



How the Firearms Industry and NRA Market Guns to Communities of Color



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This study is also available online at:

<https://vpc.org/how-the-firearms-industry-and-nra-market-guns-to-communities-of-color/>.

Any new material added to this study will be available in the online version.

INTRODUCTION

Since the mid-1960s, self-defense has been the foundational argument used by the gun industry to sell firearms, primarily handguns, in the United States. In this effort, gunmakers have been aided by the gun lobby, most notably the National Rifle Association of America (NRA). This is despite the fact that evidence consistently shows that guns are rarely used to kill criminals or stop crimes.¹ Instead of protecting its owner, family, and friends, the presence of a gun in the home actually increases the risk of suicide, homicide, and unintentional death.

Historically, the primary demographic targeted by the gun industry has been white males. This is now changing as the result of the fact that this traditional customer base is aging and dying off and gunmakers, to paraphrase a tobacco industry term, have failed to recruit a sufficient number of ‘replacement shooters’ to fill their thinning ranks. As a result, household and individual gun ownership over the past few decades in the United States have declined significantly and remain relatively stagnant.²

While children³ and women have been the default targets of the industry in the wake of stagnation of the white male market, there has also been a growing focus on marketing guns, primarily for self-defense, to Latinos, Blacks, and other minority groups in America. And there is no reason to believe that the real-world impact of gun ownership on newly minted Black and Brown gun owners will be any different than their white predecessors — increased risk of death and injury in suicides, homicides, and fatal unintentional injuries. What is different is that these communities are already disproportionately impacted by lethal firearms violence and that increased gun ownership can only increase death and injury among them.

Historically, Blacks and Latinos in the United States have relatively low rates of gun ownership.⁴ Yet, the majority of both Blacks and Latinos, like most Americans, falsely believe “that a gun in the home is much more likely to be used to protect, rather than harm, members of the household.” One survey found that 75

1 Please see *Section Five: “The Myth of Self-Defense Gun Use”* for additional information.

2 From 1977 to 2018, the percentage of American households that reported having any guns in the home dropped by 32 percent. During this period: household gun ownership hit its peak in 1977, when more than half (50.4 percent) of American households reported having any guns. By 2018, 34.3 of American households reported having any guns in the home, a drop of 16 percentage points. From 1985 to 2018, the percentage of Americans who reported personally owning a gun dropped more than 28 percent. During this period, personal gun ownership hit its peak in 1985, when 30.5 percent of Americans reported personally owning a gun. By 2018, this number had dropped nearly nine percentage points to 21.9 percent. For more information, see *The Long-Term Decline of Gun Ownership in America: 1973 to 2018*, Violence Policy Center, June 2020 (<http://vpc.org/studies/ownership.pdf>).

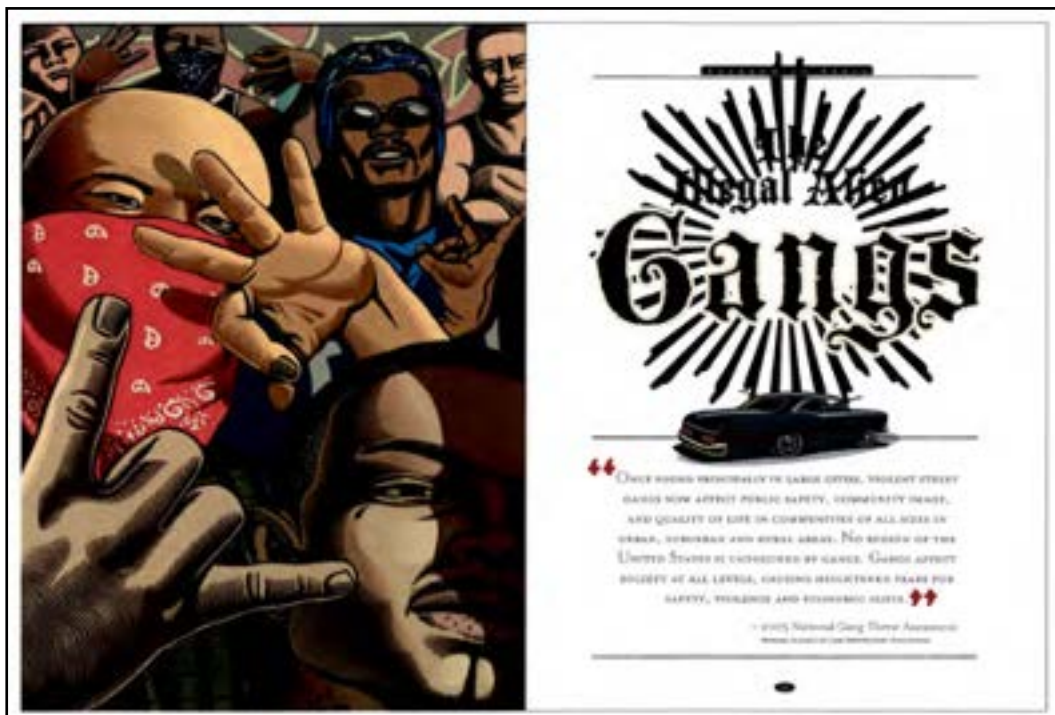
3 For an in-depth overview of firearms industry and gun lobby marketing efforts focused on children and teens, see the 2016 Violence Policy Center study “*Start Them Young*”— *How the Firearms Industry and Gun Lobby Are Targeting Your Children* (<http://www.vpc.org/publications/start-them-young/>).

4 According to data from the General Social Survey (GSS) conducted by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the University of Chicago, in both 1980 and 2018, the percentage of Blacks who reported personally owning a gun was 16 percent. During this period, personal gun ownership for Blacks ranged from a low of eight percent to a high of 23 percent. Overall, personal gun ownership by Blacks during the period surveyed has not appreciably changed. In 2000 (the first year in which Hispanic gun ownership was measured by the GSS), five percent of Hispanics reported personally owning a gun. In 2018, this percentage was reported as 12 percent. During this 19-year period for which Hispanic gun ownership was measured, the percentage fluctuated between five and 13 percent. This is due in part to the relatively small sample surveyed by the GSS. Overall, personal gun ownership by Hispanics is estimated to be approximately in the 10 percent range and has not appreciably changed during the period surveyed. For more information, see *The Long-Term Decline of Gun Ownership in America: 1973 to 2018*, Violence Policy Center, June 2020 (<http://vpc.org/studies/ownership.pdf>).

percent of Blacks and 73 percent of Latinos felt that it was more likely that a gun would be “used to protect members of the home.” Only 18 percent of Blacks and 22 percent of Latinos felt that it would be more likely that the gun would be “used to harm someone in the home, either accidentally or on purpose.”⁵ This is despite the fact that guns, in any hands, are rarely used to kill criminals or stop crimes and that both the Black and Brown communities are disproportionately impacted by lethal gun violence.

This combination — low gun ownership coupled with a mistaken belief in the efficacy of the self-defense handgun — is the sweet spot for the gun industry and its financial partners in the NRA. And just as important as future sales are the potential political benefits outreach to minority communities may represent. Compared to whites, Blacks and Latinos show stronger support for gun violence prevention measures.⁶ And recognizing the continuing growth of the U.S. Latino population, the potential political benefits of increased gun ownership among this group are clear.

The brazenness of this marketing shift is striking, recognizing that for decades members of the gun lobby and firearms industry have played on fear of crime and community disorder in their marketing efforts. And while rarely stated outright, often implicit is that those to be feared come from communities of color.



Among the many threats detailed in Freedom in Peril, an unreleased 2006 NRA pamphlet that was leaked to the press, were “The Illegal Alien Gangs”⁷

- 5 *The Intersection of Gun Violence, Policing and Mass Incarceration in Communities of Color: Research Results,* Benenson Strategy Group, April 28, 2016 (http://www.joycefdn.org/assets/images/Memo_on_Communities_of_Color_Survey_Results_FIN.pdf).
- 6 For example, according to the Benenson Strategy Group survey, 87 percent of Blacks and 90 percent of Latinos strongly supported a federal measure to “Require everyone to pass a background check before buying a gun, no matter where they buy it, including online gun sales, private gun sales and sales at gun shows.”
- 7 “Blast From the Past: NRA Propaganda Anticipates Newtown,” *Mother Jones*, December 17, 2012. (<https://www.motherjones.com/crime-justice/2012/12/nra-propaganda-shootings-newtown/>).



A 2008 NRA direct mail piece asked the question “Will these Criminal Aliens cost YOU your Second Amendment rights???”

This study offers an overview of efforts by the firearms industry and gun lobby to market firearms to Blacks and Latinos in the United States. Leading this effort are the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF), the trade association for the firearms industry, and the National Rifle Association (which acts as a de facto trade association for the firearms industry and has received tens millions of dollars from gunmakers).⁸



The discussion of the need to focus on Blacks and Latinos is not new. As far back as 1997, a column in the gun industry publication *Shooting Sports Retailer*, bluntly titled “Gun industry must become less racist to survive in the 21st century,” warned:

[A]ll of the usual customers the industry reaches (people of Northern European descent) who wanted a gun, now have one.

8 For more information, see *Blood Money II: How Gun Industry Dollars Fund the NRA*, Violence Policy Center, September 2013 (<https://vpc.org/studies/bloodmoney2.pdf>).

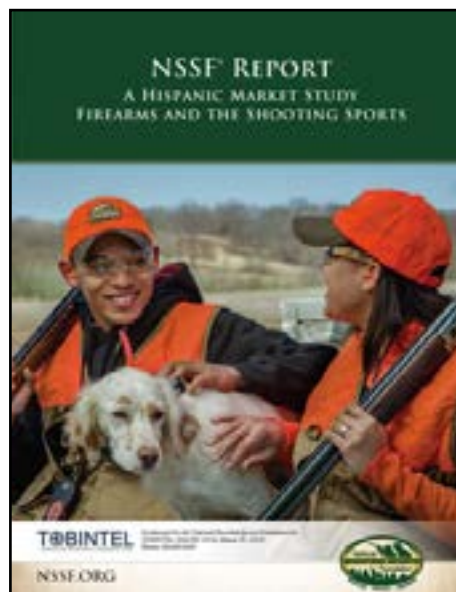
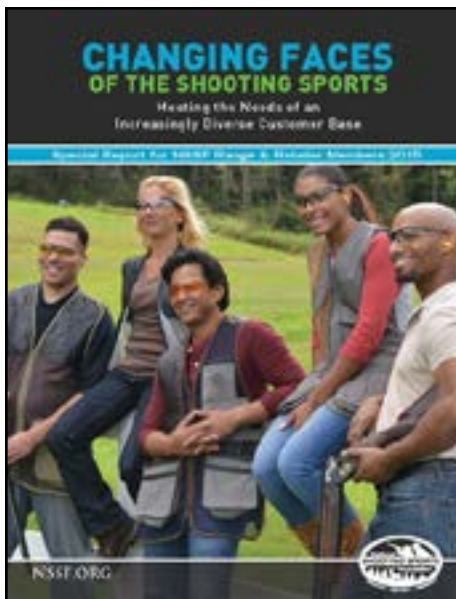
The numbers of hunters, the mainstay of the industry, is not growing. Reliance on the time-honored method of indoctrination of father-to-son in the hunting tradition can no longer be counted on with the growing urbanization of America.

It is time for a pro-active approach to include those who have not traditionally participated in the shooting sports...A major effort needs to be made to include those groups who are presently referred to as America's racial and ethnic minorities, but who are rapidly becoming the majority. And there is tremendous potential within this largely untapped market.⁹

SECTION ONE: THE NATIONAL SHOOTING SPORTS FOUNDATION (NSSF) AND THE FIREARMS INDUSTRY

While the National Rifle Association functions as the *unofficial* trade association for the firearms industry, the NSSF is its official trade association. The role played by the NSSF within the gun industry is not unlike that which was played by The Tobacco Institute for the tobacco industry. NSSF issues a constant stream of publications both to support and defend the firearms industry in the marketing of its products.

NSSF marketing publications (some publicly available, others limited to NSSF industry members) that include a focus on outreach to minorities include: *Recruitment of Hispanic Hunters: Using a Case Studies approach to gain insights into Hispanic values toward wildlife, and motivations and participation in hunting* (2017); *Changing Faces of the Shooting Sports: Meeting the Needs of an Increasingly Diverse Customer Base* (2015); *A Hispanic Market Study: Firearms and the Shooting Sports* (2015); and, *Understanding Diversity in Hunting and Shooting Sports* (2013).¹⁰



9 "Gun Industry Must Become Less Racist to Survive 21st Century," *Shooting Sports Retailer*, January 1997.

10 Other marketing titles include: *Millennials and The Shooting Sports: An In-Depth Exploration* (2014); *Understanding the Impact of Peer Influence on Youth Participation in Hunting and Target Shooting* (2012); and, *Understanding Activities that Compete with Hunting and Target Shooting* (2012).

The birthplace of the long-term, organized, and coordinated effort by the firearms industry and gun lobby targeting non-white potential gun owners was the 2015 NSSF Industry Summit, which occurred in June of that year in Savannah, Georgia.¹¹ As a press release issued by NSSF after the event explained:

The central theme of the 2015 Industry Summit, diversity, is one that proved the industry is preparing to significantly change the way it does business. ‘We’ve talked loosely about diversity for years,’ said Chris Dolnack, NSSF Senior Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer, ‘but there’s never been a cohesive effort across the industry as a whole to address this subject and innovate change. This year’s Industry Summit showed us that we’re about to experience a ground-swell shift in that attitude. Summit attendees came fully prepared, arriving with focused, on-point questions about what changes they need to make in their businesses to embrace a new consumer audience.’¹²



As seen by presentation slides shared on Twitter by Summit attendees, speakers offered overviews of the potential shooters they were targeting, breaking racial and ethnic groups down by “demographics,”

11 In a grim irony, NSSF’s headquarters is located in Newtown, Connecticut, site of the 2012 Sandy Hook school massacre.

12 “2015 NSSF Industry Summit Hits High Notes,” National Shooting Sports Foundation, press release, June 4, 2015 (<https://www.nssf.org/2015-nssf-industry-summit-hits-high-notes/>).

“psychographics,” and “technographics.” The demographics for “African American Shooters” included: “Very high male skew; More similar to NH [Non-Hispanic] White household; Age, income & household composition; Less likely to be married and to be a college grad.” Psychographics were listed as: “Hard-working, career driven, success-minded; Job and work very important; Will sacrifice time with family to succeed; Image conscious and brand driven, appearances matter; Social, outgoing, experiences-driven, live life to fullest.” Technographics were listed as: “Very comfortable with social media; Sees self as a role model, leader, someone who is respected; Is expressive and confident socially, in a crowd.”

HISPANIC SHOOTERS

Demographics

- 11 years younger
- Lower HHI and education (but higher than Hispanic overall)
- More likely to have kids in HH, multi-gen HH
- More acculturated (49% acculturated, 41% bicultural)

Psychographics

- Less tough/independent guy, more group oriented
- Influenced by pop culture and people around them
- Much more trusting of advertising and celebrities
- Enthusiastic, social, non-conformist
- Likes introducing people to each other

Technographics

- Highest level of mobile ownership
- Tech savvy and comfortable with new technology
- Extremely high engagement with social media
- More likely to trust social Media, to post, to learn new [missing word].

	HH	NH
	Percent	Percent
Male	75%	75%
Median Age	31	41
Median HH	21	20
College Grad	48%	48%

The demographics for “Hispanic Shooters” included: “11 years younger; Lower HHI [household income] and education (but higher than Hispanic overall); More likely to have kids in HH [household], multi-gen HH; More acculturated (49% acculturated, 41% bicultural.” Psychographics were listed as: “Less tough/independent guy, more group oriented; Influenced by pop culture and people around them; Much more trusting of advertising and celebrities; Enthusiastic, social, non-conformist; Likes introducing people to each other.” Technographics were listed as: “Highest level of mobile ownership; Tech savvy and comfortable with new technology; Extremely high engagement with social media; More likely to trust social Media, to post, to learn new [missing word].”

Among the speakers at the meeting was Chris Cheng, a one-time Google employee whose notoriety was based on his having won the *History Channel's* “Top Shot” shooting competition without any formal training or having won a prior shooting award. Cheng has worked on behalf of NSSF, with one NSSF article’s author

describing him as “one of the more unlikely people I can think of to become a top shooter. He not only breaks many shooting sports molds, but rumor has it he even has the mold-makers on the run. Cheng is a techno-nerd, an Asian-American and openly gay — three things the stereotype monitors tell us you’re not supposed to find in the shooting sports.”¹³ Cheng has also served on NSSF’s Inclusion and Outreach Working Group.¹⁴

Cheng’s presentation was titled “Diversity: The Next Big Opportunity,” with the hoped-for result being “new shooters, and new gun owners, and new Second Amendment advocates....” As Cheng addressed his audience, he asked:

Now, what is diversity and why is it important...For the context of today’s talk, we’re talking about ethnicities like we’ve been talking about for most of the day. Hispanics, Asians, whites, Blacks. Now, this is important because in the context of America, we are a country of immigrants...[W]e then have to understand that a lot of immigrant families do not have traditions of firearms ownership, of hunting, of sports shooting. And therein lies the opportunity for us to promote the Second Amendment, to promote hunting and sports shooting to this new demographic and make them a multi-generational customer and a lifelong Second Amendment advocate.

Cheng concluded with a “call to action” including: “more targeted messaging towards ethnic groups..., sponsoring or attending diversity events such as the NSSF First Shots Program..., [a]nd then finally highlight people of color in firearm ads, media articles and other marketing collateral.” Cheng promised, “Diversity is the next area of success for our industry.”¹⁵



A slide from Chris Cheng’s presentation at the 2015 NSSF Industry Summit

13 “Chris Cheng — An Unlikely Top Shot,” National Shooting Sports Foundation, November 20, 2018 (<https://www.letsgoshoooting.org/2018/11/20/chris-cheng-an-unlikely-top-shot/>).

14 “What Does It All Mean?,” *SHOT Business*, October/November 2018.

15 “Diversity: The Next Big Opportunity,” presentation by Chris Cheng at the 2015 NSSF Industry Summit, June 23, 2015 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4FZbiyEJJGo>).

Following the Summit, NSSF Senior Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer Chris Dolnack discussed the trade association's marketing efforts:

[O]ver the years many of us have discussed how to expand shooting participation numbers beyond the traditional predominance of Caucasian males. We've made tremendous strides in welcoming women into the sport in the past couple decades,¹⁶ but we haven't been as successful when it comes to ethnic diversity. And the thing is, there are legions of African-American, Hispanic and Asian recreational and competitive shooters out there, as well as hunters, but they aren't part of the greater family of gun enthusiasts most are familiar with. We need to change that, need to create the avenues that will welcome these shooters into the fold, and that's what this year's Summit focused on.¹⁷

Or as NSSF president and CEO Steve Sanetti summarized, "What a difference this is from just a few years ago when the industry was lamenting that it was becoming stale, male and pale."¹⁸

"What a difference this is from just a few years ago when the industry was lamenting that it was becoming stale, male and pale."

Steve Sanetti, NSSF president and CEO

In the months following, the Industry Summit and its diversity goals were hailed in gun industry publications. *Shooting Sports Retailer*, in an article titled "Shooting Industry Must Talk the Talk With New Generation," noted:

The summit theme was recruitment to replace the Baby Boomer generation that has done so much for the shooting sports...The NSSF believes that rapidly retiring demographic is unsustainable in the long run, and hence this meeting sought to alert attendees to looming population trends and to send folks home with an agenda: reach out to women and minorities.¹⁹

16 Despite NSSF's claims of success in marketing guns to woman, according to the General Social Survey conducted by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the University of Chicago, in 2018, 10.5 percent of females reported personally owning a firearm. In its 2015 report *Trends in Gun Ownership in the United States, 1972-2014*, NORC noted, "Personal ownership of firearms has not appreciably change[d] for women from 1980 through 2014. Between 9% and 14% of women personally owned a firearm during those years and there is no meaningful trend in the level of personal ownership." The 2015 NORC study also noted that men "are much more likely to personally own a firearm than women are, but the gender gap has narrowed due to a decline in personal firearm ownership among men," not an increase among women. In 1980, 50.3 percent of men owned a firearm while 10.1 percent of women owned a gun resulting in a gender gap of 40.2 percentage points. By 2018, male gun ownership had dropped more than 14 percentage points from 1980 to 35.8 percent, while female gun ownership in 2018 remained relatively stagnant at 10.5 percent, resulting in a gender gap of 25.3 points. For more information, see *Trends in Gun Ownership in the United States, 1972-2014*, Tom W. Smith and Jaesok Son, NORC at the University of Chicago, March 2015 (http://www.norc.org/PDFs/GSS%20Reports/GSS_Trends%20in%20Gun%20Ownership_US_1972-2014.pdf) and *The Long-Term Decline of Gun Ownership in America: 1973 to 2018*, Violence Policy Center, June 2020 (<http://vpc.org/studies/ownership.pdf>).

17 "NSSF Industry Summit Earns Rave Reviews," *NSSF Blog*, June 12, 2015 (<https://www.nssf.org/nssf-industry-summit-earns-rave-reviews/>).

18 "Shooting Industry Must Talk the Talk with New Generation," *Shooting Sports Retailer*, October 2015.

19 "Shooting Industry Must Talk the Talk with New Generation," *Shooting Sports Retailer*, October 2015.

The article also warned:

And of course, the problem with failing to recruit and grow is that numbers equate to political power. In an era when the private ownership and use of firearms, the right to 'keep and bear arms,' has come under increasing pressure, numbers and a young, vital membership are critical.²⁰

Among the photos supplied by NSSF for the article was that of a cheerful Black couple leaving a gun store. The text accompanying the photo stated:

By the year 2050, minorities will number more than half of all U.S. citizens. To preserve the future of the shooting sports in America, it is necessary to begin changing our message and presentation so that everyone feels welcome at the shooting line, in the deer woods and in our retail stores.²¹



A photo supplied by NSSF is featured in an article in Shooting Sports Retailer

20 "Shooting Industry Must Talk the Talk with New Generation," *Shooting Sports Retailer*, October 2015.

21 "Shooting Industry Must Talk the Talk with New Generation," *Shooting Sports Retailer*, October 2015.

In its “Outlook For 2016,” *Shooting Industry*, under the heading “New Customer Base is Key,” observed:

When it comes to increasing diversity in the shooting sports, the industry has taken note — which is great news! [Consulting firm] Southwick Associates has been helping NSSF identify opportunities to engage with new customers and their motivations. There’s a huge untapped demand within the multi-cultural markets...It’s important for the industry to adapt to multi-cultural preferences and expectations, which will help welcome them into our ranks as active customers...Stay tuned: These new markets have the potential to start the next wave of growth for our industry.²²

Bob Owens, editor of the pro-gun website *Bearing Arms*, who also participated in the NSSF event, wrote:

While there were a wide range of topics covered by the 21 speakers..., the clear intent of the 2015 Industry Summit was to reach out to minority communities, including African-Americans, Asians, Hispanics, and women.

This shows that the industry has been responsive to the increase in the number of young, urban, and female shooters, and is now try to be proactive so that the industry is poised to welcome diverse populations to the shooting sports. This is a Very Big Deal, as we’ve long stereotyped as the realm of ‘fat old white guys’ or the ‘pale, male, and stale.’

It was refreshing to see these sessions packed with industry leaders listening intently and taking notes on how to better meet groups on their own terms, in their own spaces.

The more effort we spend in sharing our love of shooting, the more friends and allies we will make, and the better we will be poised to protect and reassert our Second Amendment rights.

The future is bright.²³

Since the 2015 Industry Summit, a focus on “diversity” has remained central to NSSF’s research and marketing efforts:

- At the 2016 Industry Summit held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, plenary topics included “Engaging the Multi-Cultural Target Shooting Audience,” while breakout sessions included “The First Steps in Hispanic Outreach.”²⁴
- A 2016 NSSF blog described new programs being tested by the organization regarding their effectiveness in expanding their customer base:

22 “Outlook For 2016,” *Shooting Industry*, January 2016.

23 “Diversity Becomes a Key Focus for the U.S. Gun Industry,” *Bearing Arms*, June 5, 2015 (<https://bearingarms.com/bob-o/2015/06/05/diversity-becomes-key-focus-u-s-gun-industry/>). All grammatical errors in original. In May 2017 Owens took his own life with a firearm near his North Carolina home. “Death of Bearing Arms editor and gun-rights advocate Bob Owens has been ruled a suicide,” *Washington Post*, May 9, 2017.

24 “NSSF Industry Summit Hits a Home Run in Pittsburgh,” NSSF press release, June 9, 2016 (<https://www.nssf.org/nssf-industry-summit-hits-a-home-run-in-pittsburgh-2-2/>) and “Learn from Your Peers at the 2016 NSSF Industry Summit,” NSSF press release, May 3, 2016 (<https://www.nssf.org/learn-from-your-peers-at-the-2016-nssf-industry-summit/>).

[S]tatistics show our core base of customers is still overwhelmingly comprised of older Caucasian males, while the face of America is increasingly heading in different directions. To help the industry adapt to changing times, NSSF is testing how to effectively engage new and diverse audiences through hands-on pilot initiatives.

Diversified customers can refer to many things: different races, ethnicities, ages, genders, and more. Therefore, identifying which customer segments offer the best growth opportunities, and how to successfully engage them, is the first task. Developing and testing tactics that retailers, ranges and others in the industry can effectively implement locally is the next step. In 2014 and 2015, NSSF has been engaged in these research and pilot testing efforts, and will continue to improve and expand in 2016 and beyond.²⁵

- In 2017, NSSF published the marketing report *Recruitment of Hispanic Hunters: Using a Case Studies approach to gain insights into Hispanic values toward wildlife, and motivations and participation in hunting.*

The lines are not straight. The spectrum is not one color but full of beautifully different hues...It is time for us to embrace our differences. To not only see them, but also see beyond them to appreciate what makes us all the same. What is that? A love of firearms, and a desire for safety, education, and responsibility in every aspect of the shooting sports.

Tisma Juett, NSSF

- In 2018, Tisma Juett, whose title at the time was NSSF manager inclusion & outreach, wrote in the organization's *SHOT Business* magazine about how virtually all societal divides and misunderstandings could be overcome by acknowledging "what makes us all the same...a love of firearms..." Wrote Juett:

The more different we are, the more we are all the same. Our country has been and is divided. Certain groups want to categorize people and put them into specific boxes to fit a particular agenda: black, white, conservative, liberal, straight, gay, revolver, semi-auto, MSR, bolt gun, young, old, baby boomer, millennial. Everything must be one or the other, without variance. Stay in your lane, on the straight road, don't color outside your box.

25 "Multi-Cultural Interests in Target Shooting," *NSSF Blog*, February 9, 2016 (<http://www.nssfblog.com/multi-cultural-interests-in-target-shooting/>).

The lines are not straight. The spectrum is not one color but full of beautifully different hues...It is time for us to embrace our differences. To not only see them, but also see beyond them to appreciate what makes us all the same.

What is that? A love of firearms, and a desire for safety, education, and responsibility in every aspect of the shooting sports.

We as an industry must become more inclusive and welcoming to those who do not know that we really are an industry for all law-abiding gun owners, conservationists, and outdoor enthusiasts. We must welcome those who want to join us regardless of race, color, country of origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, or religion.^{26, 27}

- In 2018, Maj Toure, the founder of Black Guns Matter, which describes its primary goal as educating “people in urban communities in all 50 states on their 2nd amendment rights and responsibilities through firearms training and education,”²⁸ was a speaker at the NSSF-sponsored SHOT Show, the annual trade show for the firearms industry. Closed to the general public, the show is held each year in Las Vegas. During his presentation, Toure told his gun industry audience, “My job is to give you all the information to increase revenue as well as make a cultural shift.”²⁹ Black Guns Matter was also a “Bronze level” sponsor of the 2018 SHOT Show University. In a press release announcing Black Guns Matter’s financial sponsorship, NSSF explained:

The era of cultural divide when it comes to firearms ownership should be a thing of the past, and thanks to the work of Maj Toure and Black Guns Matter, we’re a lot closer to that being a realization...He’s putting his money where his mouth is through this sponsorship, but his real impact will be in the ‘Black Guns Matter: Engaging Urban Communities in the 2nd Amendment Fight’ Retailer Seminar he’ll be conducting. All I can say is reserve your spot for this seminar now before it sells out.

During his seminar, Toure will present a highly interactive session on the misconceptions, myths and successes of engaging urban communities in the 2nd

26 “Embracing Our Differences,” *SHOT Business*, April/May 2018.

27 Prior to her tenure as manager inclusion & outreach, Juett was manager of NSSF’s First Shots, the organization’s primary recruiting program targeting new shooters. In 2015, NSSF held its first First Shots program in Spanish in Texas — with plans for further expansion. In December 2018, Juett became a regional member services representative for NSSF, where her job is to “provide highly personalized service to members in defined regions across the U.S., working side by side with FFL retailers, range owners and manufacturers to meet their needs and coordinate recruitment, reactivation and retainment efforts for the betterment of the entire firearms industry.” See “NRA, gun industry target Hispanics to broaden its appeal — and survive,” *Fox News*, December 1, 2016 (<https://www.foxnews.com/world/nra-gun-industry-target-hispanics-to-broaden-its-appeal-and-survive>) and “NSSF Adds Two Regional Member Services Representative to Roster,” National Shooting Sports Foundation press release, December 14, 2018 (<https://www.nssf.org/nssf-adds-two-regional-member-services-representatives-to-roster/>).

28 See <https://blackgunsmatter.myshopify.com/>.

29 “Black Guns Matter: 2018 Shot Show,” YouTube, January 28, 2018 (no longer available, video in files of Violence Policy Center).

Amendment fight. Toure will share lessons he’s learned through hosting his 50 States Firearm Education Tour, take questions from the audience on engaging urban communities and explain how companies and organizations can support the Black Guns Matter movement. Anyone who is interested in building deeper connections with the urban demographic should make attending this session a top priority.³⁰

That same year, Toure was featured in a photo of NSSF’s 2018 industry summit.



Maj Toure stands front and center at the 2018 NSSF Industry Summit

- In 2019, Toure attended the SHOT Show again, and was a guest on “SHOT Show TV.”³¹ During the interview, Toure detailed how Black Guns Matter was now working with handgun manufacturer Bersa as a part of the gunmaker’s #BeginwithBersa marketing program for first-time shooters.³² He also discussed how he was partnering with rifle manufacturer Head Down Arms in the design and marketing of the Solutionary (a term coined by Toure to describe himself) AR-15 style assault rifle to financially benefit his organization.³³

30 “Black Guns Matter Signs as Bronze Sponsor of 2018 Retailer Seminar,” NSSF press release, January 4, 2018 (<https://www.nssf.org/black-guns-matter-signs-as-bronze-sponsor-of-2018-retailer-seminar/>).

31 “Black Guns Matter— 2019 SHOT Show TV Studio,” January 24, 2019 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=17uWvZ54U5U>).

32 See <https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/beginwithbersa/top/?hl=en>.

33 For additional information on the Solutionary AR-15 assault rifle, see “[SHOT 2019] NEW Head Down Arms ‘The Solutionary’ & Cerakote Options,” January 24, 2019 (<https://www.thefirearmblog.com/blog/2019/01/24/shot-2019-head-down-arms-solutionary/>).



A 2018 social media post advocates “Unity Over Tyranny” while promoting Bersa’s partnership with Black Guns Matter in its #BeginwithBersa marketing program.

Examples of industry outreach and targeting efforts to potential Black and Latino gun buyers include the following.

A full-page ad appearing in the Spring 2013 issue of *Junior Shooters*³⁴ magazine shows two Black males, a youth and an adult, at an outdoor range, with the headline “Confidence to Live Your Life.” The ad, in which the youth is holding an ammunition magazine in one hand and a round in the other, states, “Shooting the best pistol means you can hone your skills and rise to any challenge. Backed by proven reliability, superior engineering and used by approximately 65% of law enforcement, GLOCK is a partner you can trust.”

34 Based in Boise, Idaho, the magazine “strives to be the first of its kind to promote juniors involved in all shooting disciplines...” and is “dedicated to juniors of all ages and their parents.” Promising content “For Kids By Kids,” the publication adds, “We care about kids and their parents and want you to have a place to go to find what is needed to get started in many different shooting venues,” See <http://www.juniorshooters.net/aboutus/> and “Start Them Young”— *How the Firearms Industry and Gun Lobby Are Targeting Your Children* (<http://www.vpc.org/publications/start-them-young/>).

PROVEN PERFORMANCE

CONFIDENCE TO LIVE YOUR LIFE

Shooting the best pistol means you can hone your skills and rise to any challenge. Backed by proven reliability, superior engineering and used by approximately 65% of law enforcement, **GLOCK** is a partner you can trust.

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GLOCK[®]

PERFECTION

"Confidence to Live Your Life"

**MI CASA
NO ES SU CASA**

The new KS7™ Shotgun is bred for light weight, personal defense. Its compact size and carry handle allow for easy and convenient handling. KelTec™ patented downward shell ejection and a 2 1/4" shell capacity of 7+1 make this one ambidextrous, 12-gauge, pump-action micro beast. Innovation. Performance. KelTec. See more at KelTecWeapons.com.



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“Mi Casa No Es Su Casa”

An ad appearing in the June/July 2020 edition of the NRA’s *America’s 1st Freedom* (the organization’s activist magazine) for the KEL-TEC KS7 Shotgun warns, “Mi Casa No Es Su Casa.”

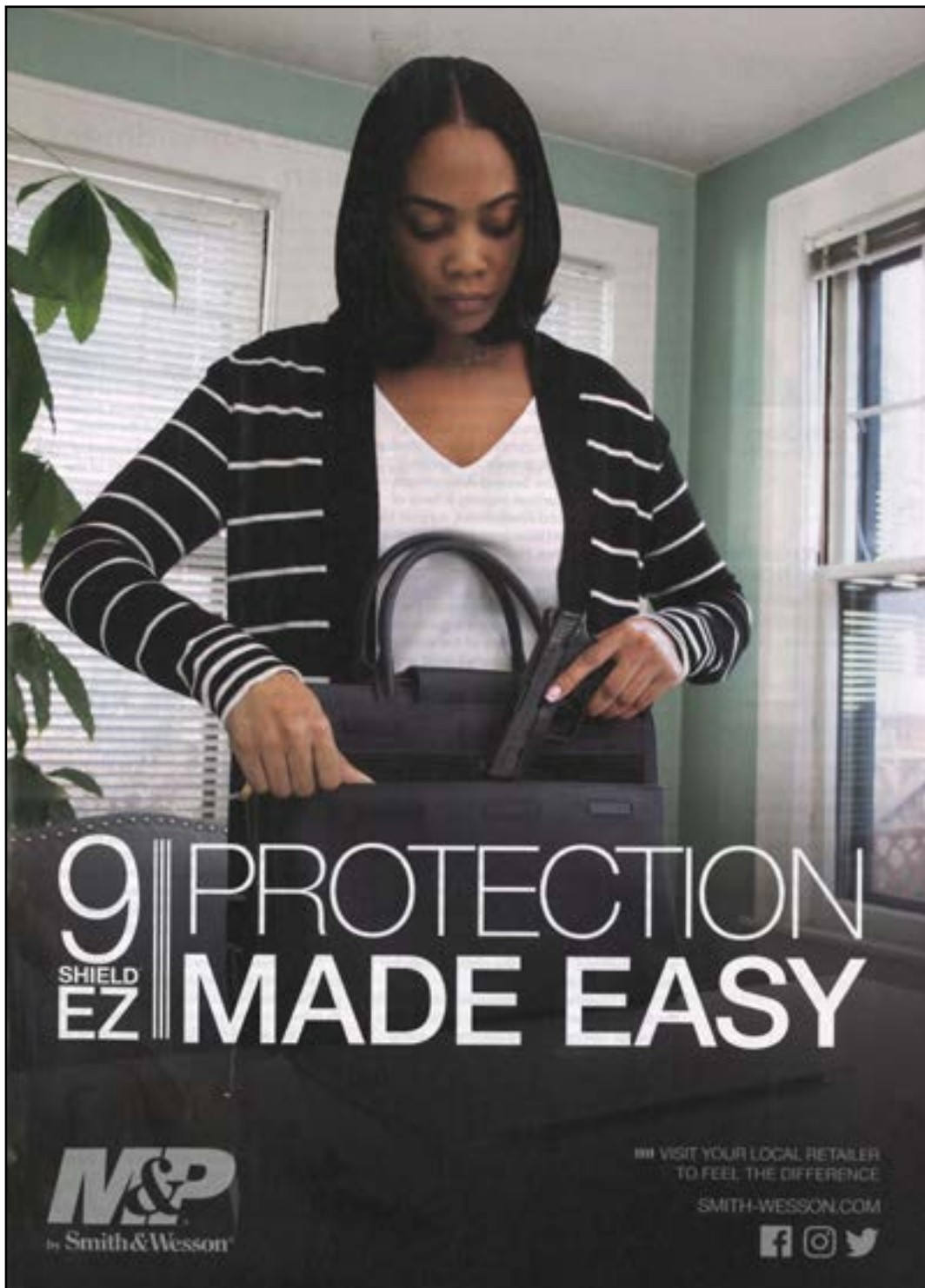
"It's a jungle out there."

Springfield Armory ad for its HELLCAT pistol



"It's a jungle out there"

An ad appearing in the December 2019 issue of *Guns & Ammo* magazine shows a Black man looking askance as he pumps gas into his car at a filling station. The ad warns, "It's a jungle out there" and urges the reader to "Protect yourself with the all new 9mm HELLCAT from Springfield Armory."



"Protection Made Easy"

An ad for the Smith & Wesson M&P (Military & Police) 9 Shield EZ pistol that appeared in both the October 2020 issue of the NRA's *American Rifleman* magazine as well as the November 2020 issue of *Guns & Ammo* shows a Black woman, presumably preparing to leave for work, placing the pistol into her briefcase side pocket. The headline on the ad reads, "Protection Made Easy."

Yet despite the joint efforts of the NSSF and gun manufacturers targeting non-white communities, and the ongoing research that in theory guides such efforts, NSSF's own research reveals that one of the primary hurdles to overcome in engaging Blacks and Latinos in gun ownership is that although NSSF and gunmakers have, for their own purposes, identified communities of color as a great "untapped market" to exploit, the objects of their attention frequently don't feel welcome in the firearms community as a whole, and gun stores in particular — despite NSSF's stock photos to the contrary.

One early NSSF study, *Understanding Diversity in Hunting and Shooting Sports*, found that although nine to 14 percent of those surveyed "don't feel welcome at a firearms retail establishment or range many don't have any suggestions for how to improve the situation. For those who do have suggestions, there are no significant differences between ethnicities." The "common suggestions" included, "Be less suspicious of non-whites/be more welcoming of other cultures."³⁵

Under the heading "Suggestions for Making People Feel Welcome," Black respondents quoted in the study observed:

- In my area it seems to be a closed club for mostly single white men and their current girlfriends. Find a way to remove racial stereo-types on all fronts — White — Black — Hispanic, and others so that we all can enjoy what there is in this type of 'sport.' I believe unfortunately this is one area where stereo-typing and racial prejudice is still prevalent.³⁶
- I would like to see more salespeople stop looking at me as if I stole something.³⁷

These comments were echoed by Latinos interviewed for the study:

- I would like for the employees at shooting ranges to NOT have preconceived ideas about who would or would not be a good customer for them. ³⁸
- Sometimes because of your ethnicity and attire shop or range owners and employees tend to single you out for lest then [sic] stellar treatment. This has happened to me and my family at local and larger places.³⁹
- Don't make assumptions based upon color of skin. I walk in with my white father-in-law and he immediately gets waited upon.⁴⁰
- Treat everyone equal and don't judge by the color of skin or because someone has an accent.⁴¹
- Wider range of diversity. Would be nice to enter these locations and see someone other than a late/middle white gentleman behind the counter.⁴²

35 *Understanding Diversity in Hunting and Shooting Sports*, National Shooting Sports Foundation, 2013.

36 *Understanding Diversity in Hunting and Shooting Sports*, National Shooting Sports Foundation, 2013.

37 *Understanding Diversity in Hunting and Shooting Sports*, National Shooting Sports Foundation, 2013.

38 *Understanding Diversity in Hunting and Shooting Sports*, National Shooting Sports Foundation, 2013.

39 *Understanding Diversity in Hunting and Shooting Sports*, National Shooting Sports Foundation, 2013.

40 *Understanding Diversity in Hunting and Shooting Sports*, National Shooting Sports Foundation, 2013.

41 *Understanding Diversity in Hunting and Shooting Sports*, National Shooting Sports Foundation, 2013.

42 *Understanding Diversity in Hunting and Shooting Sports*, National Shooting Sports Foundation, 2013.

SECTION TWO: THE NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION

The NSSF and its industry partners are joined in their marketing efforts by the National Rifle Association. As noted earlier, while the marketing efforts of the NSSF are designed to ensure the financial success of the gun industry, for the NRA new gun buyers represent the ranks from which future foot soldiers can be drawn to protect its political and financial interests.

While historically the NRA has focused its outreach efforts on women (one recent example is its NRA Women campaign sponsored by gunmaker Smith & Wesson) and more recently on children, like NSSF it has jumped on the diversity bandwagon.

In 2015, the *NRA Family* website, under the headline “American Hispanics: The Newest Second Amendment Enthusiasts,” breathlessly cited the findings of NSSF’s research on Latinos:

There is a market out there that is 57 million strong, has a buying power approaching \$1 trillion and, for many, have a positive interest in firearms and the shooting sports. Can you guess who it might be? The answer might surprise you: our American Hispanic population. The National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) commissioned a study to learn more about Hispanics’ interests in firearms and the shooting sports. The study showed that, of the Hispanics surveyed, 18 percent own firearms and 25 percent would like to, 41 percent have been to a shooting range and 42 percent would attend a training class or seek firearms instruction...This is valuable information! This survey has informed us of a barely tapped population that can broaden our pro-gun community, increase participation in the shooting sports and boost NRA membership and our political presence.⁴³

In its efforts, the NRA has taken two approaches. The first has been to present Black and Latino spokespeople in its public education and marketing efforts. The second has been to profile and publicize groups, as the NSSF’s Juett states, “whose memberships are considered non-traditional.”

Until its collapse in 2019 as the result of a power struggle between the National Rifle Association, its long-time public relations firm Ackerman McQueen, and principals on both sides, the NRA’s online “network,” NRATV, was the primary means by which the organization conducted its outreach activities to its hoped-for new markets.

In 2013, Colion Noir, a pro-gun Black YouTube personality joined the NRA as one of the organization’s commenters and show hosts on NRATV and other media platforms. In his role, Noir not only was presented as an “authentic” pro-gun Black voice, thus burnishing the NRA’s outreach bona fides, but also was deployed to attack politicians, advocates, the news media, organizations, and institutions. Noir filled an awkward, self-conscious void at the NRA. A ceaseless self-promoter, Noir was perhaps the only official NRA commentator who freely used profanity (perhaps as a gauge of his authenticity). In one NRA ad, Noir stated:

43 “American Hispanics: The Newest Second Amendment Enthusiasts,” *NRAFamily*, August 13, 2015.

No one wants to fight for their protection, they want the government to do it. The same government who at one point hosed us down with water, attacked us with dogs, wouldn't allow us to eat at their restaurants and told us we couldn't own guns. The only person responsible for your safety is you. Cops can't always be there. Obama definitely can't be there.⁴⁴

At the same time, on his various platforms (NRA and personal) Noir was a consistent pitch man for the gun industry and its products.

Joining Noir as an NRATV commenter was Gabby Franco, a Latina and the first female shooter to represent Venezuela in the Olympics as well as a contestant on the *History Channel's* show "Top Shot." Franco's gun industry links have included a "marketing alliance and sponsorship" agreement with Remington Outdoors Company and serving as a "brand ambassador" for Walther Arms. She also hosts Tips & Tactics, sponsored by sporting goods store Cabela's on the NRA Women's Network, which is sponsored by gun manufacturer Smith & Wesson.⁴⁵ Like Chris Cheng, Franco has been a member of NSSF's Inclusion and Outreach Working Group.⁴⁶

Writing on the *NRABlog* for Hispanic Heritage Month, Franco explained:

I am passionate to protect the constitution of the USA because I know what happens when politicians start changing it, which is what had happened in my home country Venezuela for decades.

You can say that I am an American that knows how to speak Spanish and dance merengue or you can say that I am a Hispanic that speak English and love the American flag. Either way you are correct!⁴⁷

44 "Gun Rights Groups Shift Attention To Latinos To Boost Membership," *ThinkProgress*, April 6, 2016 (<https://archive.thinkprogress.org/gun-rights-groups-shift-attention-to-latinos-to-boost-membership-ae58618ed0b/>).

45 See: "Remington Outdoor Company Announces Marketing Alliance/Sponsorship with Gabriela Franco," press release, August 18, 2014 (<https://www.remington.com/news/2014/remington-outdoor-company-announces-marketing-alliance/sponsorship-gabriela-franco>); "Gabby Franco Joins Team Walther," *NRA Shooting Sports USA*, November 29, 2018 (<https://www.ssusa.org/articles/2018/11/29/gabby-franco-joins-team-walther/>); "Tips & Tactics — Gabby Franco: Cross-Dominant Shooting," March 5, 2020 (<https://www.nrawomen.com/content/tips-tactics-gabby-franco-cross-dominant-shooting/?NRARelatedContent=true>).

46 "What Does It All Mean?," *SHOT Business*, October/November 2018.

47 "The Hispanic Community's Emerging Interest in the Shooting Sports," *NRABlog*, September 17, 2015 (<https://www.nrablog.com/articles/2015/9/the-hispanic-communitys-emerging-interest-in-the-shooting-sports/>).



A 2015 online *America's 1st Freedom* article titled "Not Your Father's NRA?" featured a composite photo of Noir and Franco rising out of an idyllic valley against a backdrop of mountains and touted a "seismic shift" in the organization's membership:

The common image of the National Rifle Association portrayed in the media is that of what Colion Noir has humorously dubbed the OFWG — the 'old, fat white guy.' But one of the most remarkable trends in American society right now is how interest in guns is expanding and obliterating demographic boundaries. The prominence of women in NRA and the gun-rights movement in general has been widely noted in the last decade — but less attention has been paid to the growing racial diversity within the ranks of gun owners.⁴⁸

What all of this means for the future is a new generation of NRA members that might look quite a bit different from its predecessors, but will have the same goal of protecting our Second Amendment rights. We'll likely see a far more equal blend of men and women, gathered from all racial backgrounds. The youngest gun owners signing up to stand behind the Second Amendment are quietly enabling a seismic shift in the organization's demographic makeup.

48 "Not Your Father's NRA?," *America's 1st Freedom*, August 19, 2015 (<https://www.americas1stfreedom.org/articles/2015/8/19/not-your-fathers-nra/>).



Invitation for a 2019 "Guns and Cake" event offering a "sneak peek of our pre-election shoot out!" with "special guest Antonia Okafor!!"⁴⁹

In July 2016, an NRA blog post announced "NRA Releases Powerful New Ads Featuring Millennial Women," one of whom was Antonia Okafor, a Black woman described as a "passionate advocate of women's issues who is the Southwest Regional Director of Students for Concealed Carry on Campus." According to the blog:

Antonia [Okafor] has been told her whole life that as a black woman she shouldn't support the Second Amendment, that she shouldn't want to have the right to protect herself, and that she should fall in line. Antonia didn't listen. She's a millennial woman who refuses to be put in a box. Antonia doesn't care what names anti-gun bigots call her. She refuses to be a victim. And she's talking to women just like her every day.⁵⁰

In the video ad, Okafor states:

I've been told that Black women aren't supposed to support the Second Amendment. I've been told I shouldn't want to be able to protect myself. I shouldn't teach my fellow students about their rights, and I shouldn't speak my mind. Thank God I didn't listen. To all of those who have called me a sellout, an Uncle Tom or a pawn for someone else, here's what should scare you. I never changed my beliefs. I woke up and realized that you don't represent them. You don't speak for me and you don't think for me. I am not the victim you need me to be. And I'm talking to more women like me every single day. I'm the National Rifle Association of America and I'm freedom's safest place.⁵¹

49 See <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/guns-cake-feat-antonia-okafor-tickets-73701516219>.

50 "NRA Releases Powerful New Ads Featuring Millennial Women," *NRA Blog*, July 12, 2016 (<https://www.nrablog.com/articles/2016/7/nra-releases-powerful-new-ads-featuring-millennial-women/>).

51 "Freedom's Safest Place — I Didn't Listen," National Rifle Association, July 11, 2016 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=6&v=6BEdyfJ9SO8).

Like Maj Toure, Colion Noir, and Gabby Franco, Okafor has her own online store.⁵²

During this period, the NRA also promoted Maj Toure and Black Guns Matter, who in a June 2016 YouTube video titled “Maj Toure on the NRA,” urged viewers to “get more informed with the NRA and what it does for us....” Said Toure:

The other thing that’s very important is especially for people in an urban demographic, you got to get more informed with the NRA and what it does for us and what it has been fighting for. Now, I know a lot of people have a skewed representation for whatever reason of the NRA, the National Rifle Association, and what it is and who their members are, but you’d be doing yourself a tremendous, again, disservice to not at least look into them. You know, you wouldn’t want someone to assume that because you’re from the urban area that you’re going to run up on him and rob him. So it’s not our job to assume that the NRA is just, you know, good old boys with pickup trucks and it’s not. So go onto NRA’s website, they are the largest gun rights advocate, Second Amendment fighting for group in the world. It’s a political organization. It’s a civil liberties organization. So you definitely should go check that out, you can become a member. But before you even decide to do that, you need to do your research and look into the NRA. They have plenty of information.⁵³

Yet, by April of 2019, Toure had turned on the NRA, telling *BREAKERMAG*:

I am no longer an NRA member. I don’t fuck with the NRA. They’re not doing what they say they’re going to do. I don’t see them doing the work in urban America like we are. They say they want to. I just see them taking cool pictures.

When I see some genuine changes in that direction, not just hiring a person that happens to be black, then I’ll switch again.⁵⁴

In addition to NRA spokespeople such as Noir, Franco, and Okafar, the NRA has also promoted organizations that aid its recruitment efforts beyond the traditional target market of white males.

In 2016 an NRA blog highlighted the one-year anniversary of the National African American Gun Association (NAAGA) with an interview with its founder, Philip Smith, who started the organization in February 2015 in honor of Black History Month.⁵⁵ The NRA has also aided and subsidized NAAGA’s legal activities. In just one example, in 2019 the organization submitted an *amicus* brief in the case *Rogers v. Grewal* before the U.S. Supreme Court.⁵⁶ The counsel of record for NAAGA’s brief was Stephen Halbrook

52 See <https://blackgunsmatter.myshopify.com/collections/all> (Toure); <https://shop.mrcolionnoir.com/> (Noir); <https://gabbyfranco.com/shop/> (Franco); and, <https://www.empowered2a.org/store> (Okafar).

53 See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eqQzk5sCAok&list=WL&index=60&t=0s>.

54 “Black Guns Matter Founder Maj Toure on Quitting the NRA and Chopping It Up With the Trumps,” *BREAKERMAG*, April 4, 2019 (<https://breakermag.com/black-guns-matter-founder-maj-toure-on-quitting-the-nra-and-chopping-it-up-with-the-trumps/>).

55 “Celebrating The National African American Gun Association’s One Year Anniversary,” *NRA Blog*, March 22, 2016 (<https://www.nrablog.com/articles/2016/3/celebrating-the-national-african-american-gun-associations-one-year-anniversary/>).

56 The case was a challenge to New Jersey’s law governing the carrying of handguns in public. New Jersey requires applicants to show a “justifiable need,” meaning there must be “a special danger to life” that can only be avoided with a permit to carry a gun. The plaintiff applied in 2017 for a public-carry permit and argued that New Jersey’s restrictions violate the Second Amendment. The Supreme Court refused to hear the case.

and the brief itself “was funded in part by the NRA Civil Rights Defense Fund.” Halbrook, one of the gun lobby’s go-to attorneys, has published articles in NRA publications, received grants from the NRA, and has served as outside counsel to the organization.⁵⁷ According to Smith, who is not a member of the NRA, the two organizations have a “respectful” relationship.⁵⁸



An Istock photo from the NAAGA web page

NAAGA does, however, have an “Official Partnership” with handgun manufacturer Glock. In announcing Glock as the “Official Handgun” of the National African American Gun Association in 2018, Smith stated:

We are extremely pleased and excited to have Glock as an official partner.

They are a Global leader in producing one of the best pistols in the Industry. Our partnership with Glock will help us continue to build a safe and effective training environment for those in our community to learn about Firearms using a world-class semi-automatic handgun platform. Glock understands the big picture for our community and the 2nd Amendment.⁵⁹

57 “NRA money helped reshape gun law,” *Washington Post*, March 13, 2013 (https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/nra-money-helped-reshape-gun-law/2013/03/13/73d71e22-829a-11e2-b99e-6baf4ebe42df_story.html).

58 “Political triggers for a Black American Gun Club,” *Scalawag*, April 10, 2018 (<https://www.scalawagmagazine.org/2018/04/political-triggers-for-a-black-american-gun-club/>).

59 “GLOCK Partners With National African American Gun Association,” *The Truth About Guns*, April 22, 2018 (https://www.thetruthaboutguns.com/glock-partners-with-national-african-american-gun-association/#:~:text=Glock%20and%20NAAGA%20begin%20Official,Glock%20as%20an%20official%20partner.)).

With the ascension to the NRA presidency in 2017 of Pete Brownell, the CEO of Brownells, a gun manufacturer and vendor of ammunition and gun accessories, the industry's diversity goals and the NRA's agenda were now publicly one. Brownell's appointment by the NRA's board was historic. For the first time in the organization's history, a member of the gun industry was the titular head of the group. Brownells is also a member of the National Shooting Sports Foundation.⁶⁰

In a July 2017 "President's Column" published in *America's 1st Freedom* headlined "NRA Will Focus On Outreach With a Broad Spectrum of Programs," Brownell expressed the desire to reach out to the Black community, and emphasized the NRA's self-proclaimed role as America's "oldest civil rights organization," stating:

Serving to save the rights that protect the liberties of all Americans, we are indeed the oldest civil rights organization in the country. Among the prouder marks of our history, which began in 1871, is that after the Civil War and during the difficult years that followed, the NRA was perhaps the only organization that was totally colorblind.

Among our top priorities is an aggressive effort to represent peaceable gun owners from every segment of our society. We will be telling our story. And in doing so, I am certain we will represent a diverse cross section of firearm owners who should be in our family, thus bringing more women and more minorities into to [sic] our community of safety, sport and preservation of freedom.⁶¹

In the next month's column, titled "Second Amendment Belongs to All Americans, Regardless of Race, Creed or Gender," Brownell stated:

The Second Amendment belongs to every American. The freedom secured by the Second Amendment cannot be put asunder by any conceivable element of discrimination — not by color, race, age, sex, sexual orientation, language, religion, political ideology or national origin.

This is the simple, direct message of the National Rifle Association to all Americans. I'm proud of our minority outreach efforts to date, but more work needs to be done. A central focus of my NRA presidency is to help the NRA be more inclusive than it's ever been.

The Constitution does not care about the tone of your skin, whom you love, which political party you've vowed to support or which language you speak — if you're speaking the language of freedom. If you're willing to protect your family no matter the cost, and if you want to have a say when it comes to your rights as a law-abiding, responsible American gun owner, then I want you to join us.⁶²

Brownell blamed the inability of the gun lobby and firearms industry to engage Black and Brown communities on the image created by "anti-gunners," stating:

60 "Talking Back to Social Media Platforms: The Brownells Case," NSSF press release, June 13, 2018 (<https://www.nssf.org/talking-back-to-social-media-platforms-the-brownell-case/>).

61 "NRA Will Focus On Outreach With a Broad Spectrum of Programs," *America's 1st Freedom*, July 3, 2017 (<https://www.americas1stfreedom.org/articles/2017/7/3/nra-will-focus-on-outreach-with-a-broad-spectrum-of-programs/>).

62 "Second Amendment Belongs to All Americans, Regardless of Race, Creed or Gender," *America's First Freedom*, August 2017 (https://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/nra/aff_201708/index.php?startid=36#/p/10).

Millions of our fellow Americans, many of them minorities, are becoming gun owners for the very first time. Unfortunately, some seem to have been deceived by false rhetoric about us peddled by anti-gunners. It's on us to quash the rhetoric; it's on us to prove anti-gunners wrong.⁶³

Brownell concluded by emphasizing the duty of the NRA and its members to reach out to these minority communities, citing YouTube videos featuring Colion Noir and noting that the NRA Board's Urban Affairs Committee was now renamed the Outreach Committee.⁶⁴

Brownell continued to state the group's diversity goals in a subsequent NRA profile:

The long-term success of this 146-year-old organization depends on what we do today. For the NRA to be viable and healthy 30 years from now, we must embrace diversity. Now, more than ever, it's critical to get our youth out hunting, shooting, fishing and just enjoying the outdoors. It's equally critical to attract minorities, women, and farm-to-table advocates who represent the next generation of outdoorsmen and women.^{65,66}



Screen shot from the first episode of NRATV's talk show NOIR, hosted by Colion Noir with co-host Amy Robbins and sponsored by gun manufacturer Mossberg⁶⁷

63 "Second Amendment Belongs to All Americans, Regardless of Race, Creed or Gender," *America's First Freedom*, August 2017 (https://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/nra/aff_201708/index.php?startid=36#/p/10).

64 "Second Amendment Belongs to All Americans, Regardless of Race, Creed or Gender," *America's First Freedom*, August 2017 (https://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/nra/aff_201708/index.php?startid=36#/p/10).

65 "Pete Brownell: Everyman's Voice," *America's 1st Freedom*, August 31, 2017 (<https://www.americas1stfreedom.org/articles/2017/8/31/pete-brownell-everyman-s-voice/>).

66 Following the 2017 annual meeting, Brownell unexpectedly resigned as NRA president before his term ended and was replaced by NRA board member Oliver North. Brownell resigned as an NRA board member in 2019. See "Pete Brownell, who heads major supplier of firearms accessories, resigns from NRA board," *Washington Post*, May 30, 2019 (https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/pete-brownell-head-of-major-firearms-supplier-resigns-from-nra-board/2019/05/30/55f7399a-831b-11e9-bce7-40b4105f7ca0_story.html).

67 See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VButiaH4hu0>.

The “viable and healthy” NRA predicted by Brownell that would result from its embrace of diversity was soon derailed by a series of financial controversies, internal power struggles, and revelations of alleged corruption surrounding Executive Vice President Wayne LaPierre and other senior officials that engulfed the organization soon after and continue as of this writing (including an August 2020 lawsuit filed by the New York State Attorney General to dissolve the organization because of its alleged financial malfeasance).⁶⁸ In May 2019, the NRA filed suit against its longtime public relations firm, Ackerman McQueen.⁶⁹ Among the firm’s responsibilities was running the NRA’s online “news” outlet NRATV, which was the most public face of the group’s efforts targeting minorities and incessantly promoted Noir and other NRA-branded pro-gun “personalities” (it was later revealed that Noir was actually an employee of Ackerman McQueen, not the NRA). In June 2019, the NRA, as part of its battle against Ackerman McQueen, pulled the plug on NRATV, removing the primary platform for its proponents of pro-gun “diversity.”⁷⁰

SECTION THREE: THE NSSF AND NRA EXPLOIT COVID-19 IN THEIR MARKETING EFFORTS

The NRA and gun industry have a long history of exploiting crises (real and perceived) and civil unrest not only to market weapons, but to justify even the most extreme arguments in support of gun ownership.

In March 2020, as concerns over COVID-19 took hold across the nation, the NRA released a four-minute video featuring Carletta Whiting, a disabled Black woman with a fibromyalgia-related disability who is also a breast cancer and domestic violence survivor.⁷¹

In a tweet publicizing the video, the NRA stated:

Americans are flocking to gun stores because they know the only reliable self-defense during a crisis is the #2A.

Carletta Whiting, who’s disabled & vulnerable to #coronavirus, asks Dems trying to exploit the pandemic: Why do you want to leave people like me defenseless?

In the video she warns:

Here’s something for you to think about. You might be stockpiling up on food right now to get through this current crisis; but if you aren’t preparing to defend your property when everything goes wrong, you’re really just stockpiling for somebody else.

68 “Attorney General James Files Lawsuit to Dissolve NRA,” press release, New York State Office of the Attorney General, August 6, 2020 (<https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/2020/attorney-general-james-files-lawsuit-dissolve-nra>).

69 “N.R.A Sues Longtime Contractor, Accusing It of Smearing Wayne LaPierre,” *New York Times*, May 22, 2019 (<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/22/us/nra-ackerman-mcqueen.html>).

70 “N.R.A. Shuts Down Production of NRATV, and Its No. 2 Official Resigns,” *New York Times*, June 25, 2019 (<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/25/us/nra-nratv-ackerman-mcqueen.html>).

71 “Gun-toting disabled woman with health condition appears in NRA video warning of effort to ‘exploit’ coronavirus pandemic,” *Washington Examiner*, March 21, 2020 (<https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/gun-toting-disabled-woman-with-health-condition-appears-in-nra-video-warning-of-effort-to-exploit-coronavirus-pandemic>).



Americans are flocking to gun stores because they know the only reliable self-defense during a crisis is the #2A.

Carletta Whiting, who's disabled & vulnerable to #coronavirus, asks Dems trying to exploit the pandemic: Why do you want to leave people like me defenseless?



Disabled Woman Weak to Coronavirus Issues Scathing Message to Lawmakers Using Pandemic to Push Gun Control

4:17 1M views

1:36 PM · Mar 21, 2020



14.5K

See the latest COVID-19 information on Twitter



The photo accompanying the NSSF article “Diversity in Gun Ownership Nothing New to Firearm Industry,” features a woman of color with a pink assault rifle on her shirt

By July, in the wake of increases in firearm sales, the National Shooting Sports Foundation was quick to assert that an increase in gun sales was the latest proof of the industry’s success in its diversity efforts. In an article that relied on argument by assertion bolstered by carefully triaged word choice published on the organization’s website titled “Diversity in Gun Ownership Nothing New to Firearm Industry,” NSSF chief Larry Keane proclaimed:

Throw out the stereotypes on American gun ownership. They’re just wrong.

Against the backdrop of historically high firearm sales, one major theme is shattering misconceptions that America’s gun owners are ‘old white men.’ A surge in gun buyers across the country in 2020, more than 2.5 million since March alone, has boosted the diversity of the firearm-owning population.

While surprising to some, it’s not to those in the firearm industry. Today’s gun buyer looks more like the rest of America. They represent all walks of life and those buying firearms today increasingly are women, minorities and more urban than in previous generations.⁷²

Tying the organization’s outreach activities to its battle against gun violence prevention efforts, NSSF promised that “increasingly more voices of a diverse American gun owner are responding. The impacts will be significant on the future of Second Amendment rights in America.”⁷³

72 “Diversity in Gun Ownership Nothing New to Firearm Industry,” National Shooting Sports Foundation, July 17, 2020 (<https://www.nssf.org/diversity-in-gun-ownership-nothing-new-to-firearm-industry/>).

73 “Diversity in Gun Ownership Nothing New to Firearm Industry,” National Shooting Sports Foundation, July 17, 2020 (<https://www.nssf.org/diversity-in-gun-ownership-nothing-new-to-firearm-industry/>).



Illustration from the NRA article "New Gun Owners and the Election"

These assertions were echoed by the NRA in October 2020 in an article titled "New Gun Owners and the Election" that appeared in the organization's *America's 1st Freedom* magazine. Promising that "no, not of all them look the same" and that it was no longer the case that "gun ownership is merely the preserve of white men," the article argued that:

many of those new gun owners have a practical stake in the preservation of the Second Amendment, and in the prevention of draconian gun-control laws that attempt to criminalize their peaceful behavior and make scapegoats of the peaceful. Perhaps in the coming election, but certainly soon after, these alterations will yield a change in our political debate.⁷⁴

74 "New Gun Owners and the Election," *America's 1st Freedom*, October 2020 (<https://www.americas1stfreedom.org/articles/2020/9/25/new-gun-owners-and-the-election/>).

SECTION FOUR: THE REALITY OF BLACK AND LATINO AMERICANS AND GUNS

Not surprisingly, the firearms industry and its financial partners in the National Rifle Association never acknowledge the harm guns inflict on our nation, and on communities of color in particular. In 2018 alone, nearly 40,000 lives were lost in gun homicides, suicides, and fatal unintentional shootings. And while gun death and injury affects all Americans, its impact does not fall evenly. Blacks and Latinos are more likely to be victims of gun homicide, while gun suicide has a greater impact on white Americans.

Black, Latino, and White Gun Death Victimization 2018: Overall, Homicide, Suicide, and Unintentional

Race/ Ethnicity	Overall Gun Death Victims	Rate per 100,00	Gun Homicide	Rate per 100,000	Gun Suicide	Rate per 100,000	Gun Unintentional	Rate per 100,000
Black	9,801	22.83	7,989	18.61	1,524	3.55	103	0.24
Latino	4,018	6.71	2,191	3.66	1,601	2.67	49	0.08
White	24,789	12.33	3,346	1.66	20,680	10.29	286	0.14
National	39,740	12.15	13,958	4.27	24,432	7.47	458	0.14

In 2018, the most recent year for which data is available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, guns claimed 9,801 Black lives at a rate of 22.83 deaths per 100,000. That same year, guns claimed 4,018 Latino lives at a rate of 6.71 per 100,000 and 24,789 white lives at a rate of 12.33 per 100,000. The Black gun homicide victimization rate of 18.61 was more than 11 times the white gun homicide victimization rate of 1.66 per 100,000. The Latino gun homicide victimization rate of 3.66 per 100,000 was more than twice the white gun homicide victimization rate. While only 13 percent of the U.S. population, Blacks represented more than half of all gun homicide victims.

Black, Latino, and White Male and Female Homicide Victims, Overall Homicide, Firearm Homicide, Rate Per 100,000, and Percentage of Homicides Involving Guns, 2018

Race/ Ethnicity	Male Homicide Victims	Rate per 100,00	Male Firearm Homicide Victims	Rate per 100,000	Percent of Homicides Involving Guns	Female Homicide Victims	Rate per 100,000	Female Firearm Homicide Victims	Rate per 100,000	Percent of Homicides Involving Guns
Black	8,125	39.49	7,040	34.22	86.6	1,418	6.34	949	4.24	66.9
Latino	2,491	8.24	1,880	6.22	75.5	554	1.87	311	1.05	56.1
White	3,688	3.72	2,384	2.40	64.6	1,843	1.81	962	0.94	52.2

In 2018, the Black male gun homicide victimization rate of 34.22 per 100,000 was five and a half times the Latino male gun homicide victimization rate of 6.22 per 100,000 and more than 14 times the white gun homicide victimization rate of 2.40 per 100,000.

For that year, the Black female gun homicide victimization rate of 4.24 per 100,000 was four times the Latina female gun homicide victimization rate of 1.05 per 100,000 and four and a half times the white female gun homicide victimization rate of 0.94 per 100,000.

Black, Latino, and White Male and Female Suicide Victims, Overall Suicide, Firearm Suicide, Rate Per 100,000, and Percentage of Suicides Involving Guns, 2018

Race/ Ethnicity	Male Suicide Victims	Rate per 100,00	Male Firearm Suicide Victims	Rate per 100,000	Percent of Suicides Involving Guns	Female Suicide Victims	Rate per 100,000	Female Firearm Suicide Victims	Rate per 100,000	Percent of Suicides Involving Guns
Black	2,476	12.04	1,343	6.53	54.2	648	2.90	181	0.81	27.9
Latino	3,469	11.47	1,431	4.73	41.3	844	2.85	170	0.57	20.1
White	30,169	30.43	17,797	17.95	59.0	8,474	8.31	2,883	2.83	34.0

In 2018, guns were used in: 54.2 percent of Black male suicides and 27.9 percent of Black female suicides; 41.3 percent of Latino male suicides and 20.1 percent of Latina female suicides; and, 59 percent of white male suicides and 34.0 percent of white female suicides.

In 2018, homicide was the leading cause of death for Black males ages 15 to 24 (95.2 percent involving guns) and ages 25 to 34 (91.7 percent involving guns). For Black females, homicide was the second leading cause of death for victims ages 15 to 24 (82.9 percent involving guns) and the fourth leading cause of death for victims ages 25 to 34 (76.9 percent involving guns).

That same year, homicide was the third leading cause of death for Latino males ages 15 to 24 (87.2 percent involving a gun) and 25 to 34 (79.8 percent involving a gun). For Latina females, homicide was the third leading cause of death for victims ages 15 to 24 (69.7 percent involving guns) and the fourth leading cause of death for victims ages 25 to 34 (56.9 percent involving guns).

Homicide as Leading Cause of Death for Male and Female Black, Latino, and White Victims, Overall, Ages 15 to 24, and Ages 25 to 34, 2018

Race/ Ethnicity	Rank for Male & Female Homicide Victims (overall)	Rank for Male & Female Homicide Victims (15 - 24)	Rank for Male & Female Homicide Victims (25 - 34)	Rank for Male Homicide Victims (overall)	Rank for Male Homicide Victims (15 - 24)	Rank for Male Homicide Victims (25 - 34)	Rank for Female Homicide Victims (Overall)	Rank for Female Homicide Victims (15 - 24)	Rank for Female Homicide Victims (25 - 34)
Black	8th	1st	2nd	5th	1st	1st	Not Among 10 Leading Causes of Death	2nd	4th
Percent Involving a Gun	83.7	93.8	89.8	86.6	95.2	91.7	Not Among 10 Leading Causes of Death	82.9	76.9
Latino	Not Among 10 Leading Causes of Death	3rd	3rd	10th	3rd	3rd	Not Among 10 Leading Causes of Death	3rd	4th
Percent Involving a Gun	Not Among 10 Leading Causes of Death	84.5	76.3	75.5	87.2	79.8	Not Among 10 Leading Causes of Death	69.7	56.9
White	Not Among 10 Leading Causes of Death	3rd	5th	Not Among 10 Leading Causes of Death	3rd	5th	Not Among 10 Leading Causes of Death	4th	5th
Percent Involving a Gun	Not Among 10 Leading Causes of Death	77.7	71.6	Not Among 10 Leading Causes of Death	82.3	75.3	Not Among 10 Leading Causes of Death	65.1	62.4

In 2018, suicide was the third leading cause of death for Black males ages 15 to 24 (60.3 percent involving guns) and ages 25 to 34 (51.4 percent involving guns). For Black females, suicide was the third leading cause of death for victims ages 15 to 24 (29.9 percent involving guns) and the fifth leading cause of death for victims ages 25 to 34 (32.5 percent involving guns).

That same year, suicide was the second leading cause of death for Latino males ages 15 to 24 (46.2 percent involving guns) and 25 to 34 (39.6 percent involving guns). For Latina females, suicide was the second leading cause of death for victims ages 15 to 24 (23.7 percent involving guns) and the third leading cause of death for victims ages 25 to 34 (20.4 percent involving guns).

**Suicide as Leading Cause of Death for Male and Female Black, Latino, and White Victims,
Overall, Ages 15 to 24, and Ages 25 to 34, 2018**

Race/ Ethnicity	Rank for Male & Female Suicide Victims (overall)	Rank for Male & Female Suicide Victims (15 - 24)	Rank for Male & Female Suicide Victims (25 - 34)	Rank for Male Suicide Victims (overall)	Rank for Male Suicide Victims (15 - 24)	Rank for Male Suicide Victims (25 - 34)	Rank for Female Suicide Victims (Overall)	Rank for Female Suicide Victims (15 - 24)	Rank for Female Suicide Victims (25 - 34)
Black	Not Among 10 Leading Causes of Death	3rd	4th	Not Among 10 Leading Causes of Death	3rd	3rd	Not Among 10 Leading Causes of Death	3rd	5th
Percent Involving a Gun	Not Among 10 Leading Causes of Death	54.3	47.7	Not Among 10 Leading Causes of Death	60.3	51.4	Not Among 10 Leading Causes of Death	29.9	32.5
Latino	9th	2nd	2nd	7th	2nd	2nd	Not Among 10 Leading Causes of Death	2nd	3rd
Percent Involving a Gun	37.1	41.9	35.5	41.3	46.2	39.6	Not Among 10 Leading Causes of Death	23.7	20.4
White	9th	2nd	2nd	8th	2nd	2nd	Not Among 10 Leading Causes of Death	2nd	2nd
Percent Involving a Gun	53.5	51.2	44.8	59.0	55.9	47.9	Not Among 10 Leading Causes of Death	30.9	33.0

SECTION FIVE: THE MYTH OF SELF-DEFENSE GUN USE

While the centerpiece of the shared marketing strategy of the gun industry and NRA is the promotion of guns for self-defense, as noted at the beginning of this study, guns are rarely used to kill criminals or stop crimes.

As detailed in the 2020 Violence Policy Center study *Firearm Justifiable Homicides and Non-Fatal Self-Defense Gun Use*, in 2017, across the nation for all races and sexes, there were only 298 justifiable homicides involving a private citizen using a firearm reported to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program as detailed in its Supplementary Homicide Report (SHR).⁷⁵ That same year, there were 10,380 criminal gun homicides tallied in the SHR. In 2017, for every justifiable homicide in the United States involving a gun, guns were used in 35 criminal homicides. And this ratio, of course, does not take into account the tens of thousands of lives ended in gun suicides or unintentional shootings that year.

Of these 298 justifiable homicide incidents, 146 of the private citizens who used a firearm were Black (Hispanic ethnicity could not be determined because of the inadequacy of data reporting and collection). That same year, there were 7,809 Black homicide victims reported to the SHR. In 2017, for every time a Black American used a gun in a justifiable homicide, 53 Black lives were ended in homicides. And, once again, this ratio does not take into account Black lives lost in suicides or fatal unintentional shootings.

And while relatively few justifiable homicides are reported to the SHR, the question remains of how many times are guns used in non-lethal self-defense incidents. The most accurate survey of self-defense gun use is the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) conducted by the Bureau of Justice Statistics. The survey has been ongoing since 1973. According to the NCVS, looking at the total number of self-protective behaviors undertaken by all victims of both attempted and completed *violent crime* for the three-year period 2014 through 2016, in only 1.1 percent of these instances had the intended victim in resistance to a criminal "Threatened or attacked with a firearm." For the three-year period 2014 through 2016, the NCVS estimates that there were 16,115,500 victims of attempted or completed violent crime. During this same three-year period, only 177,300 of the self-protective behaviors involved a firearm. Of this number, it is not known what type of firearm was used or whether it was fired or not. The number may also include off-duty law enforcement officers who use their firearms in self-defense.

⁷⁵ *Firearm Justifiable Homicides and Non-Fatal Self-Defense Gun Use: An Analysis of Federal Bureau of Investigation and National Crime Victimization Survey Data*, Violence Policy Center, May 2020 (<https://vpc.org/studies/justifiable20.pdf>).

SELF-PROTECTIVE BEHAVIORS, BY TYPE OF CRIME, 2014-2016

	Violent Crime 2014-2016		Property Crime 2014-2016	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Total Number of Crimes	16,115,500	100	45,816,900	100
“Victim was Present”^a	16,115,500	100	7,319,100	16.0
Self-Protective Behavior				
Took no action or kept still	6,528,900	40.5	5,866,000	12.8
Threatened or attacked with a firearm	177,300	1.1	123,800	0.3
Threatened or attacked with other weapon	234,800	1.5	17,200	~
Threatened or attacked without a weapon	3,641,300	22.6	239,800	0.5
Nonconfrontational tactics ^b	4,811,700	29.9	910,700	2.0
Other reaction	695,700	4.3	154,300	0.3
Unknown reaction	25,900	0.2	7,300*	~*
Property crime, victim not present ^a	≠	≠	38,497,900	84.0
a By definition, victims are present during violent crime victimizations. Victims are not necessarily present during property crime victimizations.				
b Includes yelling, cooperating, running away, arguing or reasoning, calling police, or trying to attract attention or warn others.				
~ Less than 0.05%				
* Interpret with caution. Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases, or coefficient of variation is greater than 50 percent.				
≠ Not applicable				
Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 2014-2016, Special Tabulation.				

According to the NCVS, looking at the total number of self-protective behaviors undertaken by all victims of attempted or completed *property crime* for the three-year period 2014 through 2016, in only 0.3 percent of these instances had the intended victim in resistance to a criminal threatened or attacked with a firearm. For the three-year period 2014 through 2016, the NCVS estimates that there were 45,816,900 victims of attempted or completed property crime. During this same three-year period, only 123,800 of the self-protective behaviors involved a firearm. Of this number, it is not known what type of firearm was used, whether it was fired or not, or whether the use of a gun would even be a legal response to the property crime. And as before, the number may also include off-duty law enforcement officers. In comparison, a 2017 study estimated that there are approximately 250,000 gun theft incidents per year, with about 380,000 guns stolen.⁷⁶ Further, according to the NCVS, there were 470,840 firearm victimizations in 2018 alone.⁷⁷

76 Hemenway, D., Azrael, D., & Miller, M., “Whose guns are stolen? The epidemiology of Gun theft victims,” *Injury Epidemiology*, December 2017 (<http://doi.org/10.1186/s40621-017-0109-8>).

77 Morgan, Rachel and Oudekerk, Barbara, *Criminal Victimization*, 2018, Table 11, U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, September 2019 (<https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/cv18.pdf>).

CONCLUSION

The gun industry faces an existential crisis. If it cannot grow beyond its now-stagnant market of white males, its long-term sustainability remains in peril. This is an open secret when industry members meet and plan for their future, but one they are quick to dismiss when questioned in public forums. Instead, they point to the latest short-term sales burst (most recently the boost in gun sales during the COVID-19 pandemic) that are part of the crisis-driven peaks and resultant valleys that define gun sales in America. Yet overall, household gun ownership in America has been on a steady decline for decades and now remains relatively stagnant.

The gun industry resembles all other manufacturers in that it needs a constant flow of customers to survive. And, like all other industries, it must adjust to demographic and cultural changes. The industry has worked to not only resell its shrinking primary market of white males, but also focused on new “opportunities.” As noted at the beginning of this study, historically the focus has been on women and children. And now, following a trail blazed by the alcohol and tobacco industries, it has expanded to non-white potential gun buyers, primarily Blacks and Latinos.

While the gun lobby and firearm industry’s efforts are frequently awkward (NSSF’s proclaiming that they are no longer “stale, male and pale”), ham-handed (the industry and NRA’s utilization and/or employment of pro-gun spokespeople of color, such as Colion Noir, Maj Toure, Gabby Franco, and others), or just puzzling and offensive (Springfield Armory’s gun ad featuring a Black man at a gas station that warns, “It’s a jungle out there”), the reality is that based on the low gun ownership rates of Blacks and Latinos in the U.S., there is a potential market to be exploited. And taking into account the support among both Blacks and Latinos for gun violence prevention measures and the growth of Latinos as a political force, it is openly acknowledged by the gun lobby and firearms industry that the hoped-for benefits are political as well as financial.

As with the alcohol and tobacco industries, the joint actions of the NRA and the firearms industry should be seen for what they are: a cynical marketing effort by a rogue industry that values its own perpetuation above all, including any lives lost or communities adversely impacted. Historically, both the gun industry and the NRA have dismissed the gun-driven homicide rates and related violence that disproportionately impact Black and Brown communities as a uniquely urban phenomenon and falsely present it as the inevitable result of irredeemable criminals preying on one another. In 1991, long-time NRA board member Jeff Cooper (now deceased) offered an example of this view to *Guns & Ammo* magazine in a blunt, racist assessment commenting on the murder rate in Los Angeles:

[T]he consensus is that no more than five to ten people in a hundred who die by gunfire in Los Angeles are any loss to society. These people fight small wars amongst themselves. It would seem a valid social service to keep them well-supplied with ammunition.⁷⁸

78 “Cooper’s Corner,” *Guns & Ammo*, April 1991. Although Cooper is no longer alive, his position as house racist on the NRA’s board has been amply filled by entertainer Ted Nugent, whose racist and sexist public statements have been frequent and well documented (see for example *NRA Family Values*, Violence Policy Center, 1996, <https://vpc.org/publications/nra-family-values/>) and *Ted Nugent*, Media Matters for America, ongoing (<https://www.mediamatters.org/ted-nugent?page=2>).

And when “solutions” are offered, the answer is almost always the same: buy a gun. This is despite the fact that NSSF’s own research shows that in gun stores Black and Brown customers frequently feel uncomfortable, with one respondent telling the organization’s researchers, “I would like to see more salespeople stop looking at me as if I stole something.”

At the same time, both the NRA and gun industry are tethered to the racist words and actions of Donald Trump, who was endorsed by the NRA in both 2016 and 2020. In 2016, the NRA reportedly spent more than \$30 million in support of Trump’s presidential campaign.⁷⁹ That same year, the political action committee affiliated with NSSF spent \$430,000 on House and Senate candidates, 95 percent of whom were Republicans.⁸⁰ During his term, Trump undertook numerous actions in support of NSSF’s agenda.⁸¹

For any American, regardless of race or ethnicity, bringing a gun into the home increases the risk of death or injury to the owner or a family member. If the marketing efforts targeting Black and Latinos by the firearms industry and the National Rifle Association gain traction, the impact will be measured not only in dollars and cents, but in increased death and injury among communities of color.

79 See “What gun groups want from Trump,” *The Hill*, December 10, 2016 (<https://thehill.com/regulation/other/309771-what-gun-groups-want-from-trump>) and “NRA Endorses President Donald Trump for Reelection,” *America’s 1st Freedom*, July 16, 2020 (<https://www.americas1stfreedom.org/articles/2020/7/16/nra-endorses-president-donald-trump-for-reelection/>).

80 *Open Secrets*, Center for Responsive Politics, National Shooting Sports Foundation, Contributions to Federal Candidates, 2016 Cycle (<https://www.opensecrets.org/pacs/pacgot.php?cmte=C00480863&cycle=2016>).

81 See, for example: “NSSF Welcomes State Department Removing Obstacles to Suppressor Exports,” NSSF press release July 10, 2020 (<https://www.nssf.org/nssf-welcomes-state-department-removing-obstacles-to-suppressor-exports/>); “NSSF Thanks Trump Administration for Industry’s Critical Infrastructure Designation,” NSSF press release, March 28, 2020 (<https://www.nssf.org/nssf-thanks-trump-administration-for-industrys-critical-infrastructure-designation/>); “NSSF Hails Publication of Firearms Export Reform Rules,” NSSF press release, January 17, 2020 (<https://www.nssf.org/nssf-hails-publication-of-firearms-export-reform-rules/>); and, “NSSF Praises President Trump’s Rejection of U.N. Arms Trade Treaty,” NSSF press release, April 26, 2019 (<https://www.nssf.org/nssf-praises-president-trumps-rejection-of-u-n-arms-trade-treaty/>).



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