

THIS LAND IS OUR LAND

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Boys who have never fired a gun

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*"We cannot but pity the boy who has never
fired a gun."
--Thoreau*

After the last youthful shooting of classmates, most thoughtful folks are asking whether the unrelenting attack upon traditional morality has let loose more systemic societal toxins than ever experienced under the former "repressive" Judeo-Christian culture. Do we continue to pretend that our embrace of secular narcissism does not naturally breed cynical, violent children? Do we delude ourselves that school children, educated in death, sex, homosexuality and AIDS, are not being violated (a word which shares its Latin root -- v"s, to force -- with violent)?

And we do persist in denying that our mass media -- film, television, books, music, newspapers, the Internet -- daily train American children in Advanced Sex and Violence Education.

While many critics cite untested childhood vaccines like hepatitis B as adding fuel to the youthful violence fire, there are those who insist *any*

recollection of childhood innocence is a variation on the "false memory syndrome."

Such experts just discount increases of youthful venereal disease, sexual addiction, depression, violence, suicide, rape, homosexual/bisexual gender confusion or child sexual abuse.

Instead, establishment liberals are sure that guns cause boys to murder praying and passing classmates. With an absence of historical data showing boys as mass murderers, the robotic response is that the memories of good kids are mere fantasies.

But the biographies of our brightest and best, including men like Teddy and Franklin Roosevelt, record youths perched in trees, rifles at the ready for an errant squirrel or bird.

The "make love not war" elites appear to have brought us indiscriminate lust (not love) and domestic massacres (plus war). Which brings us to 1854 and environmental icon Henry David Thoreau's contribution to the current debate on boys and guns. In the tenth chapter of his book, "Walden," Thoreau reports that for centuries boys used firearms without murdering friends and strangers -- while managing to treat girls and women with courtesy and respect. Hear Thoreau's own observations about American boys and their guns:

- We cannot but pity the boy who has never fired a gun. He is no more humane, while his education has been sadly neglected. For no human being past the age of boyhood will wantonly murder. Such is often the young man's introduction to the finest and the most original part of himself.
- Almost every New England boy among my contemporaries shouldered a fowling-piece between the ages of ten and fourteen; and his hunting and fishing grounds were not limited, like the preserves of an English nobleman, but were more boundless even than those of a savage. No wonder, then, that he did not oftener stay to play on the common. ... (W) hen some of my friends have asked me

anxiously about their boys, whether they should let them hunt, I have answered, yes -- remembering that it was one of the best parts of my education -- make them hunters, though sportsmen only at first, if possible, mighty hunters at last. ... There is a period in the history of the individual, as of the race, when the hunters are the "best men," as the Algonquins called them.

Thoreau might conclude that while guns do not poison children, cultural mores can indeed poison children. He records a difficult era before the mass media and federally funded sexperts taught young Americans to repudiate the demands and delays of a moral life. Does the state honestly seek causes for the growing numbers of youths who blaspheme, curse, rape, kill and lose their health to STDs, sterility, abortion and AIDS? Causal answers can be found in an honest study of the radical change agents of the second half of the 20th century -- especially the Rockefeller Foundation and its handpicked sex agent, Dr. Alfred C. Kinsey.

Thoreau documents life as *sacred* when moral conduct was resolutely required in all of America's institutions and fully expected of everyone, especially a president, legislator, clergyman, teacher or others who held a position of authority and responsibility.

Not as much "fun"? Perhaps. But children carried firearms without killing one another at school and their sexual life was largely confined to "the marital act" on the marriage bed and not to playgrounds and bushes in public parks. An unflinching look at the *real* causes for juvenile vice and violence has become a national imperative for liberty-loving Americans.

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