

Statistics : Definitions matter

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Lies, Damn Lies and Statistics

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Who am I?

- Gary Mauser
- Professor emeritus, Simon Fraser University
- Member, Firearms Advisory Committee
 - Public Safety Minister Stephen Blaney
- Testified before Canadian Parliament and Supreme Court of Canada on criminal justice issues
- Husband, father, grandfather, gun collector, hunter, target shooter

Warning!

- Statistics ahead - *boring*
- See if you can find the deliberate typos
- Go for coffee -- now

ZZZZZ



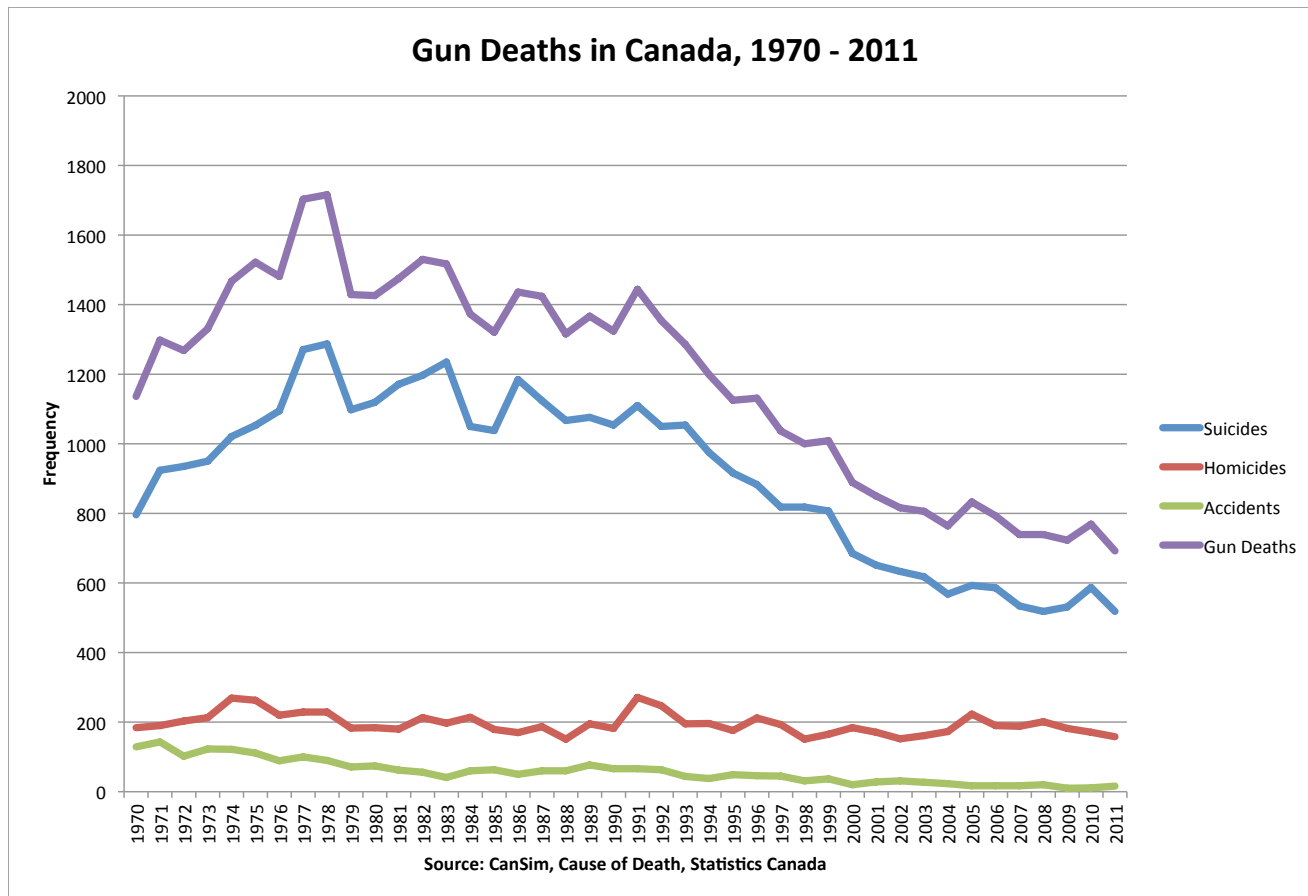
Some terms for gun injuries

- Gun deaths
- Gun incidents
- Accidental gun deaths

Gun injuries - explained

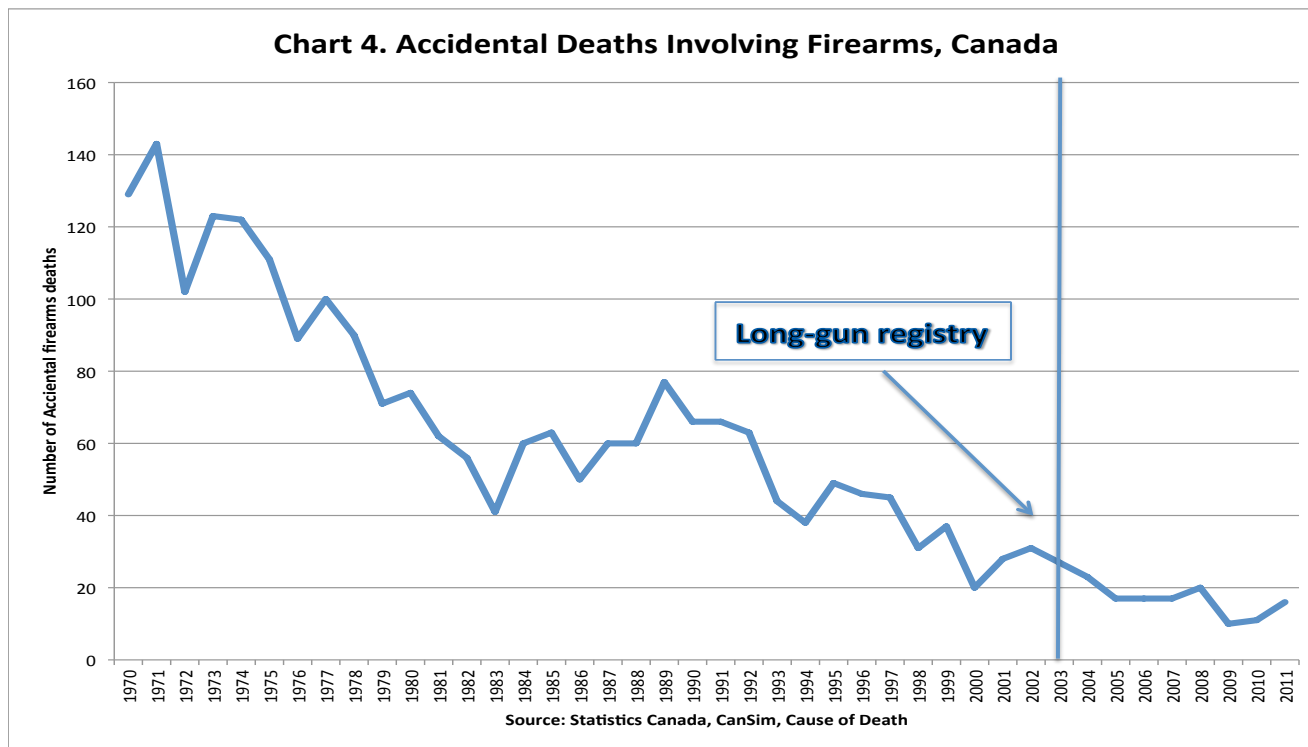
- **Gun deaths**
 - Mixes accidents, murders and suicide deaths
- **Gun incidents**
 - Mixes unintentional with intentional incidents as well as non-fatal and fatal incidents
- **Accidental gun deaths**
 - Limited to unintentional gun deaths

Gun deaths have been falling for decades



Does Safety Education Reduce Accidents?

Accidental firearms deaths



Firearms safety courses

- The number of accidental firearms deaths dropped after provinces made hunter safety courses mandatory in the 1970s
- Deadly firearms accidents continued to decrease after passage of bills C-17 and C-68
- Declines continued after mandatory licensing

Occasionally,
governments deliver the goods

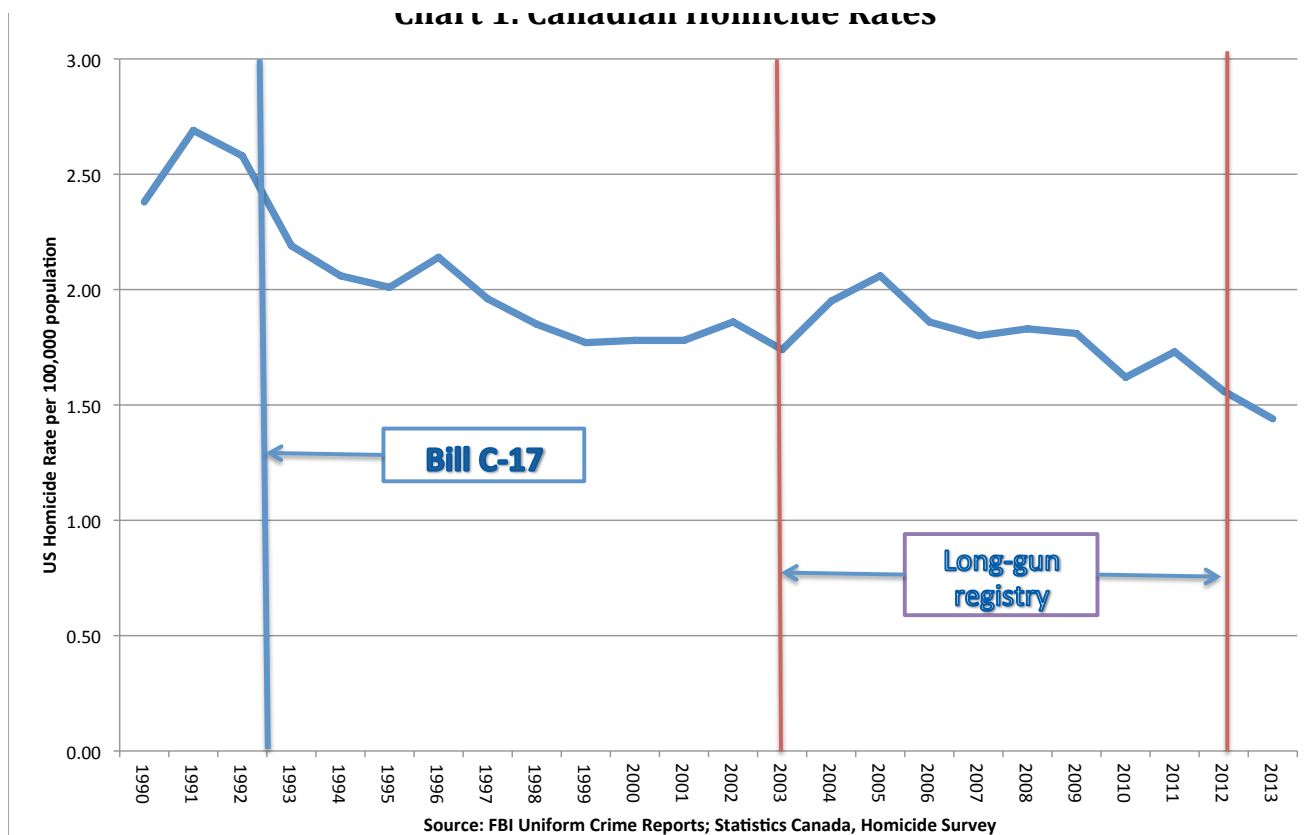


Accidental deaths, Canada 2000-2011

	< 1	1 to 4	5 to 9	10 to 14	15 to 19	20+	Totals
Gun accidents	0	2	6	16	26	187	237
Medical comps	16	9	6	4	16	2,155	2,206
Drowning	39	210	119	112	251	2,524	3,255
Burns	18	108	76	64	85	2,733	3,084
Falls	7	43	21	32	117	31,576	31,796
Cycling		3	39	76	91	675	884
Motor vehicles	52	302	444	680	3,947	29,920	35,345

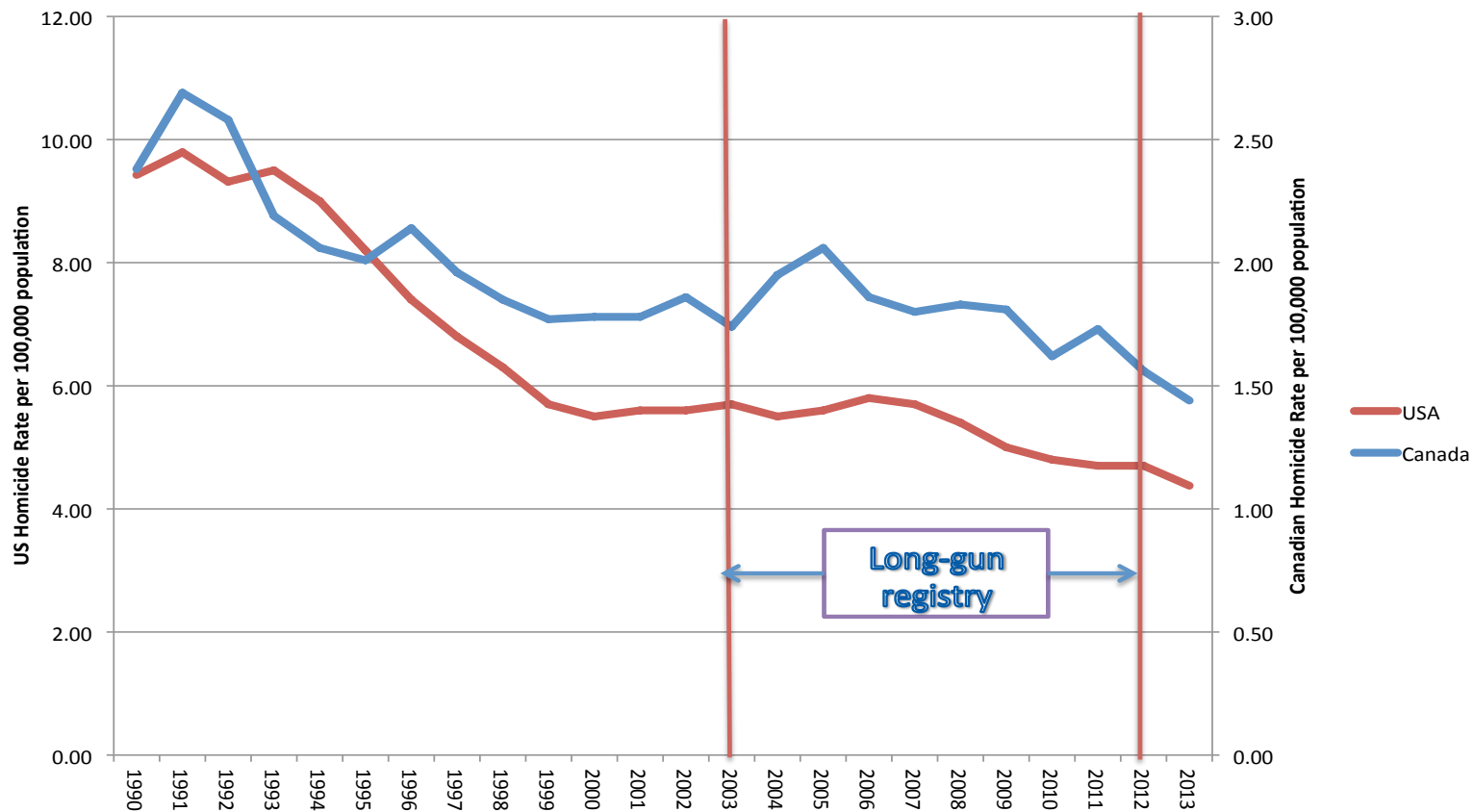
Do Gun Laws Reduce Homicide Rates?

Are Canadian Gun Laws Effective?



Murder rates falling faster in USA

Chart 1. Homicide Rate Trends in the United States and Canada



Source: FBI Uniform Crime Reports; Statistics Canada, Homicide Survey

Counting is harder than you think

First. Start with a sensible definition ...

What is a “gun-related” crime?

- A stick-up at a convenience store with a gun
- An attack on an unarmed homeowner with a baseball bat
 - But a hunting rifle is in the closet
- A man and his wife get into a drunken brawl
 - But an old rifle is in the basement

Stats Can says it's...

All of the above!

Statistics Canada's exaggerated definition

- A “firearms-related” crime” is defined as when “a gun is present during the commission of the crime”
 - Just “present,” not “used”
- A crime may be “firearms-related” even though the gun was not directly involved in committing the crime or injuring the victim
- A gun was just found nearby

Is this a demon?



Stats Can confuses guns with demons

- Statistics Canada justifies their definition by assuming :
- Victims are intimidated by knowing a firearm is in the house
- This means that ...
- Any police call to the home of a hunter or target shooter – for any reason -- is a “gun-related” incident

Weapon - definition

- Since at least 1970,
- the Criminal Code has considered any firearm as a “weapon”
- R.S.C. 1970, c. C-34, s.2

The Criminal Misuse of Firearms, 2013

	Frequency
Firearms causing injury	1,194
Firearms-related crimes	5,027
Violent crimes	263,054
Source: Statistics Canada	

The Criminal Misuse of Firearms, 2010-2013

	5-year totals
Firearms causing injury	7,221
Firearms-related crimes	29,831
Exaggeration factor	4.13
Source: Special Request, Statistics Canada	UCR2, extraction, January 2015

Costs of this Exaggeration

- Public are misled by over-inclusive definition
- Politicians believe gun crime is more prevalent than it really is
- PAL holders are demonized

Is the RCMP looking for guns in the wrong place?

Is having some data better
than none?

Where are the guns?



The Drunk and the Lamp Post

- A Drunk is looking for his keys under the lamp post
- Asked if he lost them there, he says,
- “No. But the light is better here.”
- Is this the logic the RCMP is using with PALs?

Canadian Police Information Centre

- CPIC's stated goal is "to provide important "tactical information about crimes and criminals."
- If so, then why are PAL holders on CPIC?

CPIC

- CPIC a portal for police
- Allows access to a variety of data bases
 - Courts and Corrections
 - Criminal records
 - Canadian Firearms Program
 - PALs and registered firearms

Canadian Police Information Centre

- PALs on CPIC for “public safety”
- Police check CPIC before approaching a residence or a car
- The police want to know where the guns are
- Does this protect the public? The police?

Is this a PAL holder?



PALs and CPIC

- Only guns on CPIC are owned by PAL holders
- No illegally held guns on CPIC
- Only law-abiding people qualify for a PAL
- PAL holders are less likely to be violent than other Canadians

Are PAL holders murderous?

- Between 1997 and 2012, an average of 12 PAL holder per year were accused of murder
- This is a murder rate of 0.60 per 100,000 PAL holders
- The annual national homicide rate for that same period was 1.81
- PAL holders pose less of a threat than the average Canadian

Police killings

- Between 1961 and 2010
- Firearms were used to murder 123 police officers
- 14 were registered

Where are the guns?

- Police report they “feel safer” knowing where some of the guns are
 - Why?
- But “No PAL” does not mean “no gun”
 - Should assume that any home MIGHT have a gun
- Finding a “PAL” means “no criminal record”
- How can it help police knowing where PALs are?

How many guns are
not lawfully held?

PAL \neq gun owner

- Estimated 11 to 21 million guns in Canada
- Maximum 8 million registered guns in 2012
- Where are the other 3 – 13 million guns?
- Currently 2 million PALs
- Estimated 3 to 3.8 million gun owners

Auditor General and CPIC

- In 2011, AG reported that there was a 14 month backlog to update criminal records on CPIC
- In 2013, the RCMP reported that there were over 400,000 criminal records that had yet to be added to the CPIC database

CPIC needs to be fixed

Now what?

- Why hasn't the RCMP fixed CPIC?
 - Is it money?
 - Priorities?
 - Poor organization?
- It's time for a house cleaning

The RCMP and the Long-gun registry

- Before the government scrapped the long-gun registry
- The RCMP claimed it would take 6 months to a year to erase all of the many copies of the LGR.
- They admitted they didn't even know how many copies existed

And then ...

- Shortly after the long-gun registry had been ordered scrapped,
- The RCMP said all copies had been destroyed
- But ...
- Dennis Young has proof a copy was used to ~~confiscate~~ oops, **safeguard**, long guns in High River, Alberta

Now what?

- Have you signed the petition to call a judicial inquiry into the High River Forced Entries ?
- <https://www.change.org/p/premier-of-alberta-call-a-judicial-inquiry-into-the-high-river-forced-entries>
- Dennis Young
 - Honourary Life Member of the CSSA and the NFA

Thank you!

Go get a coffee

Time to wake up!

