



An Attorney Reflects on Gun Modifications An Interview with Mark Seiden

Interview by Gila Hayes

How many times have you heard or read, "If it is a 'good shoot,' how could it matter if your gun was customized or whether you used home-loaded ammunition?" This assertion is usually followed by the challenge, "If you think I'm wrong, show me the cases."

Retired attorney Mark Seiden does just that. He knows from hard experience how difficult it is to keep the focus on the criminal aggressor who initiated an attack that ended in gunfire. Seiden and his former law partner, Roy Black and expert witness Massad Ayoob fought hard and won an acquittal for Miami, FL police officer Luis Alvarez thirty years ago after a justifiable shooting with a modified revolver.

While the riots that followed the shooting and the racial elements of the trial linger in memory, most have forgotten the home garage gunsmithing that fueled the prosecution's claim of manslaughter by gross reckless culpable negligence.

As Santayana said, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it," so when the opportunity arose to ask Seiden questions about gun modifications, we had many topics to explore. Let's switch now to Q&A to learn from Seiden's own words.

eJournal: With so much attention focused on when deadly force is justified, it is easy to ignore peripheral issues that let a prosecutor or plaintiff's attorney distort what happened through arguments that have little or nothing to do with the necessity of self defense. I'm hoping to learn from some of the cases you defended and apply those lessons so readers can avoid having to go through trials like some of your clients. With that in mind, thank you for speaking to us!

Seiden: To get started, there are three different kinds of shootings that we should discuss. A justifiable shooting is an intentional shooting where the danger to the shooter is absolutely clear. Maybe the shooter is sitting

in a café enjoying a cup of coffee and somebody in a suicide vest comes running in with an AK47, shouting "Allah Akbar," and the armed citizen puts him down. That's one type of shooting.

Another type of shooting is an accidental shooting and the third type of shooting is a politically sensitive shooting, like the George Zimmerman case. Under Florida's Stand Your Ground law, it was pretty clear that Zimmerman was justified in his use of deadly force, but because it was politically sensitive, racially charged, and there were careers at stake, the prosecutors went after him with everything they could to try to prove that he committed manslaughter at the least, and murder at the most.

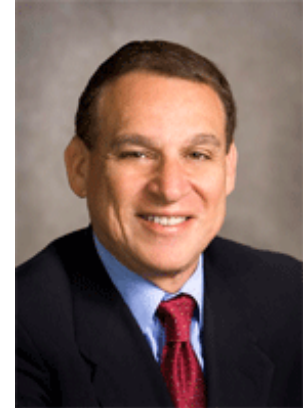
eJournal: Political prosecutions are nothing new. One of your landmark cases was the defense of police officer Luis Alvarez where the accusations hinged on what seemed like pretty minor gunsmithing. How can an armed citizen avoid getting swept up in something like that?

Seiden: Here is the background: On December 28 of 1982, Luis Alvarez was a police officer in the city of Miami. He was assigned as FTO (field training officer) to a young recruit whom previous FTOs said had a fear of black neighborhoods. Alvarez wanted to see whether or not this was correct and so they spent a lot of time in black neighborhoods.

Alvarez decided to show this recruit how to do a premises check, so they stopped at a video arcade. He was explaining what licenses should be publicly posted, so he brought the recruit into the game room and showed him the licenses. He then saw a young man,

[Continued next page...]

November 2017



Neville Johnson, Jr., bent over a Donkey Kong video game.

It is December and Johnson is wearing a sweater. Alvarez sees what he believes to be the grip of a handgun in the cross draw position on Johnson's left side. This is back in the days before shall-issue statewide carry permits and it was virtually impossible to get a carry permit in Dade County. There may have been only 200 or 250 carry permits in a county of well over a million people, so he assumes the gun is being illegally carried. He walks over, puts his hand on what he believes to be the weapon and says, "What's this?" He feels it and knows it is a weapon.

Johnson says, "It's a gun." Alvarez tries to lift the sweater up to get the gun, but the sweater slips. Alvarez has drawn his revolver, he tells his partner to retrieve the pistol. At that point Johnson pivots toward him, Alvarez sees his right shoulder and upper arm move toward the weapon and, in fear for his life, he fires his Smith & Wesson Model 64 one time. The bullet hits Johnson in the head and traverses the sagittal sinus. He goes crashing to the floor and is dead before he hits the ground.

The weapon is retrieved, secured and the crowd starts getting nasty. Alvarez calls for assistance. A riot develops. The scene is pretty well trounced and Alvarez, his partner and one of the homicide detectives have to be rescued by the SWAT team because of the riot that is now in full force outside. That was the scenario of the shooting.

eJournal: Do you ever wonder whether Alvarez would have been prosecuted had the riots not started so immediately?

Seiden: It is difficult to say! If the riots hadn't happened, I think the likelihood of him being charged would have been far less. It was clearly a political decision.

eJournal: The State charged Alvarez with manslaughter?

Seiden: He'd had a home-garage gunsmith modify his revolver by removing a coil and a half off the rebound slide spring and polishing the rebound slide. The prosecution's theory was that Alvarez fired unintentionally because of the lightened trigger pull and

he committed manslaughter by gross reckless culpable negligence by modifying his weapon.

When I was a law enforcement officer, the first service weapon I had was a K-frame revolver. The training sergeant in the firearms unit took a coil and a half off the rebound slide spring and polished the rebound slide. It didn't really lighten the trigger pull; it just made it smoother.

eJournal: But Alvarez's revolver had the very same modifications. How does that end up in a manslaughter charge?

Seiden: It happened because we'd had a spate of three police shootings around 1982. It used to be that the prosecutor would review the shooting and issue a letter that there was no criminal action on the part of the officer and that would be the end of it.

Janet Reno was then the state attorney. Her office had been accused by the Department of Justice of being racially insensitive, so she sent these three police shootings to the grand jury rather than ruling on the shootings herself. One officer was indicted, went to trial and was acquitted; the second officer was convicted; Alvarez was acquitted.

eJournal: What made the difference?

Seiden: There are a lot of variables whether a person is prosecuted or not. What is the political mood of the community? What is the political sensitivity of the chief prosecutor? Are they running for election? Have they been criticized for their conduct in other shooting cases? Are the newspapers pushing for an indictment? Once that train starts rolling, there is nothing that you can do to stop it. You just have to deal with it.

eJournal: Can we tie the lessons of 30 years ago to the kinds of guns and the options for home gunsmithing available today?

Seiden: I believe that a carry pistol should be as close to box stock as you can get it. The reason is that it eliminates an issue. The prosecutor is looking for some issue to hang their hat on in order to charge you or in order to make a point during trial. If you eliminate that

[Continued next page...]

rack for them to hang their hat on, that is one less issue that you have to deal with.

eJournal: What about changing parts to improve the feel of the trigger, keeping with parts from the original manufacturer, for example? Citing a very common brand of gun in wide use today, aren't there variations to the factory Glock trigger you prefer? While not all our readers will use Glocks, it provides an example of what's OK and what opens avenues of doubt a prosecutor can raise.

Seiden: I like the New York 1 spring; it increases the trigger pull weight. My own pistol [trigger] is a little over 7 pounds, which is clearly above the factory spec of 5.5 pounds, all Glock parts installed by a Glock certified armorer. I can't see that ever being a problem in the courtroom.

Now, Glock tells you in the armorers' manual that the minus connector is for competition only. If you put that minus connector in your carry weapon without a New York 1 spring, the trigger pull weight is well below the standard Glock specification for trigger pull. If you do that, you have just created a hat rack for the prosecutor to hang his or her hat on.

Glock approves the modification of the minus connector and the NY1 spring. Per page 53 of the 2015 Glock armorers manual, it increases the trigger pull from the standard, presuming the standard firing pin spring, from 4.3 to 6.5 pounds, which is a nominally 5.5 to a 6.3 to 8.3 pounds.

Also the same manual on the next page talks about the extended slide stop; I don't see that as a problem. Of course, Glock sells the pistols with night sights, or you can put aftermarket night sights on Glocks. I don't see that as a problem. Beyond that, I would leave it alone.

I speak of Glocks because it is probably the service weapon that I am most familiar with. Many departments now issue Glock pistols, but I doubt that there is a police department armorer out there that would approve of somebody modifying their pistol or doing anything to alter it from its factory stock condition with the exception of night sights. I don't see a problem with sights at all.

eJournal: Is there a parallel standard for the 1911 owner? Colts, Kimbers or Springfields, to name only a few, are awash in aftermarket parts that definitely are

not from the factory—extended thumb safeties, magazine funnels, and many more. Now what?

Seiden: You are creating an issue, even though in reality a mag well may not actually have much effect on the pistol. Nonetheless, they will argue that it was your intent to turn your side arm into a deadly, more efficient killing machine with an increased rate of firepower, as the prosecution's expert argued in the Alvarez case. So why create the issue? It makes no sense! If it makes you feel good, do it, but don't carry it.

eJournal: What about laser sights? Do you think that creates the issue for the prosecutor to attack?

Seiden: If it comes factory installed, as a factory option, I don't think that would be a problem. I think that would be in the area of changing sights, which I don't think is a problem.

eJournal: What if the custom modification is done for you by a reputable gunsmith?

Seiden: If you sent your weapon to the Smith & Wesson Performance Center for a service pistol action job, a carry modification not a competition modification, as long as it still meets factory specs, you are going to have less problems because it was done and approved by the factory than if you went to even a very well known, custom gunsmith. You can buy a Smith & Wesson Performance Center pistol that comes with the modifications already done, you just pay a little more money for it.

In the Alvarez case, even though the modifications were commonplace, and the grips made by Roger's Holster Company were perfectly suitable and acceptable, the prosecutor did not have much else to go on because the decedent was armed, and Alvarez's reaction was reasonable. So their theory was that it was manslaughter by culpable negligence because he modified the revolver and therefore it was more likely to discharge accidentally.

The prosecution had an expert witness who used to be a designer for Hi Standard come in and testify that the grips and the trigger job made it, and I am quoting, "A far more efficient and deadly killing machine with greater fire power." I kid you not.

[Continued next page...]

eJournal: How did you rebut that?

Seiden: We put the head of the technical services division at ATF who had examined the revolver on the stand. He said that the revolver's trigger pull, both single and double action, was within factory specifications, that was a common modification which many police officers did and that he, himself, had done that to his own service revolver.

One of the firearms examiners for the Metro Dade Police Department, who examined the weapon, said exactly the same thing. We put those two witnesses on to testify that it was within factory specifications. It was a common modification. We needed to defuse that issue. But if the revolver hadn't been modified, it would not have been an issue.

Your carry gun should be as close to box stock as possible. It eliminates an issue. A prosecutor might make the argument, "Oh, you wanted a lighter trigger pull so you could fire more shots within a short period of time?" or, "The factory trigger pull was too heavy to prevent you from firing as many shots in a few seconds as you wanted. Did you want to turn this weapon into a more deadly, efficient killing machine? Isn't that why you made the modifications?"

eJournal: If there is a counter argument, what might that be?

Seiden: You have to come back with counter arguments as we did in *Alvarez* that it is a standard modification, that it is within factory specifications, and there was no issue with the grips or the lock work of the revolver. But you want to avoid creating those issues.

eJournal: Armed citizens today, unfamiliar with that history, may see advertising for trigger kits, for example. They might think, "This must be OK. It came from a factory." Do you think the manufacturer of trigger kits, for example, may end up on the witness stand, testifying why their replacement part "improves" a major gun manufacturer's design?

Seiden: Perhaps. In the *Alvarez* case, Bill Rogers came to the stand to testify about his grips.

eJournal: Were you worried that the judge might not allow your experts to testify why those revolver modifications were acceptable?

Seiden: Yes! The judge decides what is admissible and what is inadmissible. The appellate court, if there is a conviction, reviews that and the appellate court can do several things. One: it can reverse the conviction, at which point the citizen would have to go through another very expensive trial, or the appellate court can say, "PCA," which means "per curiam – affirmed" where they don't even write an opinion. That means the conviction stands and cannot be reviewed by a higher court. Or, they can use the harmless error doctrine and say, "Yeah, OK, the judge should have let the evidence in, but the other evidence was so overwhelming that it would not have made a difference in the outcome of the trial, so we are affirming the conviction."

eJournal: Are you stopped cold at that point? No further appeals?

Seiden: Depending upon the jurisdiction that you live in, there may be appeal to a higher appellate court, but the higher appellate court may exercise its discretion and not even want to hear your appeal. Besides, while this is happening, you are eating baloney and cheese sandwiches on stale bread and sleeping on a concrete bunk.

Why modify the weapon? In other words, if it is your IPSC pistol, and you have this and that modification made to it, then limit its use to IPSC matches. Your carry pistol should be pretty much box stock. When I was shooting IPSC, I was a law enforcement officer and I competed with my service pistol.

What happens is that people's competitive urge gets the better of them and they think, "If I just drop in an XYZ trigger group then I will lower my pull by 3 ½ or 4 pounds and I'll be able to shoot more accurately faster." If it is only for the range or competition, go ahead, but don't carry it.

eJournal: Armed citizens have to ask are we merely hobbyists, or do we own guns to prevent death from criminal attack?

Seiden: Hobby guns should be restricted to hobby shooting; self-defense guns should be carried as close to stock as possible. Suppose you like a smooth-faced trigger on your Glock 19 so you put in the trigger from

[Continued next page...]

your Glock 17? Would it make any difference in court? Hard to say, but if that is what you want, why not just buy a Gen 5 Glock that comes with a smooth-faced trigger right out of the box? If you don't like the finger humps on the Glock, well, get a Gen 5.

eJournal: I am sure there are corollaries for guns from other manufacturers, and that most have a custom shop to keep the gun in factory spec.

Seiden: That depends whether the custom pistol is meant as a hobby gun or as a duty gun. I don't advocate aftermarket trigger jobs performed by gunsmith in a carry gun, but those gunsmiths that do that usually have two trigger jobs – a competition trigger job or a carry trigger. When I was a law enforcement officer, when I went to the detective bureau, we could carry whatever we wanted. I carried a Government Model that was modified by the late Jim Hoag when he worked at Kings Gun Works many, many years ago. That was also the pistol I competed with. Would I do that today? No!

eJournal: Are you “older and wiser” or has America become more litigious?

Seiden: Both! We definitely have become more litigious. The Alvarez case taught me, “Don't make it better. Leave it the way it is.”

eJournal: And you were smart enough to apply the lessons someone else learned so you didn't have to suffer the same mistakes yourself. Now, what if the manufacturer creates a problem and gives a model of their gun an indiscreet name?

Seiden: Well, what would happen is this: if you are carrying a weapon that has something roll marked on it that sounds aggressive or sounds like you intend to use it in a battle or a combat situation, the prosecutor is going to hold that in front of a jury, photograph it, blow it up to 6 feet by 5 feet and say, “Look what the intent was in his mind. Look at this! It was not enough for him to have a standard pistol. He had to have one that was called Close Quarter Battle or Scorpion,” or things of that nature.

It is much better if it just says M&P, or 19 Gen 4, Model of 1911A1 or Government Model or something innocuous, instead of some hyperbole. If you put the plastic bit on the back of the Glock slide, with a skull and

crossbones on it, that's going to be blown up to six foot by five foot and shown to the jury, too.

eJournal: I've even seen cartoon characters engraved on pistol slides. I wonder if the frivolity could also be misrepresented to suggest the taking of life was not a serious matter?

Seiden: They don't call lawyers sharks because of their ability to swim! A plaintiff's lawyer who in essence is not fighting for justice but is fighting for his or her own fee, is going to pull out all the stops. They are going to pull out every dirty trick in the book to try to get a judgment against you so that they can put money in their pockets. That is the way personal injury [law] works.

In a criminal case, a prosecutor's job is to obtain a conviction. Now, they are supposed to seek justice, but that gets blurred because egos are involved. Trials are a competitive sport. Each side wants to win. It is defined as an adversarial system of justice. Each party puts out evidence that is most favorable to their side and then the jury decides. So if you place yourself in a situation where you put a target on your back because you want to carry a fancy custom pistol with a three-pound trigger, you have got to be prepared to face the consequences. When people say, “If it is a good shoot, it will stand on its own merit,” they are wrong. Ask Luis Alvarez!

eJournal: In earlier conversations, you've indicated a preference to mirror law enforcement in your community when selecting firearms for defense. However, there are a lot of really decent concealable firearms that are probably never going to be approved for police use. How stringently should that ideal be applied?

Seiden: As long as it is a pistol made by a reputable manufacturer with factory ammunition and it is not modified, I don't see a problem. That brings up something else: Don't carry handloads!

eJournal: Can you explain why?

Seiden: Major ammunition manufacturers keep samples of ammunition lots. If a few years later, ammunition from a lot is used in a shooting, and it is very important to determine the range [distance between persons involved], the manufacturer can provide ammunition to

[Continued next page...]

the forensic, testing laboratory so that the range can be more accurately determined.

I don't know that boutique ammunition manufacturers keep samples of the various lots of their ammunition, firstly, and secondly, the argument by the plaintiff's lawyer or the prosecutor would be, "Well, standard ammunition, police ammunition was not good enough for this man. He had to have some kind of fancy ammunition, custom ammunition, that creates greater wounds and was more deadly." See, you created another issue.

Pay attention to the name. You don't want a plaintiff's attorney to say, "He had to carry ammunition called 'Thermonuclear Ammunition,' because the standard stuff that our local police carry was not deadly enough for him." That goes to show your intent; that you tried to create a more deadly, efficient killing machine by modifying the weapon, then purchasing ammunition that advertises itself as more deadly. Why create that issue?

If you buy ammunition from a major manufacturer today, Federal HST or Speer Gold Dot, you are not going to have much difficulty defending that. But if you carry ammunition made by some boutique manufacturer that advertises the deadly qualities and the wound channels produced by its loads, then you create another issue.

eJournal: Fortunately, there is no shortage of responsibly marketed ammunition choices from major manufacturers that are likely to still be in business if, some years down the line, ammunition from a particular lot ends up in a shooting. Still, I wonder how damaging not being able to come up with exemplar rounds would be if you were defending a justifiable shooting?

Seiden: It depends on how strong the facts are in your favor. For instance: you're sitting in the café enjoying your cup of coffee and someone in a suicide vest with an AK 47 runs in shouting "Allah Akbar" and you shoot them? I don't think it would make any difference if you had a modified weapon or a non-modified weapon or if you used "Thermonuclear" ammunition or not. That's very clear-cut.

On the other hand, if you are in a politically-sensitive shooting but you have a modified weapon and specialized ammunition, the prosecutor could push for murder or manslaughter. They could push it to show your intent that you were looking for somebody to shoot;

that you had a gun that was modified to make it "more deadly," to quote the prosecutor from that case more than 30 years ago; that you had ammunition that at least in your mind was "more deadly." You've created those issues.

You can't pick the situation in which you have to defend yourself; the situation picks you. Why create those issues? Why not just use standard commercially available ammunition and a standard sidearm?

The sidearm is a tool to protect you and your loved ones from death or great bodily harm. The more issues you create by modifications or engraving or unusual ammunition, the more ammunition it gives the prosecutor to try to convict you or the civil lawyer to try to get a huge civil judgment against you.

eJournal: People hope their attorney can get them out of trouble!

Seiden: A few years after *Alvarez*, in a shooting that occurred in 1988 just a block or two away from the video arcade, the judge sentenced Officer William Lozano to four years, but allowed him to remain free pending the resolution of his appeal. We changed the venue to Orlando, retried it and won it. The point is, while we did these cases for virtually nothing except fundraising to raise expenses for experts and other things, you'd have to be a multi- multi-millionaire to be able to afford that kind of defense today.

Every single point was fought and tested. There was nothing genteel about either of those two trials. The prosecution pulled some nasty stuff. They put witnesses on who we were later able to prove were not even in the game room at the time of the shooting.

eJournal: So little has changed! Although we would hope for a focus on justice, prosecutors are subject to the competitive need to win—whether 30 years ago in that trial or more recently in the Zimmerman trial.

Seiden: The police department in Zimmerman, didn't see any need to arrest him, and the prosecutor's office in that jurisdiction didn't want to charge him, so the governor appointed a special prosecutor who was then the state attorney in Duval County and a couple of surrounding counties and she prosecuted him just as aggressively as could be done.

[Continued next page...]

It appeared to me to be a Stand Your Ground case, although admittedly he didn't use good judgment in approaching this young man. Many arguments have been made either way, but it is never a good idea for a citizen to try and play policeman. It is one thing if you are attacked, if someone breaks into your home, if you are accosted on the street, or if someone tries to rob you in the store. It is another thing to go out looking for trouble.

eJournal: The necessity to use a gun to avoid being killed or injured by an attacker is not something we seek out. Now, however, you've expanded our viewpoint to see that we indeed do control some decisions well in advance of a self-defense incident. Through choices of guns and ammunition, we certainly can mitigate the legal aftermath of defending against the attack. Thank you for sharing your knowledge so we better understand these issues.

—

Mark Seiden graduated from the University of Miami, and immediately started the police academy in what is now Miami Dade Police Department. He served between 1970 and 1981, first in uniform, then as firearms instructor and then as a sergeant in the Detective Bureau. He attended University of Miami Law

School, completing the first two years of classes in the evenings while still working as a police officer. He is honorably retired from police work, having taken early retirement to practice law.

While wrapping up his law degree, he interned in the major crimes homicide section for the State Attorney's Office, and then Roy Black hired him right out of law school. They worked as partners at Black & Seiden for 12 years, until Seiden opened his own firm in January of 1995. He retired in September 2013. He is listed in Best Lawyers in America, Top 100 Super Lawyers in the state of Florida and Legal Elite, receiving the highest possible AV Preeminent rating from Martindale Hubbell for Ethics and Ability.

Seiden commented that while he enjoyed practicing law, he reached a certain point where he decided he "didn't want to die still hitched to the wagon while I still had some good years and my health left." His Affiliation with the Network is due to his generous willingness to "do triage if something happened to a member in Florida," he explains.

*[End of article.
Please enjoy the next article.]*



President's Message

Letters! We Get Letters!

by Marty Hayes, J.D.

Occasionally non-members write to us with questions that I think need to be addressed more widely than just an individual response.

This column is a great venue for discussions of such matters, so let me share two samples from my email inbox this last month.

One question was headed:

"Unanswered Rebuttal:

Why We Need Assault Rifles" referring to my article at <https://armedcitizensnetwork.org/why-american-citizens-need-assault-rifles>. The message read:

"In your article from 2013 about why we need assault rifles you bring up many valuable points. I think these counter arguments should be explored and answered. Maybe they are answered in other articles. If so, you might want to add a link at the bottom of the page.

"Argument 1: 100 million gun owners are no match for an organized and trained military or police force who are trained to work together. Gun owners may be trained on many things like clearing a room, digging in or firing accuracy. But they don't operate in the ORGANIZED fashion of a military or police force.

"Argument 2: A massive arsenal is still no match for the military. One well-placed 2000 lb. guided bomb from the bay of a B-1 bomber ends the fight.

"Argument 3: Where is the line drawn? Are you suggesting the citizen should be able to have hand grenades, land mines, tanks, fighter jets, bombers, and nukes? This may sound ludicrous but should all of these be legal?

"How does someone answer these questions in an educated manner? Thanks."

My answer to him was:

"Jim: I took a few days to answer your query, and then I saw the following article

<http://www.nationalreview.com/article/452426/second-amendment-armed-citizenry-vs-government-force-history>. That article pretty much explains the "well regulated militia" aspect of your question.

"I believe that author could have said so much more. I would add, specifically, that even though we have about two million armed service members in uniform and close to a million more cops, not all would fight for the government. In fact, I estimate that the vast majority would join the insurgents. I am glad you are considering this issue."

Then, we also receive questions or comments like one on which the subject line read: "Rage."

The body of the message went on to read:

"Can I defend myself against someone who wants to do me bodily harm? If a man breaks out my car windows, wanting to get at me for what[ever] reason. Can I legally shoot the ***, if I carry a concealed weapon? Can I use pepper spray on the***?"

"I mind my own business. People curse me in cross walks. I ignore them. I say nothing. I want no retaliation. If they come after me anyway, do I take a beating? HELL, no! I will use pepper spray on them. I live in Centerville, Ohio. I am cursed daily. I obey the law. I do not make eye contact with people. Yet, some want to beat me to death. I am 68 years old. I am a Christian. I walk for exercise. Can U please tell me, why there is so much anger out there?"

"What is wrong with the drivers in Centerville, Ohio? I am cursed in cross walks. I am cursed when I drive my car. Cursing does not bother me. When people come after me to attack me, I am not going to just let them beat me to a pulp, because they are having a bad day. Would U turn the other cheek? I just want to be left alone. Can U please tell me, why I am hated? I mind my own business. I obey the laws. Yet, I am cursed daily."

[Continued next page...]

November 2017

There really was nothing I could say that would have been a productive response to that rant, so his e-mail went unanswered. I thought not engaging with the man was the only thing to do because we certainly do not want him in the Network.

In closing, I'd like to wrap up a discussion between our members and me. After my last *President's Message*, I received several comments about using the Legal Defense Fund for administrative considerations like helping members get their gun possession rights back after the legal problems following a self-defense incident are resolved.

The vast majority of the comments simply agreed with my message, and I appreciate that. A few thought perhaps we could develop another level of membership with higher dues to help with this part of the aftermath. The idea of tiered benefits is something that your Network leadership will consider and discuss.

For now, I believe we have more important duties in the day-to-day operation of our organization, so no immediate changes are forthcoming. Thank you all for your input.

*[End of article.
Please enjoy the next article.]*

November 2017



Attorney Question of the Month

Last month, we started a new topic of discussion with our affiliated attorneys when we asked—

Suppose that a member keeps an extensive collection of legal rifles, shotguns and handguns locked in a safe, and uses his or her carry gun in justifiable self defense. Can the gun collection be discussed in a trial to suggest to a jury that the armed citizen is a blood-thirsty monster, not a good member of the community? How would a prosecutor or plaintiff's attorney introduce that line of reasoning? If defending the member, how would you counter the accusation if it arose?

There were so many responses that we carried this topic forward into this month. If you missed last month, you'll also be interested to read the comments at <https://armedcitizensnetwork.org/october-2017-attorney-question> and then pick up the discussion with the responses below.

Arthur R. Medley

The Medley Firm
141 N St Andrews Street, Dothan, AL 36303
334-790-6878
<http://medleyfirm.com>

The only way I see a prosecutor getting into the fact that an armed citizen has an extensive collection of guns locked in a safe is in a situation where our armed citizen lies or exaggerates about the self-defense encounter by saying something along the lines that "I can't believe I shot the assailant; I've never handled a gun before." Then the collection goes to knowledge about guns in general and the ability to handle them and being familiar with them as well as impeachment, where impeachment is a pretty wide-open proposition. This all presupposes that the prosecution has any knowledge of the gun collection. If it's locked up in a safe, obviously not involved in a self-defense shooting, then how does the prosecution/law-enforcement ever get a search warrant to even justify looking for a collection? Bottom line, don't lie, but don't run your mouth. You have the right to remain silent, demonstrate your ability to remain silent.

As for the defense in a criminal case, there are many waves of attack to be directed at this evidence. First

wave, how did they find it? Valid search warrant? Second, if being offered as evidence, the question is evidence of what? How is this relevant to the perception of immediate danger and the need to defend oneself or another? Third, this is evidence of other bad acts which are generally excluded in criminal cases because such evidence cannot be the basis upon which to support guilt. So how did a gun collection at home in the safe make you shoot somebody? Answer, it didn't, which cycles back around to the relevancy issue.

Even in a civil case the relevancy issue still jumps out. How are guns tucked away under lock and key relevant? I don't see that they are relevant and I don't see this evidence coming into a trial, criminal or civil, and being used against the armed citizen.

Mike Ooley

Boehl Stopher & Graves
400 Pearl St., Ste. 204, New Albany, IN 47150
812-948-5053
mikeooley@bsg-in.com

From the perspective of Indiana law, I believe the answer to this question is relatively straightforward. I do not believe that a prosecutor or plaintiff's attorney in Indiana would be allowed to introduce evidence of any extensive collection of legally owned firearms under evidence in the scenario provided. In Indiana, our courts have said that evidence of firearms possessed by defendant, but not used in a purported crime for which the defendant is charged, generally should not be introduced because the evidence is irrelevant and highly prejudicial.

Please keep in mind that this response is referring to firearms not connected with the purported crime or self defense. This is not to say that it wouldn't be possible for a prosecutor or plaintiff's attorney to argue for the admission of evidence as support for corroboration of some other factual dispute, but I believe under Indiana law it would be highly unusual to expect that evidence of a gun collection would be heard by any potential jury. This would apply to both a civil and criminal case.

[Continued next page...]

November 2017

To ensure that the evidence of a gun collection is not introduced, one would expect defendant's attorney to file a motion in limine or other pretrial motion to preclude the prosecution in a criminal case or plaintiff attorney in a civil case from mentioning or attempting to introduce evidence of any gun collection.

Kevin E. J. Regan

The Regan Law Firm, L.L.C.
1821 Wyandotte, Suite 200, Kansas City, MO 64108
816-221-5357
<http://reganlawfirm.com/kevin-bio.html>

Under Missouri or Kansas law, where I chiefly practice, competent defense counsel would spot this issue and file a Motion in Limine, which is Latin for "Motion to Limit" or exclude the evidence of the client's firearms collection.

The legal argument would be that the other firearms had nothing to do with the case at bar, or the instant case, involving the defendant's use of justifiable force.

The attorney would argue to the court that the prejudicial value of these other firearms clearly outweighs the probative value of them in this case.

They were remotely locked in a safe, far away from the occurrence at hand. They have absolutely nothing to do with the commission of the acts that are at issue in this civil or criminal case.

Plaintiff's counsel in the civil case or counsel for the prosecution in the criminal case would only be offering those items to unduly prejudice the jury against the defendant or citizen accused.

It is my belief that, based on the facts given in the question, these other irrelevant items should be excluded from evidence by a conscientious judge.

Eli Wainman

The Law Offices of Eli Wainman PLLC
114 W. Magnolia St. Ste 400, Bellingham, WA 98225
360-392-2826
<http://wainmanlaw.com/about-wainman-law>

The prosecutor or plaintiff's attorney can certainly try to have defendant's gun collection introduced to the trier of fact, arguing e.g. that the arsenal kept by defendant indicates a preexisting desire to do violence, or a habit, or a disorder, or whatever - my

point is that plaintiff certainly is free to make the argument that the gun collection is relevant to the elements of the charge or the cause of action; it's what lawyers do! The real question is: would it work? That's more complicated.

Defense counsel should object to any mention of defendant's battery of guns as irrelevant and excessively prejudicial to defendant. Defendant should make a pretrial motion to exclude any evidence of a gun collection, and to get a ruling on that evidentiary question, so as to avoid unpleasant surprises at trial.

The court would hear counsels' arguments for and against examination of such evidence, and make a ruling which would become part of the record. In the event that defendant's motion is granted, plaintiff will be prohibited from introducing evidence on the subject. If the motion is denied, at the very least the issue will have been preserved for appeal. If defendant is convicted or found liable, the appeals court can then be asked to review the trial court's ruling on the issue for abuse of discretion.

In all likelihood, such a ruling by the trial court will be upheld by the court of appeals, as the standard of review is quite deferential to the trial court on such questions. Why? Besides the unlikely event that the trial court is found to have abused its wide discretion, usually the evidence in question isn't really that prejudicial.

After all, and this would again be on defense counsel to argue to the jury, the existence of a gun collection safely locked up elsewhere has zero relevance to the establishment of whether the use of force was reasonable in a claimed self-defense shooting.

Brad Scott

Attorney & Counselor at Law
700 Camp Street, New Orleans, LA 70130
504-528-9500
<http://bradscottlaw.com/attorney-profile/>

Q. Suppose that a member keeps an extensive collection of legal rifles, shotguns and handguns locked in a safe. The member uses his or her carry gun in justifiable self defense.

[Continued next page...]

A. If it is justifiable, then hopefully it would not get to trial. Most attorneys when hired early enough would meet with the district attorney to present reasons why bringing the case to trial would be a waste of taxpayer money.

Q. Can the gun collection be discussed in a trial to suggest to a jury that the armed citizen is a blood-thirsty monster, not a good member of the community?

A. If the shooting took place away from the home, then the police would have no reason to search the home and seize the other guns as evidence. If it took place in the home then the guns may be seized or at least photographed. In Louisiana, the other guns would not be admissible to prove the character of the defendant, but may be mentioned in the case when the detective is explaining the total investigation to the jury. However, the defense attorney could and should file a pre-trial motion to exclude the mentioning of the other guns because of the fact that it could cause a juror to unfairly consider that as evidence of the defendant's character.

Q. How would a prosecutor or plaintiff's attorney introduce that line of reasoning?

A. The prosecutor would simply ask the detective about his investigation including whether a search of the house was done.

Q. If defending the member, how would you counter the accusation if it arose?

A. Countering evidence of a gun collection starts in jury selection. I would make sure to cut jurors who have a fear of guns or believe that a person does not "need" that many guns. I would select jurors who own guns for self defense and have a collection themselves. I would not shy away from it during the trial and in fact would highlight that the defendant had a collection and was well trained in using all of the firearms. Additionally, I would hope that the client had taken a self-defense course where the use of deadly force was covered, showing him to be a responsible gun owner.

Finally, I would request a jury instruction that instructed the jurors that they are not to consider other guns as evidence of bad character.

Kevin L. Jamison

Jamison Associates

2614 NE. 56th Terrace, Kansas City, MO 64119

816-455-2669

<http://www.kljamisonlaw.com/About/Kevin-L-Jamison.shtml>

Evidence of character is generally not admissible in court, unless the entire collection is relevant. I know of an elderly man who was selling his collection of over 200 guns. He was charged with being in the business without a license. The prosecution brought all the guns into court. He was acquitted.

I think it might come in during sentencing to show he is a gun nut. My response to that is "I am a gun nut." I am a collector. I go through every single gun, why he bought it, for how much, why and what significance it has for him. I go through ammunition and why he bought that type of ammunition. I always do this in self-defense cases. Juries want to know "why?"

In a civil case there is more latitude to introduce character evidence, especially if punitive damages are involved. I would still try to keep the information out with a motion in limine to prevent mention of the collection. Failing that I would try to keep holophobes off the jury. This will make jury selection longer and more detailed. There is a limit to how well this will work.

I would introduce the safe. My client put this safe between his collection and the world. Once I have re-focused on the shooting itself I would hammer away at the evidence.

We greatly appreciate our affiliated attorneys' generous participation in this interesting and educational column! Please return next month when we wrap up this discussion with our Affiliated Attorneys.



News from Our Affiliates

by Josh Amos

Happy November, everyone! This month I have the pleasure of bringing a couple of the Network Affiliated Instructors to your attention. For all our new readers out there, the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network has an affiliation program for instructors and these folks are out telling the public about the Network, while being the example of what a modern armed citizen should be. We like to recognize our affiliates for doing good works and encourage our members to train with them.

Two affiliated instructors caught my attention this month: one who has been with the Network for years, and the other is a newcomer.

The first affiliate for the month of November is Michelle Quesada from McHenry, Illinois. I'm not sure if I have the room here to list all of Michelle's shooting accomplishments, but to highlight a few from her biography as instructor at the Homeland Security Institute at the College of DuPage:

"Michelle Quesada is the primary firearms instructor of the concealed carry program at College of DuPage, Homeland Security Training Institute. Her focus is in precision pistol and defensive handgun shooting as well as the development of junior pistol athletes and female shooters. She is a State certified and registered firearms instructor; NRA Certified Instructor: Basic Pistol, Personal Protection Inside and Outside the Home; NRA Chief Range Safety Officer; State of Illinois Certified Concealed Carry Instructor (CCI); NRA Double Distinguished Expert – semi-automatic pistol; USA Shooting Coach Level 1; Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation – Registered Firearms Instructor."

Michelle has been a member of the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network since 2014 and has referred a number of her students to join us here at the Network. Michelle teaches CCW, precision pistol, and defensive handgun. In addition to shooting, she teaches legal aspects of defensive shooting, a must in this day and age. If you are in Illinois, I recommend contacting Michelle for some first rate training! See <https://armedcitizensnetwork.org/our->

[affiliates/map/homeland-security-training-institute-college-of-dupage](https://armedcitizensnetwork.org/our-affiliates/map/homeland-security-training-institute-college-of-dupage)

Charles "Chuck" Thon from Shepherd's Staff Tactical LLC in Roswell, GA, is a newcomer to the Network having just us joined in September of 2017. As I was screening Chuck for affiliate instructor status, I grew more and more pleased at what I saw. Chuck has a clean and informative website welcoming new students, clearly stating his mission, and he even defines what he means by "tactical," posting a current schedule, his tuition rates, and links to Georgia State CCW and weapons laws.

In the short time he's been an affiliate, Chuck has brought a number of new members to the Network, and we are appreciative. If you are in the Roswell, GA area I recommend contacting Chuck Thon at Shepherd's Staff Tactical LLC and invest in some good training. See <https://armedcitizensnetwork.org/our-affiliates/map/shepherd-s-staff-tactical-llc>

As I wind this article down, I want to point out a very important commonality between these two affiliated instructors. Specifically, both impress upon their respective students the important legal considerations of being an armed citizen. I would submit that if your instructor doesn't emphasize the legal impacts of your actions, they are not wholly preparing you for being an armed citizen. It is important stuff to know, folks.

A final note to all of our members and affiliates, here at the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, we are happy to supply you with booklets when you are headed to special events, conventions, seminars, training, matches, etc. We love to send booklets to members, but we do ask that you please give us enough time to get the materials to you. A week or 10 days' notice will do the trick, and bear in mind also that we can drop ship to your lodgings if you're traveling to an event. Reach me at Josh@armedcitizensnetwork.org or 360-978-5200.

Well, that wraps it up for this month. Let me close with this thought: the kind of people who choose to be armed citizens are also the type who stop and lend a hand to help people need. Take some time and look after yourselves this month. We will see you next month.

*[End of article.
Please enjoy the next article.]*

November 2017

Book Review

Beyond the Picket Fence

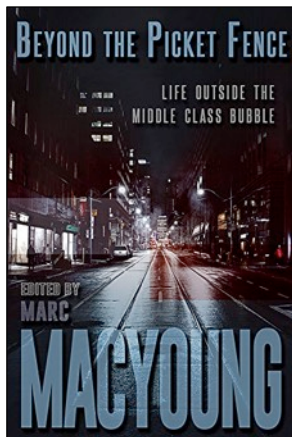
Life Outside the Middle-class Bubble

Edited by Marc MacYoung

Kindle Edition at

<https://www.amazon.com/Beyond-Picket-Fence-Outside-Middle-Class-ebook/dp/B076KVC6C3>

Reviewed by Gila Hayes



Many years ago, I heard Marc MacYoung speak about a book he had outlined, intended to help middle class people operate effectively and with reasonable safety outside their familiar environment. Even way back then, Picket Fence figured into the title, so it was with considerable anticipation that I ordered an electronic copy from Amazon when it was first released. MacYoung encourages readers to take the book in small bites, and I confess that while I originally violated that advice, I promise to return and reread it more thoughtfully.

“This is a book about unspoken rules and how you can keep from being burned by them” are MacYoung’s introductory words to *Beyond The Picket Fence*, in which he observes that the fact that a book about rules of behavior is even needed shows the seriousness of today’s behavioral problems. Initiated as a project to show “how middle class people could move smoothly and safely through subcultures and lower social classes,” the finished product is an anthology with chapters by a variety of authors that coaches “about functioning in different situations, including places you might not think are different, but are—like college, the workplace and abroad.” While originally addressed to young adults newly out on their own, I found that it contained a lot to ponder for readers of all ages.

MacYoung compares a well-functioning society’s rules to fences, commenting that past generations tore down “fences” with little to no understanding of why the rules were important. “Instead of it being freeing, these missing fences mostly left us stressed, confused and floundering,” he observes. *Beyond the Picket Fence* proposes to explain why “those fences were there,” as well as helping the reader understand how and when we

unintentionally offend. After all, if your Mom, Dad, teachers and other mentors didn’t teach good behavior, how are you supposed to know how to act?

Although the world has indeed changed, the reasons those “fences” existed remain valid, MacYoung observes, adding that having not learned the rules “leaves you not only facing problems you don’t know how to fix, but you have no idea where they’re coming from.” In addition, definitions of acceptable behavior are generally tied to location, so the rules you grew up with “aren’t universal.” Besides, your parents and mentors taught from their own experience, so they literally did not know what you would need to know once you left the neighborhood.

The damage from violating cultural rules occurs whether you’re aware of the rule or not: “Rocks are thrown over your words and behaviors—whether you think what you’re doing is wrong or not,” MacYoung illustrates. “Rights” have little influence over the visceral way people react to violations of their culture’s unwritten rules. In discussing the disconnect between rights and rules, MacYoung spotlights how we justify our own bad behavior, noting that sometimes offenders genuinely do not know that what they did was offensive. The key is recognizing that justifications—“why you’re doing it”—are a lot less important than what you said or did.

The solution, which MacYoung proposes to outline in *Beyond the Picket Fence*, is not about how others should behave, but about functioning both in and outside your own neighborhood. This he does in a thoroughly engaging style, through chapters that intersperse MacYoung’s observations with contributions from folks who have lived their lessons, sometimes the hard way. Be warned, the language is often coarse and if vulgarity offends, the reader would be well advised to put aside his or her sensitivities long enough to learn the lessons from *Beyond The Picket Fence*. It is that important.

After a chapter by a world traveler outlines “the art of being an acceptable stranger,” moving through foreign cultures and unfamiliar societies while attracting a minimum of attention, a follow up teaches the value of authentic niceness, or perhaps more accurately, “Give

[Continued next page...]

November 2017

respect, get respect." When others fail in that regard, let the offense pass, another contributor advises. MacYoung then weighs in to identify how various cultures assign different value judgments about violence, who performs the violence, or as MacYoung explains, "who is responsible for protecting your rights, honor, dignity, and status."

Americans talk much about "inalienable rights," but MacYoung stresses that what we dub rights, "are beliefs and ideals that guide our behavior and treatment of others," not "physical realities." Rights and ideals change when you cross cultural borders, he warns. Question the validity of assumptions, by yourself and others, adds a contributor. "If you encounter violence in the first place either your fundamental assumptions are dead wrong or you aren't paying attention. Both are symptomatic of the failure to ask questions."

MacYoung explores the "whys" behind values and how they differ from one person to another. Values drive actions and decisions, but while "values dictate huge chunks of a person's behavior and decision-making paradigms, they are very seldom actually spoken about in direct, meaningful ways. They are...something called 'assumed knowledge.'" He challenges the reader to identify the "things that you've assigned value to. Things you're willing to fight over. It's useful to be aware of what those are and in control over your fighting reactions."

A good amount of MacYoung's advice addresses conscious decisions we try to excuse by claiming ignorance or inattention. He offers a fair number of admonitions about getting drunk or stoned, not so much from the basic vulnerability of being unaware, but from the increased likelihood of offending or misreading the cues. If you're a MacYoung fan, you already know the phrase that violence comes with instructions like "Stop that or I'll kick your..." and if you're tuned in, you can hear and act on the instructions before the violence starts. Altered states hinder perceptiveness.

Quite a lot of what we do starts with unconscious reactions, patterns or drives. MacYoung explains that you don't have to be a slave to your unconscious, illustrating the gap between impulse and action. "Mind the gap," he urges, calling that personal awareness "a pretty big life question. In a more immediate situation, however, it can keep you out of serious trouble when everyone's amped up and the booze and drugs are flowing."

In MacYoung's opinion, we have raised a generation that insists on their own boundaries, but honors no one else's. "That may not be what is taught, but it's usually how it's interpreted. At the very least, that's how a whole lot of selfish people act. Their approach is they get a free pass and you don't. You have to put up with their bad behavior, but you can't say or do anything that encroaches on their 'right' to behave that way."

Little wonder boundary setting confuses people. "Where are you supposed to get these skills, much less understanding of the very idea?" MacYoung observes. How does one learn to defend boundary encroachments without causing offense? He notes that without "being taught—or allowed to—stand up for yourself" many over-react and become offensive or abusive themselves. Now what feels like protecting yourself turns into a dust up that observers perceive as a mutual fight, instead of one person telling another to back off.

Bullies are quite skilled at identifying who will stand up to them, MacYoung continues, explaining that some test by huffing and puffing to read the reaction. When told no, some get loud and demanding, he continues, and still others skillfully push you into reaction mode. If you want to learn about boundaries, watch people who are NOT bullied, he advises. "If you're serious, 'I said no' is often enough. You don't have to be hostile, rude, insulting or threatening—if you can back it up."

This short synopsis does not do justice to MacYoung's chapter on boundaries, and if the reader has time for nothing else, this is must-know information for people of all ages. I've focused on it to whet the reader's appetite for getting and digesting the entire book, because it is unusual to find the topic discussed in such practical terms.

But Wait, There's More

The value of a sincere apology and de-escalation resurfaces time and again in the various chapters of this book, as does effective de-escalation. On that topic, one contributor explains that just as fire requires oxygen and combustion, violence requires "the physical capability of inflicting harm...rational or emotional decision...and a target." The most manageable factor is the aggressor's decision to inflict harm, he observes. Objective assessment is the key when facing danger, he continues, "assigning importance to observed details

[Continued next page...]

November 2017

and focusing on that which is most pertinent." You might think that prioritization would worry that the assailant is really big or armed with dangerous weapons, but in reality, neither is within your ability to change, so that's merely distracting from what is important. You may be able to change the tension level (de-escalate), or retreat, or "When you employ what is within your grasp for your benefit, it's surprising how fast what isn't [within your grasp] becomes less of a problem," he notes.

What follows is an important discussion of separating perceptions from what actually is, and how the mind filters the intel we take in based on our beliefs, preconceived notions, and prior experiences, further colored by situational factors like fatigue, inebriation, and emotion. MacYoung revisits this lesson in a later chapter when he emphasizes that "your reality" is rarely if ever in complete congruence with the actual situation. "Your reality is the sum of your feelings, thoughts, beliefs, and interpretation of what is happening. Actuality is what appears on the video camera," he illustrates.

This is revisited again when MacYoung explains that verbally blowing off steam, "self-soothing," getting the last dig in, and not walking away when given the chance is usually the product of self-justification. "When you're angry and defensive, you're way more likely to say things that are hostile, insulting, threatening, and attacking—all the while 'thinking' you're defending yourself." In this, as in much of the rest of *Beyond The Picket Fence*, the advice applies to a much wider demographic than just young people living on their own for the first time.

Avoiding sexual assault is addressed multiple times in *Beyond The Picket Fence*, but certainly not in the ways the subject is most commonly presented. These lessons are tied together at the very end of the book when MacYoung advises, "Recognizing when things are starting to go wrong can get you out of there before you have to hit him," or use deadly force to stop the threat, or as he comments, "Using—but especially initiating—ineffective violence against a larger and stronger person is the fastest way I know to be successfully counter attacked."

MacYoung cites research about the stages of bonding applied to sexual encounters as he teaches stopping interactions that begin to feel unsafe. "You don't have to wait. It's over when you decide it's over. When you start getting wrong answers is the time to withdraw. And

guess what? You don't have to explain or justify the decision...The longer you stick around, the harder it's going to be to get out without using violence."

Many Voices on Many Topics

Assessing crowds especially groups from different cultures or ethnicities, recognizing and knowing when to use informal and formal speech, interacting effectively with law enforcement, dealing with a stalker, thriving at work, finding equilibrium with employers and coworkers, deescalating both verbal and physical assault, and intervening to stop a crime of violence are vital topics that each receive a chapter. While much of *Beyond the Picket Fence* focuses on how we bring aggression upon ourselves, we also need strategies to get out of coercive social situations. Know what your hot buttons are, advises one contributor, to disengage before you're emotional and hooked into an argument.

MacYoung follows this with a long segment on the pernicious result of what he calls "victim culture," which ostensibly puts human dignity and human rights above all else. Taken beyond reasonable limits, the victim culture produces abusers who cling to past wrongs against them—be that a travesty perpetrated against them in childhood or done against others with whom they identify via race, gender, class or sexual orientation—as an "excuse for all the bad things they do," MacYoung observes. "Once you are adjudged this way, it's okay to verbally and emotionally abuse you, and in some extremes to even physically attack you," he writes. "The speed they go from pretending to be reasonable to hostile is intimidating. That's why they do it—and so fast," he adds. "Although they can and will get into your face and even physically assault you, in their minds you are prohibited from responding. As such, they have no hesitation to fly off the handle."

MacYoung's real world advice is not to attempt to handle formal grievances of self-proclaimed victims without legal counsel. In today's world, business and organizational entities go into full defensive mode, and if scapegoating the accused gets them out from under a complaint, "You get fired, chewed out, and put on restrictions whether or not the incident complained about really happened," he warns, and goes on to discuss how to defend yourself against false charges.

While I essentially devoured the book from cover to cover, I suggest there may be merit in sitting down with

[Continued next page...]

your young adults and discussing select chapters to be sure they learn specific lessons. There is so much material in *Beyond The Picket Fence* that I fear a 20-something might quit reading before discovering the advice that may literally mean life or death for her or him. I foresee that this book may serve best as a library from which parents and mentors select and expose young adults about whom they care to the knowledge they need to know at one stage or another of life.

Beyond The Picket Fence contains so many jewels that choosing what to discuss proved nearly impossible. Let me close with the comment that in language and subject matter, it is a little rough, but it is very authentic, it challenges you to self-examination and open mindedness, and in keeping with its intention of giving assistance to those who need it most it is extremely affordable at \$3.99 for the eBook. Find it on Amazon.com by searching "MacYoung Picket Fence."

MacYoung indicates that a print version as well as an audio version is currently in the works, although actual release dates are not known. Until then, the electronic version is affordable, and the Kindle app allows reading on computers, smart phones and tablets.

Note: As I've admitted already, I had a very hard time stopping talking about Marc's new book. His ideas and those of the other contributors were far more important than anything I might hold forth about in an editorial, so I'll take a break from Editor's Notebook and cede that space to the foregoing review, which has much more of pertinence to our day to day well-being!

--GH

*[End of November 2017 eJournal.
Please return for our December 2017 edition.]*

November 2017

About the Network's Online Journal

The **eJournal** of the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, Inc. is published monthly on the Network's website at <http://www.armedcitizensnetwork.org/our-journal>. Content is copyrighted by the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, Inc.

Do not mistake information presented in this online publication for legal advice; it is not. The Network strives to assure that information published in this journal is both accurate and useful. Reader, it is your responsibility to consult your own attorney to receive professional assurance that this information and your interpretation or understanding of it is accurate, complete and appropriate with respect to your particular situation.

In addition, material presented in our opinion columns is entirely the opinion of the bylined author, and is intended to provoke thought and discussion among readers.

To submit letters and comments about content in the **eJournal**, please contact editor Gila Hayes by e-mail sent to editor@armedcitizensnetwork.org.

The Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, Inc. receives its direction from these corporate officers:
Marty Hayes, President
J. Vincent Shuck, Vice President
Gila Hayes, Operations Manager

We welcome your questions and comments about the Network.
Please write to us at info@armedcitizensnetwork.org or PO Box 400, Onalaska, WA 98570 or call us at 360-978-5200.



November 2017

Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network • www.armedcitizensnetwork.org • P O Box 400, Onalaska, WA 98570