

Report a delivery issue

10 graphics that explain gun violence in the US



By **Matt Rocheleau**

GLOBE STAFF DECEMBER 03, 2015

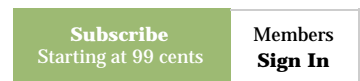
1. Mass shootings appear to have become more common

There are different definitions of mass shootings. But the bottom line is that such incidents appear to have become more common in recent years.

Investigative news outlet [Mother Jones](#) has compiled decades' worth of data about mass shootings. It defines a mass killing as the killing of at least four people in a public place in which the motive appeared to be indiscriminate killing.

Between 1982 and Oct. 1 of this year, there were at least 72 incidents that fit the Mother Jones definition of a mass shooting. Thirty-five, or nearly half, have occurred since 2006, including 7 in 2012 alone.

Researchers from Harvard and Northeastern University [released](#) a study last year using the Mother Jones data and found that the rate of mass shootings had tripled since 2011.



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A rise in mass shootings

The rate of such incidents has climbed over the past three decades, as tracked by Mother Jones.



DATA: Mother Jones

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2. In fact, there have been more mass shootings than days this year

The [Mass Shooting Tracker](#) is a project that tracks incidents in which four or more people are shot — but not necessarily killed — in a single spree or setting.



What could tighter gun control accomplish?

It's hard to know exactly, but the proposals

floated in recent years have all been relatively narrow.

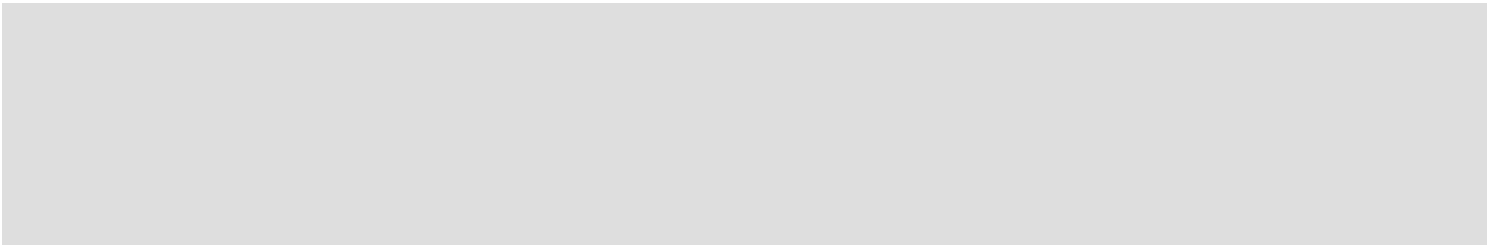
By its count, there have been 355 such incidents so far this year. That's more mass shootings than days, an oft-cited statistic. Those incidents killed 462 people, and wounded 1,312.

Where the mass shootings occurred

Incidents where four or more people were shot in 2015.

Size of the dot reflects the number shot





DATA: Mass Shooting Tracker

MATT ROCHELEAU/GLOBE STAFF

3. Active shooter incidents are also on the rise

The FBI last year released a look at “active shooter” incidents. An active shooter incident, to the FBI, involves one or more people “actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area.”

The agency counted 160 such incidents between 2000 and 2013, and noticed a rising trend.

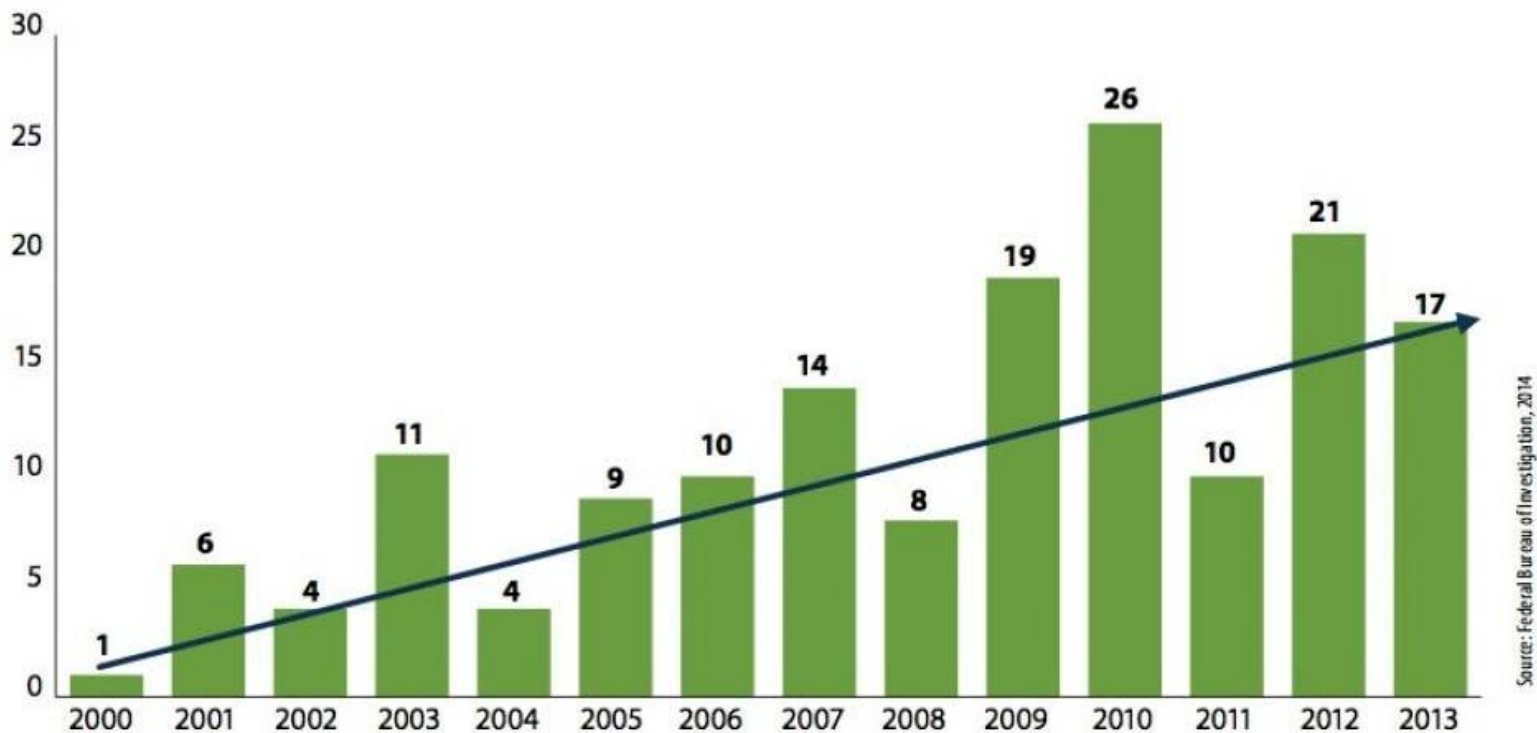


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A Study of 160 Active Shooter Incidents in the United States Between 2000 - 2013: Incidents Annually



FBI

The FBI has not yet released data about active shooter cases for 2014 or 2015, but J. Pete Blair, a criminal justice researcher from Texas State University who helped collect data for and co-authored the report the FBI released last year, told the Globe this week that he counted 19 active shooter incidents in 2014 and that he expects the total for 2015 to be similar.

4. The term 'active shooter' has rapidly become a part of our vocabulary

The Washington Post researched online search data from Google Trends to find how use of the two-word term has risen sharply in recent years.



THE WASHINGTON POST, GOOGLE

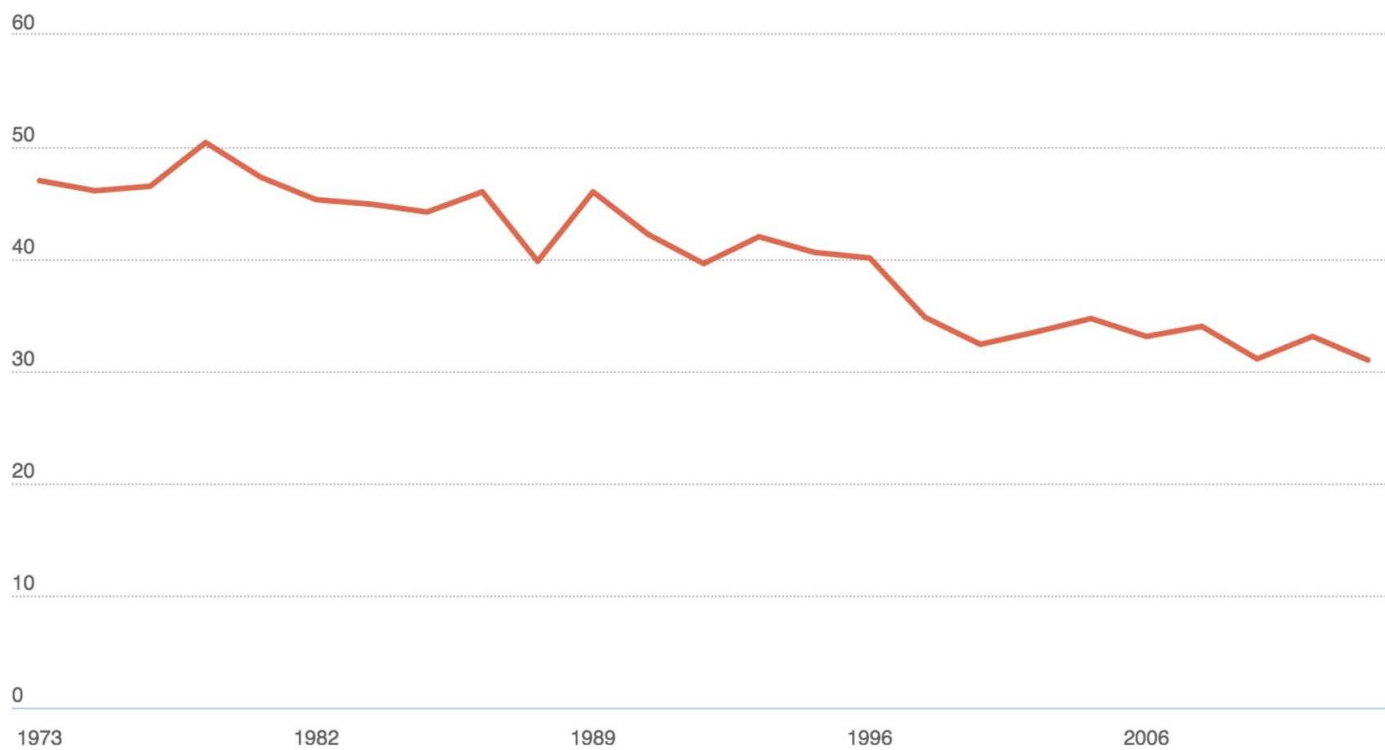
5. Gun ownership in the US has declined overall

Gun ownership is at the lowest level in the US since at least the early 1970s.

In 1973, 47 percent of American households reported having at least one gun. That figure peaked in 1977 at 50.4 percent, according to the most recent General Social Survey report by the University of Chicago. But since then it has trended downward.

In 2014, 31 percent of households in the US said they had a gun.

Percent of US households with guns



DATA: General Social Survey, University of Chicago

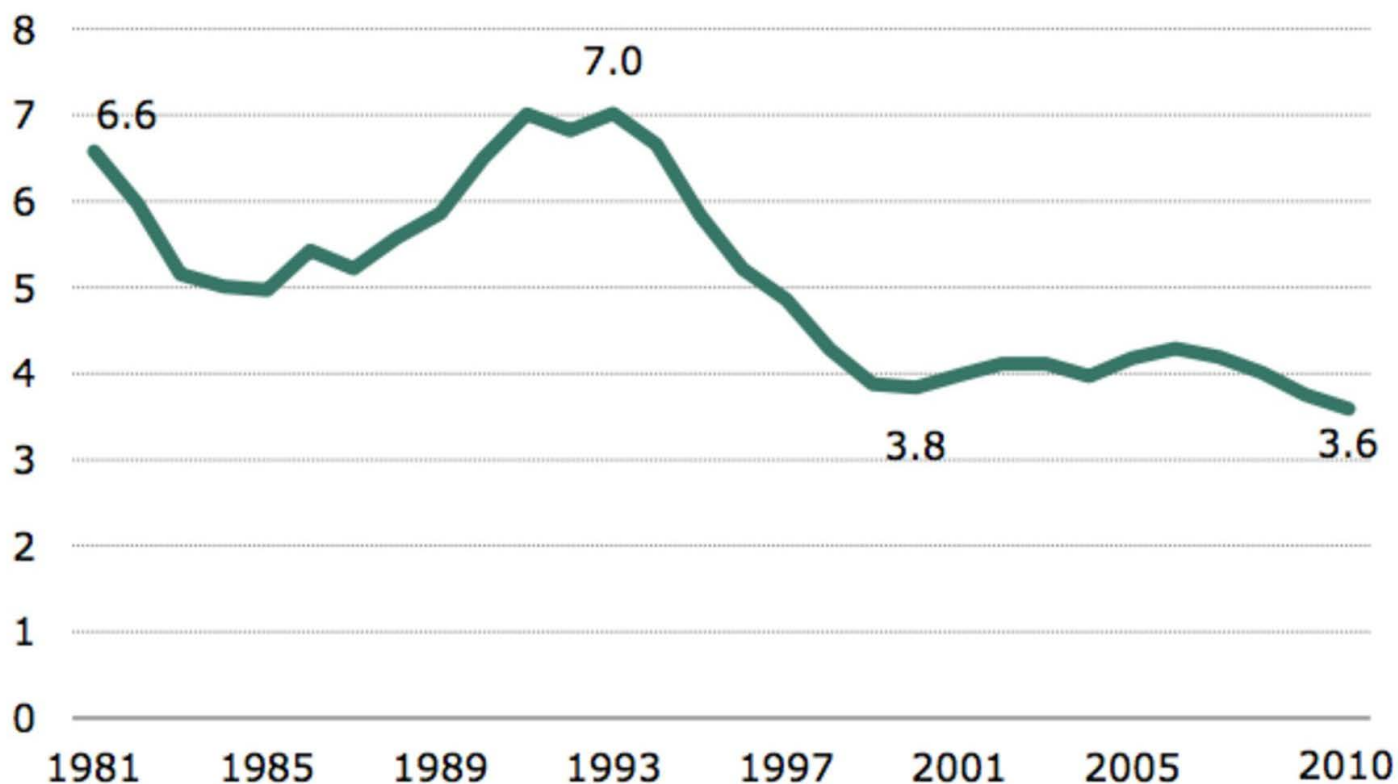
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6. So, too have gun homicide rates

The Pew Research Center reported that the gun homicide rate in the US peaked in 1993 and has declined since, even amid the rise in mass shootings, which account for a relatively small number of gun homicides. As of 2010, the rate was 49 percent lower than the 1993 rate.

Rate of Firearm Homicide Deaths, 1981-2010

Per 100,000 people



Note: Data labels shown for 1981, 1993, 2000 and 2010.

Source: CDC's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS)

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7. But both gun ownership rates AND gun death rates in the US are much higher than in any other highly developed country

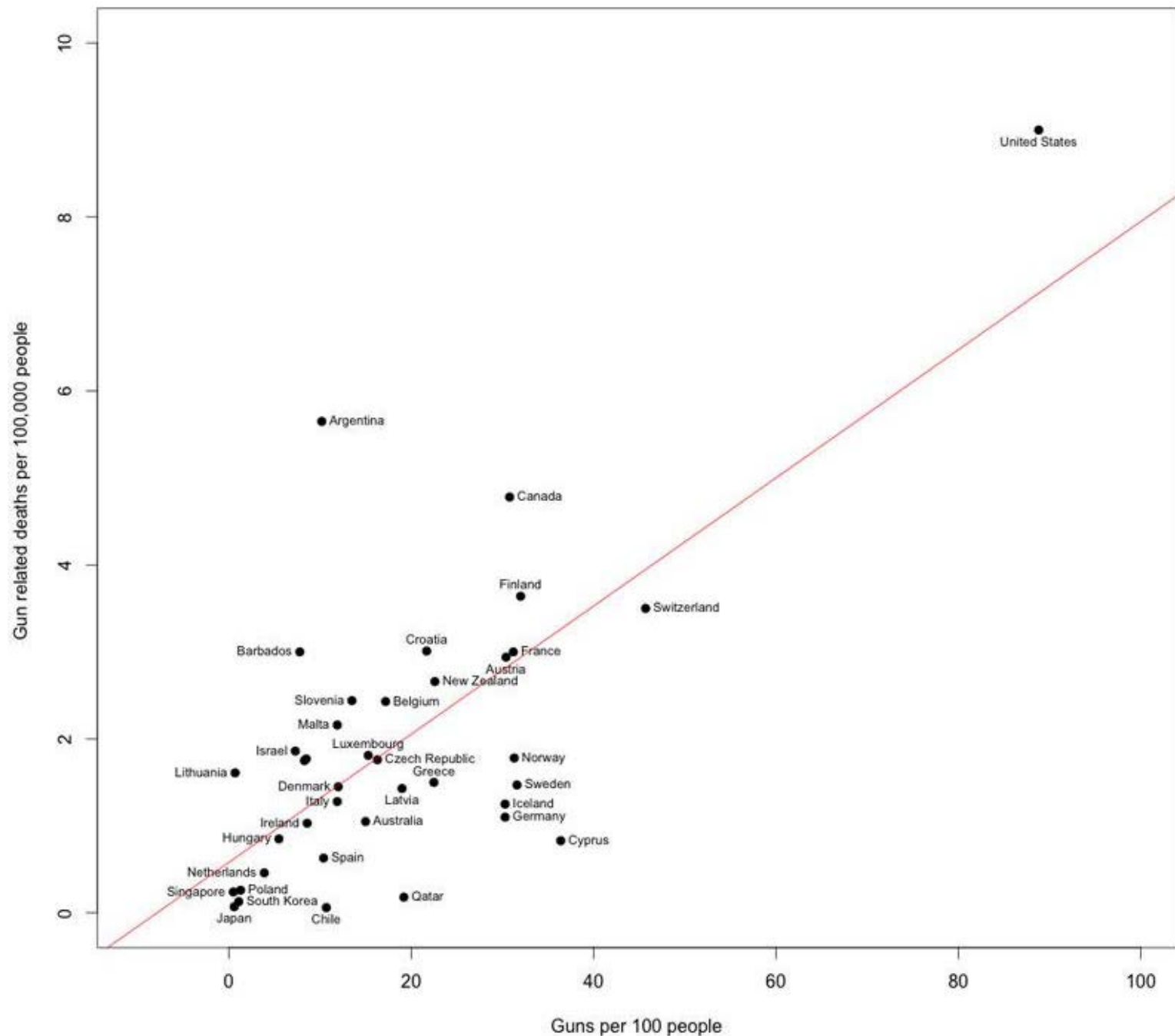
The [Small Arms Survey](#) found that there were 88.8 civilian-owned guns per 100 people in the US as of 2007. The next highest rate was 54.8 civilian-owned guns per 100 in Yemen.

According to 2012 data from the United Nations compiled by the [Guardian](#) news outlet, the US has the highest rate of firearm homicides among highly developed nations, 29.7 gun killings per 1 million

people.

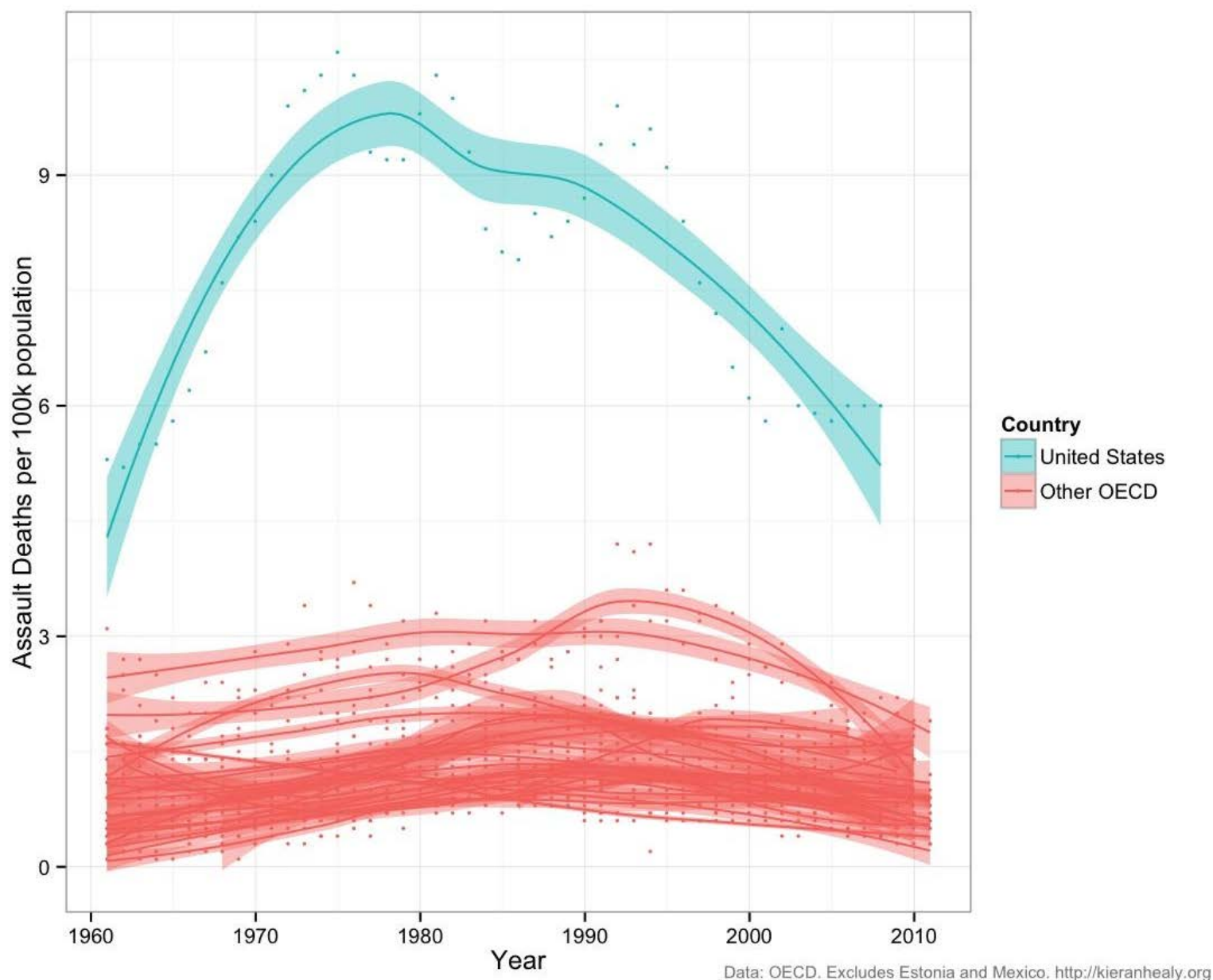
Active shooter incidents are also more common in the US than in other countries, according to J. Pete Blair, a criminal justice researcher from Texas State University, who has closely researched such attacks.

Another stunning piece of data: Guns have killed more Americans in just the past half century than every war in US history, according to news website [Vox](#).



8. That fits with a pattern of there being more violence in US than in most other developed nations

A Duke University researcher found the rate of assault deaths in the US to be higher than in other than in most other nations in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.



KIERAN HEALY, DUKE UNIVERSITY

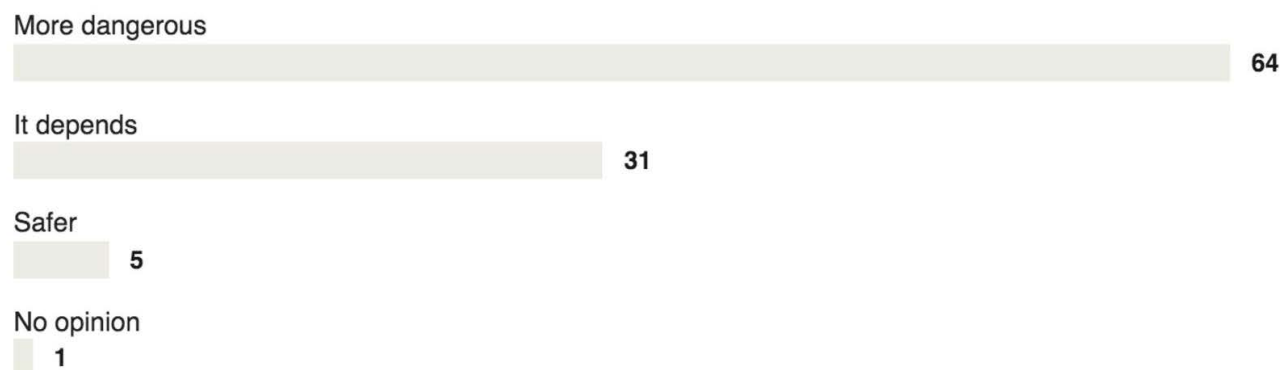
9. Many gun experts believe strong gun laws reduce killings

Numerous studies have found that states with stricter gun laws tend to have fewer gun deaths.

The Harvard Injury Control Research Center polled dozens of leading gun experts, finding that a majority believe that having a gun in someone's home can make it a more dangerous place.

The following chart shows how about 100 experts responded when the center posed this question to them:

Periodically the Gallup poll asks this exact question of the general public. Please give your own opinion. 'Do you think having a gun in the house makes it a safer or a more dangerous place to be?'



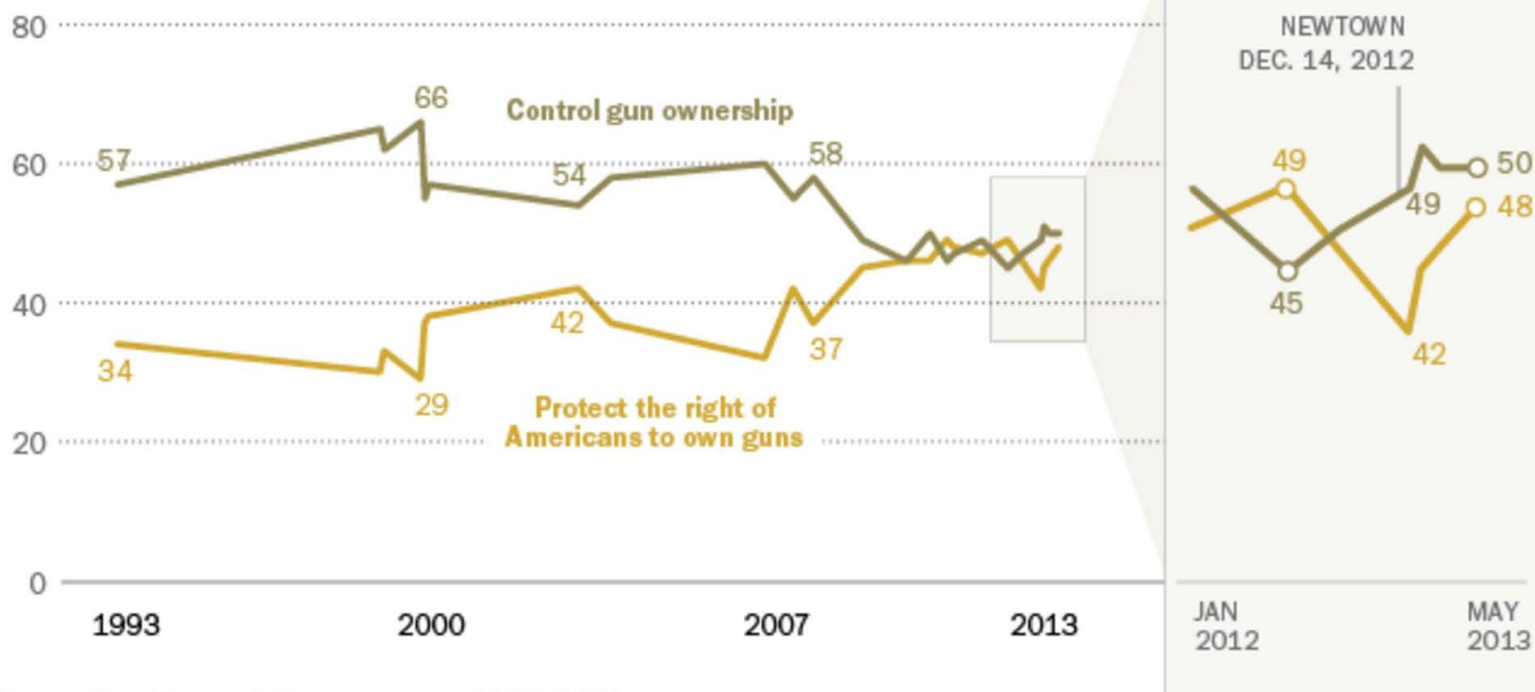
HARVARD INJURY CONTROL RESEARCH CENTER

10. But support for gun laws has increased, even in the wake of gun massacres

Polls by the [Pew Research Center](#) have found increasing support for protecting gun owners' rights over the past 20 years, while support for measures to control gun ownership has trended downward over the same period.

Views of Gun Control: 1993–2013

Percent of American adults who say it is more important to ...



Source: Pew Research Center surveys, 1993–2013

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