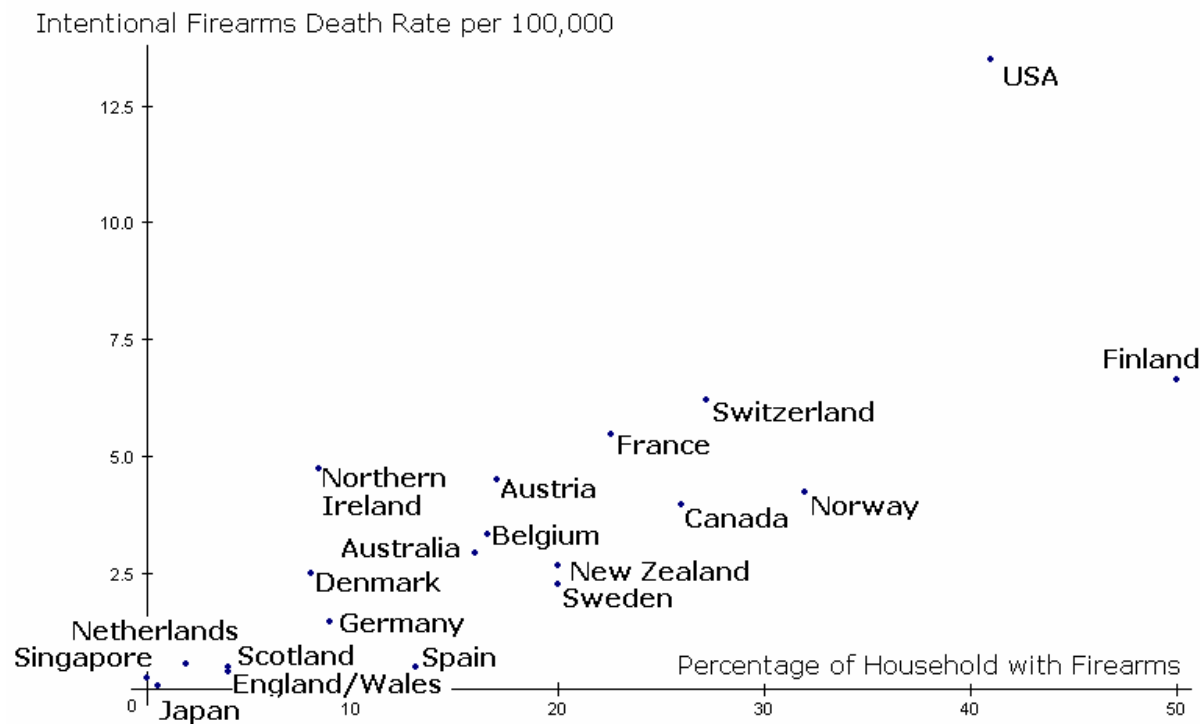


MORE GUNS = MORE DEATHS

Some claim that more guns will make us safer. In fact, where there are more guns there are higher rates of gun death and injury. A terrible irony is that both in Canada and internationally where there are more guns there also tends to be more opposition to gun control.

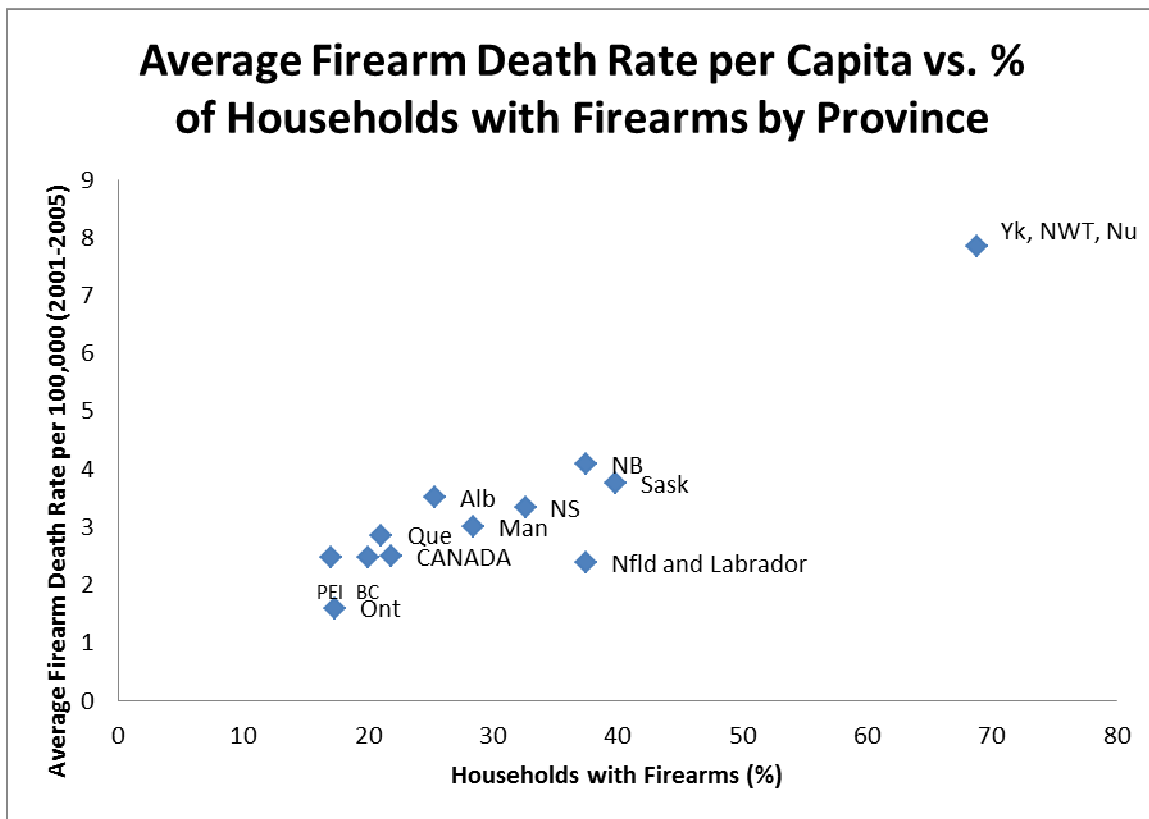
International Comparisons

Among industrialized countries, where there are higher rates of gun ownership, there are also higher rates of gun death. This is because when there are guns in the home they are more likely to be used in suicides,¹ and domestic homicides,² or to be the cause of accidental injury, particularly among youth.³



Source: Cukier, Wendy. (2005) Global Firearm Deaths. Toronto: Small Arms/Firearms Education and Research Network.; also United Nations. (2003) The Eighth International Crime Victims Survey, 2000. Prepared by the Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute.

This is also true within Canada. In spite of the attention focused on urban crime, there are higher rates of gun death and injury in rural areas⁴ For example, Northeastern Ontario has gun death rates which are twice the provincial average, driven largely by higher than average suicide rates but also by increased rates of domestic violence with firearms and firearm related accidents. The western provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta all have higher percentages of gun ownership, and to go along with this, these provinces also have firearm death rates that are higher than the Canadian average. In 2008, RCMP in rural Alberta noted an increase in the number of gun-related calls.⁵ In that province, 68% of suicides by firearms are in rural areas.⁶ In spite of the surge of gang related handgun violence in Toronto, Ontario has one of the lowest rates of gun death and injury in the country. Homicide rates as a whole were highest in the western provinces and in the North during the past decade,⁷ and that is also the case for firearms homicides.⁸



Source: Updated from Miller, T. and Cohen, M. "Costs of Gunshot and Cut/Stab Wounds in the United States, with some Canadian Comparisons." *Accid Anal Prev* 1997; 29 (3): 329-41 with data from Statistics Canada, "Mortality, Summary List of Causes", 2001-2005; Canada Firearms Center, Facts and Figures, January 8, 2009.

Research has shown that when other factors are held constant, gun death rates rise in proportion to the rate of gun ownership. One study found a 92% correlation between households with guns and firearm death rates both within Canada and in comparable industrialized countries.⁹ Other studies show increased risks associated with keeping guns in the home: Homicide of a family member is 2.7 times more likely to occur in a home with a firearm than in a home without guns.¹⁰ Keeping one or more firearms was associated with a 4.8-fold increased risk of suicide in the home. The risks increase, particularly for adolescents, when guns are kept loaded and unlocked.¹¹

In a study of changes in suicide rates with firearm ownership over a 22-year period, it was shown that for every 10% decline in gun ownership, there was a corresponding drop in firearm suicide rates of 4.2%.¹² A research study associated Canada's 1995 Firearms Act with a reduction on average of 250 suicides and 50 homicides each year.¹³

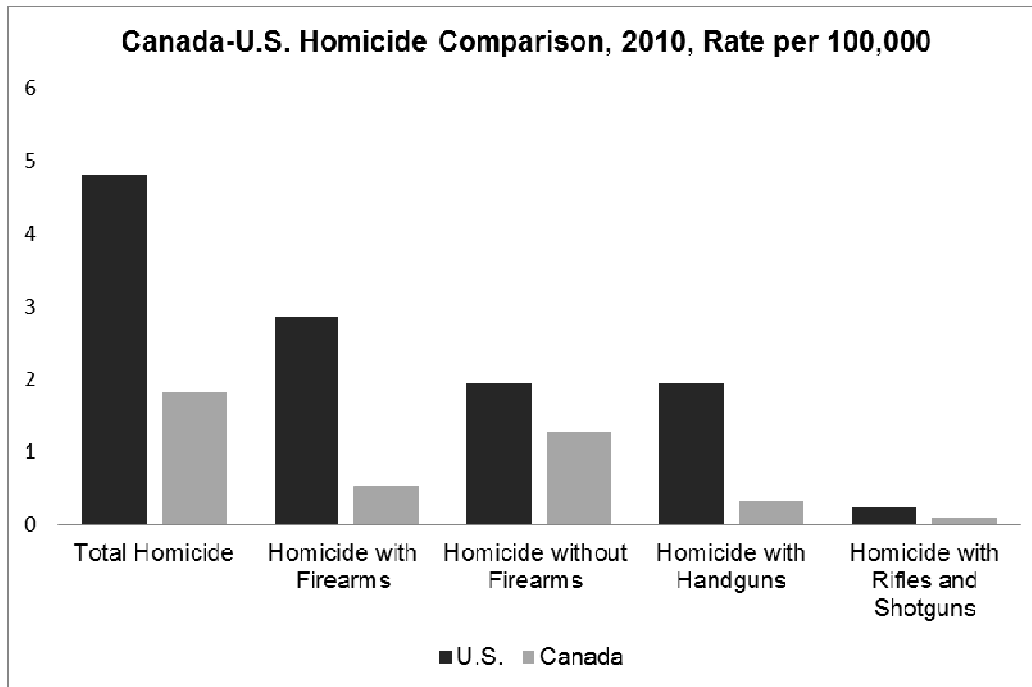
Comparing Canada and the US is also telling. The US has a higher rate of gun ownership, particularly of handguns, than any other industrialized country in the world. Approximately 45 percent of U.S. households have firearms¹⁴ and it is estimated that there are more than 270 million firearms owned¹⁵, one-third of them handguns. In Canada, approximately 18 percent of Canadian households are known to have firearms, and there are now approximately 8 million registered firearms, and it is estimated that only 450,000 handguns are owned here.

The lower rate of handgun violence in Canada compared to the US is a testament to the effectiveness of our gun control program. While the national rate of homicide without guns in the US is somewhat comparable to Canada's, the rate of homicide **with** firearms is much higher (5.7 X) and US has 6.7X times the rate of homicide with handguns. This suggests the availability of firearms is a critical factor in the high US homicide rate.

Canada-US Comparison, Homicide

2010	Canada	US	Comparison US vs Canada Rates
Total Homicide	554	14,748	
Rate of Homicide	1.62 per 100,000	4.80 per 100,000	3.0x
Total Homicide with Firearms	170	8,775	
Rate of Homicide with Firearms	0.49 per 100,000	2.85 per 100,000	5.8x
Homicides without Guns	384	5,973	
Rates of Homicides without Guns	1.12 per 100,000	1.94 per 100,000	1.7x
Total Handgun Homicides	94	6,009	
Rates of Handgun Homicides	0.29 per 100,000	1.95 per 100,000	6.7x
Total Rifle and Shotgun Homicides	36	731	
Rates of Rifle and Shotgun Homicides	0.11 per 100,000	0.23 per 100,000	2.1x

Source: Mahony, Tina Hotton. (2011) "Homicide in Canada, 2010," *Juristat*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada; U.S. Department of Justice. (2011) 2010 Crime statistics, Expanded Homicide Data. FBI.



Source: Mahony, Tina Hotton. (2011) "Homicide in Canada, 2010," *Juristat*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada; U.S. Department of Justice. (2011) 2010 Crime statistics, Expanded Homicide Data. FBI.

¹ Kellermann AL, Rivara FP, Somes G, et al. Suicide in the home in relation to gun ownership. *N Engl J Med* 1992;327:467-72; Miller M, Azrael D, Hepburn L, et al. "The association between changes in household firearm ownership and rates of suicide in the United States, 1981–2002," *Inj Prev* 2006; 12:178-82; Miller M, Lippmann SJ, Azrael D, Hemenway D. "Household firearm ownership and rates of suicide across the 50 United States," *J Trauma* 2007; 62:1029-1035; Miller M, Hemenway D. Guns and Suicide in the United States. *N Engl J Med* 2008; 359:989-91.

² Campbell JC, Webster D, Koziol-McLain J, et al. Risk factors for femicide in abusive relationships: results from a multisite case control study. *Am J Public Health* 2003;93:1089-97.

³ Grossman DC, Reay DT, Baker SA. Self-inflicted and unintentional firearm injuries among children and adolescents: the source of the firearm. *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med* 1999;153:875-8; Grossman DC, Mueller BA, Riedy C, et al. Gun storage practices and risk of youth suicide and unintentional firearm injuries. *JAMA*. 2005;293(6):707-14; Hemenway D. "Risks and Benefits of a Gun in the Home," *Am J of Lifestyle Med* 2011 5(6):502-11.

⁴ Hung, Kwing. Firearm Statistics, Updated Tables. Research and Statistics Division, Department of Justice Canada, January 2006, at http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/pi/rs/rep-rap/2006/rr06_2/t25.html and Wilkins, Kathryn. Deaths Involving Firearms. *Health Reports* 16(4):37-43, Statistics Canada, 2005.

⁵ Richard Liebrecht, "Rural violence on rise More people resorting to guns when conflicts arise, says RCMP officer," *Edmonton Sun*, 29 March 2009.

⁶ 1990-2002. Alberta Justice, "2002 Annual Review, Office of the Chief Medical Officer," 2003.

⁷ Statistics Canada. Homicide in Canada 2010. *The Daily*, October 26 2011, at Table 1 <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/111026/t111026a1-eng.htm>

⁸ For 2000 through 2008 inclusive, the mortality rate for deaths medically classified as 'Assault (homicide) by discharge of firearms' has averaged from 0.51 per 100,000 in B.C. and Saskatchewan (slightly above the national average of 0.50) to 0.72 in the Yukon, 0.74 in Alberta, 0.78 in Manitoba, and 1.04 in NWT. Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Birth and Death Databases (CANSIM table 102-0552), available in numerous formats including online 'Mortality, Summary List of Causes,' tables for each year: 2008 is at <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/84f0209x/2008000/tablesectlist-listetableuxsect-eng.htm>

⁹ Gabor T. *The impact of the availability of firearms on violent crime, suicide, and accidental death*. Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada, 1994.

¹⁰ Cukier, Wendy. Firearms Regulation: Canada in the International Context. *Chronic Diseases in Canada* 1998 19(1):25-34 .

¹¹ Kellerman AL, et al. Suicide in the home in relation to gun ownership. *New Engl J Med* 1992;327:467-72.

¹² Miller M, Azrael D, Hepburn L, et al. The association between changes in household firearm ownership and rates of suicide in the United States, 1981–2002. *Inj Prev* 2006;12:178-82.

¹³ Lavoie, Michel, Pilote, Ruth, Maurice, Pierre, Blais, Étienne. (2010) Brief Submitted to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security Concerning Bill C-391, the Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Firearms Act. Québec: Institut national de santé publique.

¹⁴ Gallup, "Self-Reported Gun Ownership in U.S. Is Highest Since 1993" October 26, 2011. <http://www.gallup.com/poll/150353/self-reported-gun-ownership-highest-1993.aspx>

¹⁵ Karp, Aaron. 2007. 'Completing the Count: Civilian firearms.' *Small Arms Survey 2007: Guns and the City*, p. 67. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 27 August.