



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on February 23, 2022

Divided States: Reaction to New “AR-15 for Kids” Exposes the Two Americas

While in a town I know well in rural upstate New York years ago, I saw a father and son emerge from its gun store. The boy, aged about 10, was carrying a neat looking Ruger Mini-14 rifle his dad had just purchased (“open carry” is legal in the county). I smiled and thought to myself, “What a slice of Americana.” It was like Norman Rockwell meets the NRA.

It’s also true that the reaction 150 miles south in New York City to a boy openly carrying a gun would have been far different: Panic and police presence. Of course, there’s high crime in the Big Apple — but little in the upstate county. And it’s all emblematic of what’s evident here: two Americas.

This divide is also apparent in the reaction to a new addition to the firearms market: an “AR-15 for kids” called the JR-15.

Created by a company named WEE1 Tactical, the manufacturer states at its [website](#) that the rifle “is the first in a line of shooting platforms that will safely help adults introduce children to the shooting sports.”

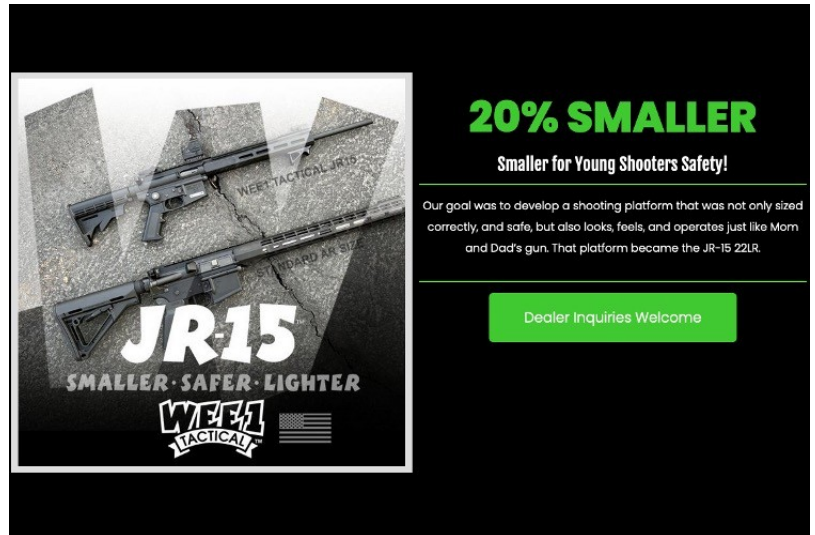
WEE1 also says that its goal was “to develop a shooting platform ... sized correctly, and safe”; thus is the JR-15 20 percent smaller than a regular AR-15 and less than 2.5 pounds in weight. Another difference is while the AR’s standard caliber round is a .223 (5.56 mm), the JR fires a .22. It in addition has a lower price than its big brother: \$389.

WEE1 further writes that the rifle “also looks, feels, and operates just like Mom and Dad’s gun.” This line brings a smile to one America’s face — and, as clear in mainstream media [reaction](#), a frown to the other America’s face.

One frown town creature is the [AFP](#), which at least does recognize that, as with the AR-15 itself, the JR-15 is a “semi-automatic rifle.” (This means that each trigger pull releases *one* bullet, not a continuous stream of them. So, no, it’s not a “machine gun.”) Yet it echoed [other left-wing media](#) in gratuitously mentioning that the AR-15 “has been used in multiple mass killings in the United States.” This is, of course, how you inject de facto commentary into Hard News™.

Yet the two-America divide was perhaps best reflected in Internet commenters. Just consider the posts under [this](#) YouTube video (embedded at this article’s conclusion) about the JR-15.

“TheDuvalBoy” happily wrote, “I definitely want one for my son... but more importantly, I want one for me too.”



screenshot from wee1tactical.com



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“Stephen White,” who may or may not have White privilege, had a very different reaction. “This is the sickest thing I’ve seen in a while,” he said.

“10diamonddave machine” added perspective. “I wonder why people are surprised by a small version of the Most Popular rifle in America??” he stated. “And it ships with a ONE round magazine! It has features to ensure that it is extremely safe and requires an adult to fire. I think it is a great idea.”

In reality, American youth have been taught to shoot at young ages since before our nation’s inception. And other than the fact that the JR-15 is smaller, lighter, and has less recoil (and is thus easier for a child to handle), what’s the difference between a kid shooting this .22-caliber rifle and a .22 Marlin, which has been around for ages?

One issue is that the AR’s and JR’s appeal to one America is exactly what makes them frightening to the other: They look cool.

Yet Happy America generally understands the distinction between these firearms’ substantive uniqueness (e.g., weight, recoil minimization) and their stylistic uniqueness and that the appeal the latter holds is mainly *emotional*.

Frowning America doesn’t realize its fright is catalyzed by mainstream-media-fired misconceptions (prejudice against a black gun?) and is entirely a function of emotion, not reason.

Speaking of which, another frown-town resident, “Chris wilson,” posted about the JR-15 “that kids can take it to school, sling it on the back and take it to a sleep over. The targets are as many a child’s mind can imagine.”

Now, apropos of this, I remember reading the comments years ago of a judge who noted (I’m paraphrasing), “I’ve never seen a boy with a hunting or fishing license come before me [in court].” The lad with an engaged father who takes him hunting or target shooting almost never becomes a mass shooter or any type of violent criminal. In jeopardy is the kid whose father isn’t around or is a miscreant himself.

Frowning America really isn’t very American at all, which is why so many foreigners align with it. Judging from the name, one of these foreigners may be poster “Karlheinz Egger,” who complained under the JR-15 video that you “can drive a car at 16 years old now you can buy deadly weapons for children but...you have to be 21 to buy a beer.”

Yes, and Frowning America (and Germany) claim that children supposedly too young to use firearms must not only be taught about sex, but that they can “transition” into the opposite one.

Other foreign posters claimed that America’s gun culture accounted for its “high” murder rate. In reality, however, there’s no correlation between having strict gun-control laws and low homicide rates. There are nations that make owning guns very difficult but have higher murder rates, such as Mexico and Russia; there are also countries with high gun ownership rates but little homicide, such as Israel and Switzerland.

Moreover, while Britain has often been cited as a poster boy for gun-control success, states such as new Hampshire and Vermont have far higher firearm ownership rates, but also lower murder rates, than the U.K. does. Explanation?

As Professor Thomas Sowell put it, it’s not the guns that explain the difference in crime. It’s the *people* (demographics).



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One criticism of WEE1 coming from Happy America is, as poster “Cheryl Salvati” put it, that its [logo](#) is “freaky” and “not a good look for this company.” This is valid criticism — WEE1 should lose the logo.

The video (from the [SHOT Show 2022](#)) explaining the JR-15 and its features is below.

By the way, the irrational fear of firearms is defined as a mental illness and is known as [Hoplophobia](#). But illness or ideology, the only time we should fear guns is when good people don’t have them.



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