As the COVID-19 pandemic raged in 2020, gun sales in the United States soared to their highest levels in at least a decade. But purchasers weren’t looking to spend the nationwide lockdown hunting or adding to their gun collections. The primary reason driving one in five American households to buy a gun was security.

Although people in most developed countries view guns as dangerous, Americans largely view guns as a tool to protect themselves in a world they perceive as dangerous, research shows. But ironically, having access to a gun may leave owners feeling more anxious, according to research by social psychologist Nick Buttrick of the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

Buttrick was among four panelists in a Sept. 20 APS webinar, Science for Society: Gun Violence and Anxiety in the United States. The webinar covered a variety of research and insights on gun ownership and attitudes.

If you were unable to attend or wish to watch again, you can now view a recording of the program.
Don’t miss the next Science for Society webinar on October 18: Helping Underrepresented Populations Through Community-Oriented Research

The full webinar is available to APS members and registered workshop attendees.

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