

Australia's Gun Control 'Success' Story

Australia's gun control law is a great success, if you haven't heard.

I learned this from a dozen memes that appeared in my Facebook news feed, a conversation with my neighbor, and a slew of media stories.

[This](#) NBC story, for example, was published as I started writing this story. It features a John Hopkins professor who points out that the U.S. gun homicide rate is *23 times* that of Australia.

And then there is [this Slate article](#)—"How Many Shootings Will It Take for America to Control Its Guns?"—forwarded to me by my friendly neighbor.

The article, written by Will Oremus, tells us this:

Violent crime and gun-related deaths did not come to an end in Australia, of course. But as [the Washington Post's Wonkblog pointed out](#) in August, [homicides by firearm plunged 59 percent between 1995 and 2006](#), with no corresponding increase in non-firearm-related homicides. The drop in suicides by gun was even steeper: 65 percent. Studies found [a close correlation between the sharp declines and the gun buybacks](#). Robberies involving a firearm also dropped significantly. Meanwhile, [home invasions did not increase](#), contrary to fears that firearm ownership is needed to deter such crimes. But here's the most stunning statistic. In the decade before the Port Arthur massacre, there had been 11 mass shootings in the country. There hasn't been a single one in Australia since.

Pretty persuasive stuff, huh? But before you get too excited about what an Australia-style gun control law could do for

America, it's worth looking at a few facts not mentioned in these articles.