

JPFO WHITE PAPER

# WHY JEWS HATE GUNS

**Are they right?  
And who are *The Shomrim*?**

by [Rabbi Dovid Bendory](#), Rabbinic Director  
[Jews for the Preservation of Firearms Ownership](#)

and [Author Alan Korwin](#), [GunLaws.com](#)

It's no secret that one of the largest blocs of people pressing for so-called "gun control" is the culturally (aka not-so-religious) American Jewish community. This confounds many observers who would expect that Jews, with such a stunning history of oppression and murder by humanity's villains, would cling tenaciously to personal firearms and the ability to protect themselves as the Hebrew Scriptures instruct.

In reaction to the Holocaust, American Jews adopted the phrase "Never Again!" If actions mean anything, they don't believe it. That's for someone else to do. How do Jews expect to put teeth behind the words "Never Again!" if not with the ability to apply and project personal force when righteous -- and necessary -- for survival?

Why then do so many American Jews hate guns and fear gun ownership so much?

Our research identifies ten reasons why these Jews feel the way they do about self defense in general, firearms specifically and your own right to keep and bear arms.

The adamantly anti-gun-rights Jews are bowing to:

- 1. A desire for *utopian moral purity***
- 2. A disproportional incidence of *hoplophobia***
- 3. A quest for power through victimization of peers**
- 4. A utopian delusion that if guns would just “go away,”  
crime would end and the world would be a peaceful safe place**
- 5. Self hatred and a wish to be helpless, acting out guilt-based  
behavioral problems that develop in childhood**
- 6. The Ostrich Syndrome**
- 7. Garden-variety hypocrisy**
- 8. Adulterated religion -- Jews In Name Only (JINOs)**
- 9. Feel-good sophistry**
- 10. Abject fear that yields irrational behavior**

Despite the modern American Jewish aversion to arms, it has not always been so, and Israeli Jews certainly understand the value of arms. Throughout history, there were Jews who fought in defense of their people and way of life. The Torah is filled with Jews who took up arms in righteous and valiant defensive action. See, for example, [\*The Ten Commandments of Self Defense\*](#), (Bendory and JPFO, 2009); or recall, “When Abraham heard that his nephew Lot was taken captive, he took the 318 trained soldiers of his house and pursued the captors,” defeated them, brought back Lot, and exacted retribution with their looted property. (*Genesis 14:14*)

Contemporary Jews may have largely acquiesced to their WWII inquisitors, but Biblical Jews resisted their Egyptian slave masters and then fought countless fierce battles against invaders and anti-Semites, such as Amelek, the Philistines and Haman.

Jews have been assaulted, accosted, and oppressed by nearly every nation and empire in history, including the ancient Greeks, Romans, Persians, Byzantines, Ottomans and of course modern nations like Germany and the USSR.

Miraculously, Jews have outlasted all those who would annihilate them, typically by using force of arms. Perhaps their liberal modern approach to assault and suffering -- “Don’t fight back, it will only make matters worse” -- holds lessons for us. Or perhaps not: it is very hard to witness open-pit graves piled high with emaciated corpses without emotional revulsion. How much worse could matters get?

“Culturally proper” Jews will not want to openly face the tortured reasoning of their Faustian bargain behind “don’t make it worse.” That doesn’t make the following reasons any less real or mortally dangerous. And Jews are not alone in relying on these justifications for rejecting the fundamental human right of self defense. Many other gunless people will also recognize their feelings accurately described by what we have found.

We would not dream of interfering with a free person’s freedom to choose and embrace defenselessness or to go gunless. On the other hand, there can be no tolerance for anyone who attempts to force others to behave so dangerously.

### **1. A desire for *utopian moral purity***

This seems to be the nub. Devin Sper, author of [\*The Future of Israel\*](#) (SY Publishing, 2004), supported by exhaustive research on the history of the Jewish people, has found that Jews are wont to seek *utopian moral purity*, and in doing so they reject use of force. By its very nature force corrupts and polarizes. With power and force come allies and adversaries. Taking sides, even righteous sides, conflicts with utopian egalitarianism. As the phrases indicate, these utopian ideals are unattainable.

Although such a rejection of personal power and righteous use of force seems irrational -- especially for groups repeatedly murdered by governments and threatened with annihilation -- it is a choice they are free to make. Using diverse strategies Jews have survived every attempt to exterminate them while their tormenters have vanished. In Mark Twain’s classic words:

“The Egyptian, the Babylonian, and the Persian rose, filled the planet with sound and splendor, then faded to dream-stuff and passed away; the Greek and the Roman followed, and made a vast noise, and they are gone; other peoples have sprung up and held their torch high for a time, but it burned out, and they sit in twilight now, or have vanished. The Jew saw them all, beat them all, and is now what he always was...”

We must remind ourselves that Twain wrote this well before the Holocaust. Would his words have been different had he witnessed the government-run atrocities of the 20th century?

Sper documents the fact that the main Jewish texts, the Torah and Hebrew Scripture, are sometimes violent texts that exhort followers to take up arms in many contexts, and tell stories of vast militia and armed actions by the Jewish tribes. Sper points out that many modern Jews -- especially liberal Jews -- ignore parts of the Torah they don't like, such as this militarism. See, for example, *Esther 8:15 – 9:18*, where Jews obliterate their enemies; and when asked what to do the next day, Esther says more of the same. And for good measure, impale the ten killed sons of evil vizier Haman on stakes. In place of this Biblical claim to righteous use of force, contemporary American Jews have constructed a plain-vanilla substitute that is mostly froth and dragons.

Even the annual Passover retelling of the escape from slavery in Egypt glosses over the horrors of slavery and war to the point of a Grimm's fairy tale -- horrifying if you look at it literally and in full detail, but diluted into a story safe for children, complete with drips of sweet wine to soften the gore and savagery.

Before condemning Jews for hypocrisy in forgetting their history, recognize that many religions similarly gloss over aspects of their sacred texts that don't mix well with their modern sensibilities. How many Biblical literalists cleave to the elements of, say, *Leviticus*, with its calls for stoning certain women to death (20:27), burning certain daughters (21:9) or instructions on how to manage your slaves (25:45-46)?

## 2. A disproportional incidence of *hoplophobia*

Hoplophobia, n. Irrational morbid fear of guns (c. 1966, coined by Col. Jeff Cooper, from the Greek *hoplites*, weapon; see his book *Principles of Personal Defense*). May cause sweating, faintness, discomfort, rapid pulse, nausea, sleeplessness, nondescript fears, fantasizing, more, at mere thought of guns. Presence of working firearms may cause panic attack, desperate effort at avoidance. *Hoplophobe*, *hoplophobic*. <http://www.gunlaws.com/GunPhobia.htm>

Dr. Sarah Thompson, M.D., in her ground-breaking essay on the subject, *Raging Against Self Defense*, pointed out that hoplophobes often use the psychological defense mechanism of *projection* in dealing with their fear. Unable or unsure of their ability to control their own internal conflicts, they project their conflicts onto people around them. They fear losing control, going berserk, shooting people around them or shooting themselves in a mad, chaotic expression of rage. It's only natural for them to then assume that anyone else with a gun could or would do the same; the occasional madman serves to reinforce their fears.

This explains at last the perpetual hysteria that proclaims, every time a Second Amendment infringement is lifted: we will suffer shootouts at stop lights, slow waiters murdered on the spot, or Dodge City bloodshed as a result. Every new carry-permit law, the repeal of the National Parks possession ban, the expired Clinton-era rifle bans, lifted restrictions for adult gun carry on campuses -- all were met with the same barrage of irrational fears. It is a knee-jerk mantra loudly shouted and then brazenly promoted by an unethical media every time.

And the imagined fear? It *never* manifests. It is but an empty neurotic fantasy. Media corrections are never published, and so the fantasies and lies are repeated and recycled. Shame on those who would forever repeat the same absurd lies, never recant, and refuse to seek help for their neuroses.

We must show tolerance and understand: Facts mean little to people with morbid irrational fears. The fears just continue. Hoplophobes need treatment and sympathy, not laws infringing on the body politic. Some of what we think of as a

political issue -- so-called “gun control” -- is actually a psychiatric condition, a medical problem.

### **Hoplophobes need treatment and sympathy, not laws infringing on the body politic.**

The hoplophobic condition also manifests itself as a fear that if the afflicted person had a gun, someone would kill them with their own gun. Of course if this had merit, Jews could have killed their assailants with their own guns throughout history.

Jews and liberals alike appear to suffer from hoplophobia in disproportionate numbers for reasons that beg to be researched. The controversial Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) published by the American Psychiatric Association, now in review for its 5th edition (due May 2013) has yet to recognize or address the widespread phenomenon of gun phobias. We’re told by one expert this is not the purpose of that book: irrational fear of spiders, water, even open spaces, yes; terrifying irrational fear of guns, the very bulwark of liberty, no. Coincidentally, the psychiatric profession has an unusually large Jewish contingent, and its founders were disproportionately Jewish.

### **3. A quest for power through victimization of peers**

In our culture, victimization accords moral authority and thus power to the victim. Subjugating or convincing a constituency to accept victimization cedes power to those perpetuating this harmful ruse on their peers. This is despicably immoral -- but it is tacitly acceptable and all too commonplace in our victimization culture. Just think of how many “rights” organizations claim moral authority and power through victimization.

Blacks have been largely convinced by their leaders to avoid guns (rap “music” notwithstanding) leaving them reliant on police who are, historically, often perceived poorly by the black community. Who among American blacks trusts police implicitly? Such trust may be irrational, but no one claims humans act rationally all or even

most of the time. The people know instinctively they cannot trust government agents for their safety, yet they are left to wish for such illusory protection.

A near-perfect parallel exists with respect to Jews. Governments are historically the greatest threat to Jews (or anyone), responsible for horrendous mass-murder campaigns and pogroms throughout history. Murder by government, *democide*, is by far the greatest killer of innocent human beings. People imbued with the intoxicating power of government authority exterminated 262 million people in the 20th century, according to political scientist R. J. Rummel. Murderous criminals don't hold a candle to the deadly threat government poses to the public.

Yet Jewish leaders -- in Congress of all places (e.g., Charles Schumer, Barbara Boxer, Diane Feinstein, Barney Frank, Frank Lautenberg, Carl Levin, Debbie Wasserman Schultz, others) -- are the anti-rights leaders on the self-defense gun issue. They are the very strongest proponents of relying on government for safety and of destroying the right of the individual to keep and bear arms. Somehow, America's liberal Jews expect the police to protect them, a reliance that has failed the Jews throughout history.

As you may already know, police are actually free of any legal obligation to protect you, as documented for all 50 states in [\*Dial 911 and Die\*](#) (Attorney Richard W. Stevens, Mazel Freedom Press, 1999). The U.S. Supreme Court has confirmed this repeatedly, most recently in *Castle Rock v. Gonzalez*, 545 U.S. 748 (2005).

#### **4. A utopian delusion that if guns would just “go away,” crime would end and the world would be a peaceful safe place**

This basic liberal tenet of faith has been around since time immemorial, and afflicts Jews in disproportionate numbers. Jews are fond of saying that if guns would just go away, the world would be a better place. They fail to look back in history, to a time before guns existed, and recall the incredible savagery that took place without guns available for protection. Life back then was brutal, and encouraged: “Doom them to destruction: grant them no quarter” (*Deuteronomy 7:1-2*).

Our world bristling with arms is a more decent and safe place to live than the ancient world. People blind themselves to this reality, and pop culture -- when it isn't promoting Hollywood-style machine-gun silliness -- enforces the false notion that a total gun ban would bring world peace.

This utopian "vision" is supposedly supported by Isaiah's prophecy of a Messianic future, when "they shall beat their spears into pruning hooks", when "the lion shall lie down with the lamb." Prophetic it may be, but as instructions for living, it's a recipe for death and destruction, and Jews are also instructed otherwise (but often prefer to ignore the inconvenient): "Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears; let the weak say, I am strong" (*Joel 4:9*). Put down your arms in the face of a vicious enemy and you will suffer the fate of the lamb who lies down with the lion.

America's Jews often hold to a dangerous related myth that violence never solves anything. Like so many platitudes it is appealing, with enormous first-blush power. Yet it is self-evidently preposterous -- any degree of thought spoils the sweet image: Hitler, Hezbollah, Haman and the other hordes are not stopped with peace marches, protest rallies, and clever signs.

**Hitler, Hezbollah, Haman and the other hordes  
are not stopped with peace marches,  
protest rallies, and clever signs.**

Despots are overthrown by force or the credible threat of force. Brutal criminals bent on rape and murder are not held back by intellectual prowess or Messianic visions -- they are held back either by the brutal stopping power of a well-aimed bullet or by caging them when captured. It is the unfortunate reality of this harsh world: countervailing force is the only deterrent for aggression. American Jews, irrationally, reject this. They're free to do so, but they have no legitimate moral authority to drag anyone else into that lethal tar pit with them.



Many Jews also cling to the notion that “it can’t happen here,” which is what many believed even as the Holocaust was taking place. This is ironically contradictory to the simultaneous militance implied by “Never Again!”

**“Deliberate misuse of guns by miscreants  
does not define guns.”**

And finally, some Jews hold to the notion that weapons are unacceptable because violence is unacceptable. The fact that guns save lives, guns stop crime, guns protect you, and guns are the reason Israel still stands, are blacked out of any thought process. They would have you believe (and they falsely believe) that guns are designed for murder. Murder is illegal. Guns are properly designed -- *for protection*. Killing to protect is legal, moral, just and virtually universally sanctioned. Deliberate misuse of guns by miscreants does not define guns.

**5. Self hatred and a wish to be helpless, acting out guilt-based behavioral problems that develop in childhood**

The founder of Jews for the Preservation of Firearms Ownership, the late Aaron Zelman, framed this succinctly with many Jews he met. They would express outrage at Aaron’s classical approach of arming for safety, peace through strength and deterrence as a means of achieving peace and stability (which is Israel’s approach, though he didn’t frame it in those terms). They would emphatically reject the idea that all Jews should be educated to arms and know how to handle and shoot guns for their own safety. He could see through their self-righteous bluster and tell them, “You’re just a self-hating Jew waiting to sniff the gas.”

**6. The Ostrich Syndrome**

Some people are inherently weak-willed and live without a strong moral compass. They are eager to simplify their lives and avoid uncomfortable situations. Unwilling to face the harsh realities of life, they would prefer to ignore guns and pretend the

need for self defense will go away if they pay it no heed. It is irrational, yes, but understandable when you consider the psyche that generates such thinking.

These people, Jews and Gentiles alike, will say things like, “I don’t believe in guns,” as if they don’t exist, or as if their purported non-belief makes the subject evaporate and obviates the possibility of encountering a situation in which self defense is necessary. It is foolhardy and dangerous, but an ostrich with its head in the sand probably feels just fine... until it is devoured.

## **7. Garden-variety hypocrisy**

While many Jews say they detest guns, they in fact staunchly support guns, so long as the guns are in the hands of “the proper authorities.” On a civil level today, that means the police. So in reality, so-called anti-gun-rights Jews are really very pro-gun-rights, they just want someone else to hold the guns for them. This is not only hypocritical, it is immoral.

**“So-called anti-gun-rights Jews  
are really very pro-gun-rights,  
they just want someone else  
to hold the guns for them.”**

Attorney Jeff Snyder points out, in his globally famous book [\*Nation of Cowards\*](#), that expecting other people to risk their lives to save yours cannot be supported in a moral way: “If you believe it is reprehensible to possess the means and will to use lethal force to repel a criminal assault, how can you call upon another to do so for you?... Because that is his job and we pay him to do it? Because your life is of incalculable value, but his is only worth the \$30,000 yearly salary we pay him?” He asks: if your life is worth protecting, whose responsibility is it to protect it? The full weight of his arguments repeatedly come back to personal responsibility.

## 8. Adulterated religion -- Jews In Name Only (JINOs)

Arizona-based historian Michael E. Newton, author of [\*The Path to Tyranny\*](#) (Elephtheria Publishing, 2010), posits that part of the problem rests with Jews who no longer believe in Judaism, and have replaced their previous religion with a popular new one: so-called “social justice.” If a Biblically-based value system no longer drives protection of the G-d-given gift of life, then abandoning the right to self defense poses little moral dilemma. Jews who are only or barely culturally Jewish have little reason to rise up to the standards Jewish Law speaks of explicitly: “If a man comes to kill you, rise early and kill him first” (*Talmud, Berakoth 58b*).

**“If a man comes to kill you,  
rise early and kill him first”  
(*Talmud, Berakoth 58b*).**

Newton observes that, “In times of trouble, religious Jews offer prayers to G-d in the hope that He will help. Secular Jews turn to the government instead to protect and defend them. The Bible says, ‘Thou shalt not stand idly by the blood of thy neighbor.’ Not only can we defend our neighbor from attack, in Torah Law we are commanded to do so. That we must also defend ourselves is so patently obvious in Jewish Law that no defense or justification is given for it.

“Who is more religious? The secular Jew who believes government police forces will defend them or the religious Jew who trusts in G-d but also believes that G-d gave us the strength, right, and even the commandment to defend ourselves?”

The entire anti-rights issue on guns may be a tangent to this perhaps larger issue: Why are the nation’s Jews predominantly liberal Democrats, leaning heavily toward statism, socialism, progressivism, and nanny-state protection and social order? Why don’t they instead gravitate toward human freedom, individual rights and responsibility, and avoidance of the heavy hand of government? Liberal Democrats, in large measure, hate guns and gun owners too, so there would seem to be a degree of go along to get along.

And what of the Israel Paradox? American Jews by and large vigorously support armed defense of the Jewish state, yet persistently work to disarm the American public. That such positions are self-contradictory and hypocritical never crosses their minds. These conundrums leave us baffled.

## **9. Feel-good sophistry**

Feel-good sophistry is rigid attachment to false arguments that have the effect of deceiving. It works for a lot of humanity, and is a component of the Jewish mindset. People attach to ideas and concepts, regardless of or despite any germ of validity, often based on emotion with no factual support. It is irrational and foolish, but people are free to be irrational and foolish. But then they vote and inject themselves into the political arena. In doing so, they force humanity to deal not only with real problems but with imaginary ones as well.

## **10. Abject fear that yields irrational behavior**

The wild-eyed desire to “take all the guns away!” ignores the fact that government is the intended agent for such a plan. Such a plan would not “take away” guns at all. It would merely transfer them, giving them all to government (with the stark exception of entire arsenals already thoroughly banned yet in the hands of criminals and enemies of the state).

**“Taking away guns merely transfers them  
to the government we all trust so deeply.”**

In seeking this “take away the guns,” Jews astoundingly disregard the fact that, historically, governments have been the main perpetrators of atrocities against them. They also ignore the fact that in times before guns, when physical protection was more difficult, violence was worse and more horrific than today. Think Genghis Kahn, Julius Caesar, Attila the Hun and Vlad the Impaler, in addition to the

obvious Hitler, Lenin, Stalin, Mao and a personal favorite, Xena the Warrior Princess (which adds Hollywood's rampant titillating sexification of violence).

## **The Shomrim**

Despite these seemingly overwhelming Jewish predilections, within the Jewish community there exists a thin but powerful stream of thought, held by some Jews, who advocate for the fundamental human right to protect one's self, one's loved ones, the community and the fruits of one's labors. As King Solomon said: "There is a time for war, and a time for peace" (*Ecclesiastes 3:8*).

These people exist, typically "in the closet" of Jewish thought and behavior, and may be thought of as *Shomrim*, "The Watchful." Non-aggressive and usually conservative in their views, they stand as silent and unobserved guardians of their Jewish brethren, without acknowledgment.

**"They stand as silent and unobserved guardians of their Jewish brethren, without acknowledgment."**

Anecdotal evidence indicates that a significant percentage of discreetly armed Shomrim are present in synagogues on a regular basis. Their numbers appear to be increasing, as gun ownership, marksmanship practice, the shooting sports and gun-safety training increases nationwide across all demographics. Atrocities like the recent al-Qaida-inspired murder of Jews in France encourage more Jews to rethink personal preparedness.

Given the severe threats Jews face in the modern world, isn't it time for Jews to rethink the anti-rights posture so many have adopted toward the fundamental human right to keep and bear arms?

While American Jews may not be required to learn about arms as civilians (unlike their Israeli cousins), it's corrupt for them to attempt to force other law-abiding adults to suffer a government ban on the tools of self defense. And it's time for the

Shomrim to come out of the closet and teach their brethren about the cold, harsh reality of the world in which we live, and the tools that allow it to be tamed. “For he does not rest nor does he sleep, the Guardian of Israel” (*Psalm 121*).

“I imagine some of this research will be attacked as anti-Semitic, a frightful charge, possible whenever you discuss Judaism. Which statements exactly, I would ask, are anti-Semitic? I can find none.” J.T.

###

*[Rabbi Dovid Bendory](#) is the Rabbinic Director of Jews for the Preservation of Gun Ownership and a certified firearms instructor. [Alan Korwin](#), author of nine books on gun law, is the publisher at Bloomfield Press and runs the national directory website, [GunLaws.com](#).*

## **Support the important work of**

### **[Jews for the Preservation of Firearms Ownership](#)**

“America’s most aggressive defender of gun rights.”

Contact: JPFO.org • [jpfo@jpfo.org](mailto:jpfo@jpfo.org) • 262-673-9745

Alan Korwin has been involved in the gun-rights struggle for more than two decades and can be reached at

[GunLaws.com](#)