



Gun Violence

By Karen Zhang



美国是世界上民间拥有枪支最多的国家。私人持枪是美国宪法保障的公民权利。所有州的居民都可以购买枪支，但每个州对各种枪支类型拥有和使用的限制各有不同。然而近年来，美国的枪支暴力问题越来越严重，我们可以从Karen的所见所闻来了解更多。

If you pay attention to the recent world news, you might have heard about gun violence in the U.S.. The continuing shootings in Missouri, in New York City and elsewhere in the country have sparked public anger at the loose gun control and rooted racial issues in America.

I haven't had any personal encounter with guns in America. The closest experience I had was riding the same metro train with armed law enforcement officers, or seeing armed traffic cops passing by me at a coffee shop. It's no news that some Americans keep guns at home on the grounds of self-protection. Some of my older friends are hunters who own rifles for gaming purposes. I haven't seen their weapons though.

I'm saddened when hearing the frequent reports of gun violence in America, especially against innocents who were often youngsters. For example, the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in Connecticut in the winter of 2012. Twenty pupils and six adults were killed. There's always a new shooting case in America, possibly even right this minute, as you're reading my article. Since Sandy Hook, there's been a debate over whether faculty staff should be armed like security officers on campus. The pro-gun opinion is that by doing so, school children will be well protected by their armed teachers should any life-threatening

situations occur. The opposing voices say this is a maniacal proposal that is counter-productive, only leading to more deaths.

U.S. Federal Law requires that an individual must be at least 21 years old to purchase handgun ammunition, and at least 18 years old to purchase rifle or shotgun ammunition. But if you look around, there're too many ways for disqualified candidates to attain firearms in America. At WalMart, for instance, there's a section which sells hunting tools including rifles and bullets. Every time I pass by this section, I always wonder what if a desperate man rushes into the store. This would be a good first stop for him to load up on ammunition. And customers who are around this area are prone to be held hostages as they're so near to the possible fatal drama. It's not uncommon that if one family member owns guns, the rest of the family and even his/her unborn descendants will or are likely to have weapons as well. Imagine if your best friends are experienced shooters. Wouldn't you be tempted to give it a go?

