

Science for Society: Insights from Psychological Science on Gun Violence and Anxiety

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[About this series](#)

Science for Society is an APS webinar series focused on educating the public and bringing psychological science to decision-makers working to solve real world problems. In addition to psychological scientists, participants include public policy decision-makers, news reporters, advocates, and scholars from adjacent fields.

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.

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

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