



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on January 14, 2019

Ninety Percent of Guns Used in Crime Not Obtained From Gun Stores/Shows

The Department of Justice [just updated](#) its decades-old study asking criminals where they got the guns they used in committing the crime for which they were currently incarcerated. After asking 287,000 prisoners in 2016 where they got the gun they used, 90 percent of them “did not obtain it from a retail source” and less than one percent obtained it from a gun show.



Half of them obtained their firearm from the “underground” market, while just six percent said they stole it. The survey reported that “most of the remainder had obtained it from a family member or a friend, or as a gift. Seven percent had purchased it under their own name from a licensed firearm dealer.”

In other words, current or pending laws banning “assault weapons” (usually variants of the AR-15 semi-automatic rifle) almost totally miss the mark, as nearly every crime was committed using a handgun. Also, those closing the so-called gun show loophole miss the mark as well.

The survey’s results are very similar to the study the DOJ completed back in 1997. Back then, 93 percent of criminals obtained the guns they used illegally, with “straw buyers” — a person buying a gun for another so he won’t have to undergo a background check — representing 40 percent, another 40 percent being obtained from “street dealers (i.e., the black market), and 13 percent being stolen. That left just seven percent obtained legally: five percent from pawn shops or gun dealers, one percent at flea markets, and less than one percent from gun shows.

These two surveys must be highly frustrating to Samuel Bieler, who wrote for the left-liberal Urban Institute in 2013, “Until we know more about the sources of crime guns, it will be difficult to devise and build consensus for effective, targeted policies that reduce unlawful access to firearms.” It seemed logical: “If we can determine which source is the most important, lawmakers can design policies to help keep weapons out of criminals’ hands.” He concluded: “If we are to develop and implement new strategies to keep guns out of the hands of criminals, we need more research on how they got those guns in the first place.”

Well, now that Bieler has that research, what is he going to do with it? As Robert Verbruggen noted in *National Review*, “it would be very difficult to regulate most of these transactions — the underground market is by definition unregulated; people in criminal social networks [“friends and family”] are not going to follow gun laws; theft is already illegal; [and] licensed gun dealers already conduct background checks.”



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on January 14, 2019

Thus, one is faced with the conclusion that gun laws enacted allegedly to reduce violent crime by removing illegal weapons from criminals so they can't use them in committing crimes are not only completely useless, but they deliberately and intentionally target law-abiding citizens instead. Under the guise of fighting crime and "keeping guns out of the hands of criminals," laws are passed that make it increasingly difficult for law-abiding citizens to exercise their Second Amendment rights.

The question then becomes "Why?" Why the continuing push to disarm private citizens while calling laws that do so attempts to disarm criminals? The answer: Those laws aren't about "gun control" after all — they're about "people control."

An Ivy League graduate and former investment advisor, Bob is a regular contributor to The New American magazine and blogs frequently at [LightFromTheRight.com](#), primarily on economics and politics. He can be reached at badelman@thenewamerican.com.

Related article:

[Bipartisan Congressional Effort to Usurp Constitutional Rights on Guns Coming?](#)



Subscribe to the New American

Get exclusive digital access to the most informative, non-partisan truthful news source for patriotic Americans!

Discover a refreshing blend of time-honored values, principles and insightful perspectives within the pages of "The New American" magazine. Delve into a world where tradition is the foundation, and exploration knows no bounds.

From politics and finance to foreign affairs, environment, culture, and technology, we bring you an unparalleled array of topics that matter most.



What's Included?

- 24 Issues Per Year
- Optional Print Edition
- Digital Edition Access
- Exclusive Subscriber Content
- Audio provided for all articles
- Unlimited access to past issues
- Coming Soon! Ad FREE
- 60-Day money back guarantee!
- Cancel anytime.

Subscribe