



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on October 6, 2014

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Inside Track

Anti-gun Billionaires Now Targeting Kroger

With a series of newspaper ads and billboards, former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg's anti-gun group Moms Demand Action (MDA) [hopes to embarrass or shame](#) the Kroger Company into changing its policies regarding its customers carrying firearms into its 2,640 grocery stores in the United States.



At present, Kroger operates its stores under the prevailing state laws regarding lawful firearms carry. But Shannon Watts, the founder of MDA, wants to change that. In a clip on *CBS This Morning* on Friday, September 5, she said: "Hopefully, Kroger will respond quickly, and we can move on to other companies and other laws and policies."

In an effort to clarify, talking head Jan Crawford of CBS noted that Watts' group "insists it is not against guns or the Second Amendment, but believes people shouldn't be allowed to walk around grocery stores with loaded weapons." Translation: According to Crawford, Watts and MDA believe in the right of people to bear arms as long as they are prohibited from doing so.

Nothing was said on the show by Crawford about the latest poll from MSNBC asking: "Should Kroger shoppers be allowed to carry handguns?" with 87 percent of the respondents saying "yes." Nothing was said about MDA having recently merged with Bloomberg's Mayors Against Illegal Guns (MAIG) into Every Town for Gun Safety, nor did Crawford offer to correct Every Town's vast overstatement of its membership on its website: "More than 2 million mayors, moms, cops, teachers, survivors, gun owners, and everyday Americans have come together to make their own communities safer. Together we are fighting for the changes that we know will save lives." The latest data available shows that MAIG has fewer than 1,000 mayors now claiming membership, while MDA has a membership of something less than 150,000.

Also left out of the conversation on CBS was that Bloomberg's group has begun surveying all federal candidates in the 2014 midterm elections on gun issues. The group hopes to use that information, gathered through a 10-part questionnaire, to rally voters either for or against them in Senate and House races this fall. As John Feinblatt, the president of Every Town and Bloomberg's longtime senior policy advisor, noted: "For too long, the gun lobbyists [in Washington] had the field to themselves." This is part of Bloomberg's effort to challenge the National Rifle Association, and its efforts in the 2014 midterms are just the beginning: "You don't build a counterweight to the gun lobby overnight; we're in this for the long haul."

Nor did CBS explain that Bloomberg is not working the issue on his own. There's the Violence Policy Center (VPC), a virulent anti-gun group founded in 1988 and funded by the Joyce Foundation, which turned Left after its founder, Beatrice Joyce Kean, died in 1972. Just in the last 10 years, the foundation



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has granted more than \$12 million to gun-control organizations, with more than \$4 million of that going to VPC. That group has called for an outright ban on handguns, semiautomatics, and other weapons, along with substantial additional restrictions on law-abiding gun owners. The foundation has also helped fund Bloomberg's MAIG.

There's the Harvard Injury Control Research Center, which publishes anti-gun articles and studies and continues to promote its 2006 book *Private Guns, Public Health* by David Hemenway, despite it being discredited in its analysis and conclusions. One anti-gun reviewer of the book said he was "hoping for a dispassionate, empirical review of the literature on guns and violence from a pro-control perspective. Unfortunately, [Hemenway's] reasoning is far too weak to make this the 'definitive' work that other viewers described."

He explained why:

As an example, Hemenway argues that Gary Kleck's estimate of 2.5 million defensive gun uses (DGUs) per year is wrong. He spends one sentence describing Kleck's methodology, then tries to show that his estimate of DGUs against burglars, 845,000, was impossibly high. He calculates a "more reasonable" estimate of 20,000, by taking the number reported to police for a single city over a single four-month period, multiplying this number by 3 (to get an annual rate) and scaling it to the entire population of the US. He does not examine whether his sample is representative for the entire country over the entire year.

He also does not consider that DGUs which go unreported to the police would be missing from his estimate. In fact, he implicitly assumes that all DGUs are reported to the National Crime Victim Survey and the police, and uses this assumption to force the contradictions he needs.

Based on this discrepancy between Kleck's estimate and his own, and a few more equally fallacious comparisons, Hemenway triumphantly dismisses Kleck's work as "not plausible," "a vast overestimate," "grossly exaggerated," and "the most outrageous number mentioned in a policy discussion by an elected official." Hemenway also makes no mention of the 15 other surveys with similar DGU estimates cited by Kleck, yet still asserts that "all attempts at external validation [of Kleck's estimate] reveal it to be a huge overestimate."

This kind of sloppy deduction from unstated (and doubtful) assumptions completely destroyed the author's credibility. This example is typical of his logic throughout the book. The worst part is that even when his arguments are logical, he rarely cites any references, so we have no way to ascertain the reliability of his evidence.

The reviewer also noted something else: "All but one [of the positive reviews of the book] appear to have been written by markcarlin, as after he wrote the first five-star review, there were six more over the next few days, all written anonymously."

Undaunted, the Harvard Injury Control Research Center continues to promote Hemenway's screed. Not surprisingly, the Harvard Center is funded by the Joyce Foundation, as well as the anti-gun David Bohnett Foundation.

There's the Democracy Alliance (DA), a network of liberal donors who coordinate their political contributions and efforts using DA as a clearinghouse. They intend to influence the midterm elections as well, announcing their intentions to spend \$374 million to "boost liberal candidates and causes in



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2014 and beyond,” according to *Politico*.

Bloomberg is also getting some unexpected help from a newcomer, the Morningside Foundation, which has just announced its gift of \$350 million to Harvard’s School of Public Health, which will be renamed in honor of TH Chan, the foundation’s creator. Delighting in announcing the gift, Harvard Dean Julio Frenk said the bequest will help fund research on “global health threats” such as the harmful effects of air and water pollution and gun violence. Said Frenk: “The Chan family’s transformational gift will help us empower current and new generations of talented and diverse students and faculty to address the complex health threats challenging the US and the world.”

As Bloomberg and his billionaire allies continue to conspire to attack precious rights of American citizens, word is getting out. The attack on Kroger is increasingly being recognized as part of an overall strategy and not a single stand-alone effort. As evidenced by the MSNBC poll, more and more of those American citizens are simply not buying into their efforts. The National Rifle Association noted in its legislative alert last Friday, “We know that no matter how much money the anti-gunners spend, they can’t buy our freedom, because it’s not for sale.”



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