

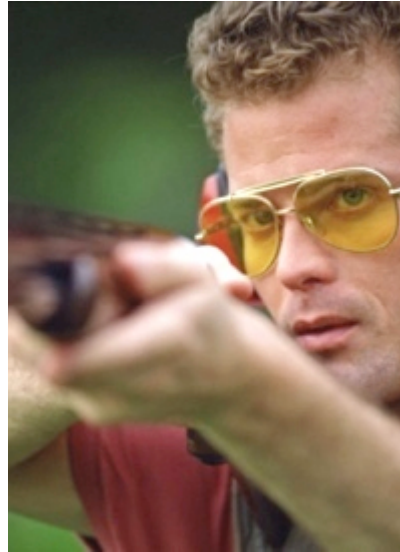


Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on October 22, 2010

Hoplophobia is Curable

Jennifer Willis exhibited all the symptoms of hoplophobia in explaining her return to sanity in her article in Salon magazine, "I Was Anti-gun, Until I Got Stalked."

I'm afraid of guns...I abhor them. I used to date a guy who owned a handgun ... I made him move [his] small gun safe...to another room....



The idea of owning a gun made me sick to my stomach ... I dreamed that people were pointing double-barreled shotguns at me.

These are all classic symptoms of hoplophobia, [defined](#) by author and firearms instructor Colonel Jeff Cooper as "an unreasoning, obsessive neurotic fear of weapons as such, usually accompanied by an irrational feeling that weapons possess a will or consciousness for evil, apart from the will of their user."

Alan Korwin of GunLaws.com further defined the condition as that which "may cause sweating, faintness, discomfort, rapid pulse, nausea, sleeplessness, nondescript fears [and] more at the mere thought of guns. Presence of working firearms may cause a panic attack."

This phobia was exhibited by [another writer](#) at *Salon* magazine a few years ago, Sallie Tisdale, who expressed her anti-gun point of view in a vitriolic diatribe, holding that the Second Amendment needed to be abolished, and all weapons of any kind whatsoever be eliminated entirely.

Imagine your worst nightmare, your scariest neighbor, your angriest employee or the most frightening student at your child's high school loading up on ammo this weekend at a convention center near you. It's perfectly legal. It happens all the time, and we act as though there is nothing we can do about it....

I am unmoved by claims of freedom, lifestyle or privacy in this realm....

I am afraid of guns. I am afraid of people who like guns, own guns ... I am a little scared all the time....

I no longer want gun control. I want an absolute ban on the manufacture, sale, possession and use of handguns ... I realize there must be exceptions. The police needs guns...

Willis, happily, had a brush with reality which turned into a wake-up call. She was being stalked by a man who expressed his interest in her through a series of phone calls, emails, and gifts sent to her in the mail. In one of the more recent emails the stalker mentioned knowing about a trip she took recently which she had told no one about, and that's when an LEO (law enforcement officer) who responded to her call suggested that she purchase and learn to use a handgun for self-defense. Oregon is a "shall-issue" state which means that a concealed weapons permit or license to carry concealed must be issued if the applicant meets certain criteria under the law. The LEO reassured Willis: "Getting a concealed carry permit isn't hard. And they make ladies' purses with concealed weapons compartments."



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Willis wrote of her change of mind about carrying. She said, "I believe in compassion and peace ... the very idea of a gun was a compromise of my principles." Her boyfriend provided the incentive when he asked her: "Which would you prefer, compromising your principles or getting abducted by Crazy Man?"

She finally "got it." She applied for her CCW and now carries for self-defense. She put it aptly: "I can still be the compassionate, diplomatic, interfaith groovy gal I've always been; I'll just be packing heat in case negotiations tank." In her article she warned her would-be abductor: "I'm not as afraid of my stalker as I used to be ... I'm armed now, with more than words and good intentions. He keeps sending upsetting letters, but if he ever pays me a visit — Jenny's got a gun, and she knows how to use it."

It is hoped that Willis has had a chance to influence Tisdale's highly emotional hoplophobia to bring her back to reality as well. Massad Ayoob, author of [In the Gravest Extreme: The Role of the Firearm in Personal Protection](#), reminds his readers that "the only real [gun] control exists, not in the law books, but in the individual conscience of the citizen who chooses to arm himself against the grave and present danger of personal, criminal assault.

I can...remember the words of my father on the day I turned twenty-one and applied for my first pistol permit. On that occasion, he presented me with a Smith & Wesson .38 snub nose, and a piece of advice that would guide my own approach to armed defense: "I hope...you never need to use it," he told me. "But if you ever do — don't miss!"



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