or suspension of a sentence, for the conviction of a felony?  
   - Yes  
   - No

10. Have you ever been convicted of a crime involving domestic violence or stalking in this or any other state?  
    - Yes  
    - No

11. Are you currently subject to a restraining order, injunction or other order for protection against violence in this or any other state?  
    - Yes  
    - No

12. Are you currently on parole or probation for a conviction in this or any other state?  
    - Yes  
    - No

13. Have you ever renounced your United States Citizenship?  
    - Yes  
    - No

List all residences, including present address, for the past 10 years: (Use separate sheet of paper for additional addresses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address</th>
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<th>Date of Residence</th>
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LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT
APPLICATION FOR CONCEALED FIREARM PERMIT

THIS APPLICATION IS EXECUTED UNDER OATH. FALSIFICATION OR MISREPRESENTATION OF ANY PART OR ANY DOCUMENT SUBJECTS THE APPLICANT TO DENIAL OR REVOCATION OF THE PERMIT FOR WHICH THIS APPLICATION IS SUBMITTED.

Before me this day personally appeared __________________________________________, who being duly sworn, deposes and says: ____________________________

Name of Applicant

I DO HEREBY SWEAR AND AFFIRM UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY THAT THE FOLLOWING ASSERTIONS ARE TRUE AND CORRECT:

A. The information contained in this application and all attached documents are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

B. I agree to, understand, and will abide by all applicable laws of the State of Nevada and Clark County relative to the use of firearms.

C. I agree to maintain proficiency with the firearm(s) listed on this permit and to exercise due care and diligence in the handling, carrying and use of said firearm.

D. I accept full responsibility for my actions while carrying a firearm under the provisions of this permit, and I hold harmless Clark County, the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department and all of its employees from any legal action or liability resulting from the granting of this permit.

______________________________
Signature of Applicant

TYPE OF IDENTIFICATION PRODUCED

☐ Nevada Driver's License Number: ____________________________

☐ Nevada Identification Card Number: ____________________________

Subscribed and Sworn before me this _______ day of __________________, 19______, by ______________________

______________________________
Notary:

(Seal)

Name of Applicant

State of Nevada, County of Clark.

LVMPD Employee: ___________ P #: ______
LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT
AUTHORIZED FIREARMS SAFETY COURSE
CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

Issued To

Date

1. __________________________ certify that the above named applicant has:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructor's Initials</th>
<th>Student's Initials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- Successfully completed a course of instruction, and demonstrated proficiency in basic firearm knowledge, and the safe handling of firearms.
- Successfully completed a course of instruction, and demonstrated proficiency in ammunition knowledge and the safe handling of ammunition.
- Successfully completed a course of instruction, and demonstrated proficiency in the cleaning and care of firearms.
- Successfully completed a course of instruction in storage and child proofing firearms.
- Successfully completed a course of instruction, and demonstrated proficiency in handgun shooting techniques and positions.
- Successfully completed a course of instruction in the laws pertaining to the use of firearms in the State of Nevada, County of Clark, and City of Las Vegas.
- Successfully completed a course of instruction in the use of deadly force, the force continuum, and civil and criminal liability.
- Successfully completed a course of instruction in the knowledge of avoiding criminal attack and controlling a violent confrontation.
- Successfully completed a course of instruction, and demonstrated proficiency in firing a handgun and range safety.
- Successfully completed and passed a Firearms Qualification Course as required.

Instructor's Signature

Student's Signature

Name of Business

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LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT
FIREARM CERTIFICATION
TO BE COMPLETED BY RANGEMASTER ONLY

Date:

NOTE: The firearm the Rangemaster certifies applicant proficiency shall be the concealed firearm carried by successful applicant.

Rangemaster of

attest that passed suitable proficiency in test firing a:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Make</th>
<th>Model</th>
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<th>Serial #</th>
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at ____________________________ (name of range)

Date: ___________ Time: ___________ Score: ___________

Rangemaster's Signature: ____________________________________________

I understand the above firearm(s) are the only firearm(s) I may carry concealed. I have qualified with each firearm listed.

Applicant's Signature: ________________________________
WAIVER AND AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE INFORMATION

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I authorize you to furnish the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department with any and all information that you have concerning me, my employment records, my reputation, my physical and mental condition and my military service records. Information of a confidential or privileged nature may be included. Your reply will be used to assist the police department in determining my qualifications and suitability for a Concealed Firearms Permit.

In addition to the above requested information, you may release arrests, detentions, field citations, field interview cards, officers' records, jail/custody booking records, traffic citations, and traffic accident information, district attorney records, court records and reports, probation and parole reports and records, laboratory reports and results, and any other criminal justice records, reports or information source.

This authorization and request is given freely and without duress, voluntarily waiving any protection against unauthorized disclosure of information under the Privacy Act and other similar legal provisions, and with the understanding that information furnished will be used by the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department in conjunction with my application for a Concealed Firearms Permit.

I hereby release you, your organization and others from any liability or damage which may result from furnishing the information requested, including any liability pursuant to any state or local code of ordinance or any similar laws.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Nevada, that the foregoing is true and correct.

Applicant's Signature ____________________________ Date __________

Notary / Metro Employee ____________________________ Date __________

NOTE: A PHOTOCOPY REPRODUCTION OF THIS REQUEST SHALL BE FOR ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES AS VALID AS THE ORIGINAL. YOU MAY RETAIN THIS FORM IN YOUR FILES.
LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT
APPLICATION FOR CONCEALED FIREARM PERMIT

CHILD SUPPORT INFORMATION

Please mark the appropriate response (failure to mark one of the three will result in denial of the application).

____ I am not subject to a court order for the support of a child.

____ I am subject to a court order for the support of one or more children and am in compliance with the order or am in compliance with a plan approved by the district attorney or other public agency enforcing the order for the repayment of the amount owed pursuant to the court order; or

____ I am subject to a court order for the support of one or more children and am not in compliance with the order or a plan approved by the district attorney or other public agency enforcing the order for the repayment of the amount owed pursuant to the order.

________________________________________
Signature of Applicant

________________________________________
Date

FALSIFICATION OF ANY PART OF THE APPLICATION
WILL RESULT IN DENIAL.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authorized FIRING RANGES</th>
<th>CONCEALED FIREARMS COURSE</th>
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| 23KPG.............................702 751-1511  
Terry Denton  
2391 E Thousandaire  
Pahrump NV 89048  |
| Active Sports..................452-6555  
2264 S Nellis Suite C1  
Las Vegas NV 89104  |
| American Gun Club..............362-4321  
3440 S Arville  
Las Vegas NV 89102  |
| Arizona Firearms Institute.....520 768-6502  
1934 Easy St  
Bullhead City AZ 86426  |
| Big Guns Ammo....................435 574-2040  
391 Cedar Tree Dr  
Brookside UT 84782-6045  |
| Boulder Rifle & Pistol Club Inc....293-1885  
P O Box 60534  
Pahrump NV 89006  |
| Desert Arms......................678-4440  
9425 Oyster Dr  
Las Vegas NV 89128  |
| Discount Firearms...............567-1158  
1212 N Boulder Hwy  
Henderson NV 89015  |
| GMJ Enterprises...................460-3405  
James L Mayhugh  
8170 S Eastern Ave Suite 4 #275  
Las Vegas NV 89123  |
| Druckman & Associates, INC......643-4333  
3285 Las Vegas Blvd N  
Las Vegas NV 89115  |
| The Gun Store....................454-1110  
Bob Irwin - Tony Dee  
2900 E Tropicana  
Las Vegas NV 89121  |
| Don Helm/Ron Drake..............734-7134  
536 E Sahara Ave  
Pahrump NV 89048  |
| Line of Fire, LLC...............242-8288  
Joe Nizzari  
3850 E Flamingo #154  
Las Vegas NV 89121  |
| Michael F McBride..................436-2187  
292 Garwood Ct  
Henderson NV 89014  |
| Master Shooter’s Supply.........362-9535  
4017 W Sahara Ave  
Las Vegas NV 89102  |
| National Survival Store Inc.....871-7116  
4663 Spring Mtn Rd, Suite A  
Las Vegas NV 89102  |
| Nevada Shooters..................751-2633  
5781 Bridger St  
Pahrump NV 89048  |
| Network Intelligence Agency....1-888 512-6863  
David Vincenti  |
| NV Concealed & Custom Weapons...456-4055  
12-B Sunset Way Suite 214  
Henderson NV 89014  |
| Paladin Instruction.............1-800 476-7878  
Giuliano Graham  
Pahrump PMB #152 Suite 4  
Las Vegas NV 89123  |

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Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
Authorized Firing Ranges
Concealed Firearms Course

Personal Security Solutions LLC...........456-8844
Peter Preiss...............................Pager 892-4100
3873 South Florrine Ave
Las Vegas NV 89121

Spurlock's Gun Shop......................564-5668
39-B East Basic
Henderson NV 89015

John W Sullivan Jr.......................520 763-3685
2000 E Ramar Rd Lot 484
Bullhead City AZ 86442

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APPENDIX IV

SURVEY: GUN SALES INCREASING SINCE GROCERY STORE SHOOTING
Survey: Gun sales increasing since grocery store shooting

Interest in concealed weapon permits grows

By Glenn Puit
Review-Journal

With several recent mass shootings nationwide, many federal lawmakers are calling for a reduction in the number of firearms.

But in Clark County, just weeks after a gunman went on a rampage in an Albertson's grocery store in Las Vegas and killed four people, it looks like many Las Vegans think the solution to the problem is more guns, not fewer.

An informal survey of gun stores in the Las Vegas Valley indicates public interest in purchasing guns has increased since the June 3 Albertson's shooting, and many of the new customers are mentioning the grocery store rampage as their reason for buying weapons. Firearms instructors also said they have seen a jump in the number of people wanting to know the requirements to carry a concealed weapon.

And, Las Vegas police have seen an increase in requests for concealed weapons permits in recent weeks. Police spokesman Steve Meriwether said that on Tuesday there were 22 requests for concealed weapons permits and the day before 16. He described the number of requests as "unusual," compared with the five or six requests the department receives daily.

He said there is no way of knowing whether the jump in demand is related to the Albertson's shooting.

"I'd say (sales) are up about 40 percent," said Floyd Coons of Master Shooter's Supply gun store on West Sahara Avenue.

Jim Mayhugh, a certified firearms instructor in Las Vegas, said in the days after the shootings at the Albertson's on Sahara, a Las Vegas businessman asked Mayhugh to teach the details of Nevada's concealed weapons law to any of his employees who were interested.

"They are very thoughtful people who simply want to be able to defend themselves when they have no other choice," Mayhugh said.

Mayhugh thinks someone with a concealed weapon could have deterred some of the bloodshed at Albertson's. The suspect in the case, Zane Floyd, legally purchased the shotgun that police say he used in the killings.

"If someone had a concealed weapon in that store, they could have stopped it," Mayhugh said. "Can you imagine what those people were thinking, knowing this was going on and that they had nothing to defend themselves with?"

Several customers at the American Shooters Supply & Gun Club on Arville Street have been echoing Mayhugh's sentiments, said owner Ron Montoya. Registration in his firearms instruction and concealed weapons classes also has jumped since the Albertson's shooting.

"Last week we had a customer purchasing a firearm and he was here with
his wife and his grandmother, a lady in her 70s," Montoya said. "And this older lady started saying, 'You know, it's a shame people need to arm themselves, but maybe they could have stopped that shooting at Albertson's if someone had of had a gun in there. We've been hearing a lot of that lately.'

Albertson's, like many other private businesses, has a policy preventing employees with concealed weapons permits from bringing their guns to work.

"Our policy is not to bring weapons to the workplace," said Albertson's spokesman Michael Read. "We want to provide a safe working environment, but when you have a lot of people with guns, you can't always predict what they are going to do with them. We just think it is a bad idea to have an influx of weapons in the workplace."

Nancy Hwa, a spokeswoman for the Washington, D.C., lobbying group Handgun Control Inc., said she understands why people feel the need to arm themselves. However, she said people fail to remember that the more guns there are, the more likely the weapons will end up in the wrong hands.

"For years the National Rifle Association and the gun industry have been selling a myth about the effectiveness of guns in reducing crime," Hwa said. "If you buy that argument, then you might as well say more alcohol, less alcoholism.

"The reality of the situation is you have people out there who lose their tempers with guns, who get clumsy with guns, who get fired and use their weapons," Hwa said.

Nevada gun laws are relatively liberal. And, just last month, Nevada legislators expanded the state's concealed weapon law to allow people with concealed permits to carry weapons in public places with the exception of airports and schools.

This story is located at:
APPENDIX V

FREQUENCY GRAPHS
### Statistics

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December 1999, Firearms registered, Frequencies
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June 1999, Firearms Registered Frequencies
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Frequencies, Firearms Registered, Summer Months
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June 1999 Concealed Weapons, Frequencies Summer Months
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Kleck, Gary, “There are No Lessons to Be Learned from Littleton,” Criminal Justice Ethics, 18 (1999): 2.


Smith, John “Maybe the jury was right, but put yourself in shooter’s place,” *Las Vegas Review Journal*, 20 March 1999, final edition.


United States v. Cruikshank, 92 U.S. 542 (1876).


VITA

Graduate College
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Becky Beckstead Harris

Local Address:
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Las Vegas, Nevada 89123

Degrees:
Bachelor of Arts, Political Science, 1989
Brigham Young University

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J. Reuben Clark School of Law
Brigham Young University, 1992

Thesis Title: Fear as a Predictor for Firearm Ownership and Concealed Weapons Permits in Clark County, Nevada

Thesis Examination Committee:
Chairperson, Dr. Dina Titus, Ph. D.
Committee Member, Dr. Timothy Fackler, Ph. D.
Committee Member, Dr. Jerry L. Simich, Ph. D.
Graduate Faculty Representative, Mr. Jay Bybee, J.D.