

Concealed Carry Permit Holders, Who Are We?

I have carried a concealed handgun since I was twenty one years old and that was twenty nine years ago. For more than half of my lifetime I have carried a loaded and concealed handgun in public. I have never had to draw my concealed firearm for defensive purposes as of yet and I hope that trend continues until my natural death as an elderly man. But on two or three occasions in the past nearly thirty years I was very glad that the option of effective self-defense was available to me.

Concealed handgun permit holders are a varied bunch, but we have a lot in common. We come from every walk of life. We are represented in every income level, from the very poor to the very affluent. We are young and we are elderly. We are frail and we are bodybuilders. We are both women and men. We are your friends, co-workers, dads, uncles, brothers and grandmothers and sisters.

We are Mayflower descendants and descendants of slaves, American Indian, Hispanic, Asian and every other represented nationality, religion and creed. We are retired military, we are off duty members of law enforcement, we are handicapped and we are nationally recognized celebrities whose names you'd know.

But who are we really and what are we thinking? Where are we? What are the philosophies that we hold onto?

I am the guy sitting in the corner of the doctor's office with the baseball cap on, who looks at everyone who enters and exits, while I sit and quietly read my book.

I am the guy who you just passed in the baking goods aisle at the grocery store who just picked up a bag of sugar and put it in my carriage. I am the man at the lumber counter at Lowe's or Home Depot buying 2X4s and I am the woman in a jogging suit getting a Coffee Coolatta at Dunkin' Donuts wearing a pink fanny pack.

I am your auto mechanic, your dentist, your lawyer, the owner of your favorite restaurant and I'm the retired woman at the pharmacy picking up a prescription. I am the woman you just passed who was filling up my minivan at the gas station.

I am everywhere, but I am nowhere at the same time and the vast majority of people don't even take notice of me. I'm your average Joe. I am the guy who is exiting the shopping mall and it seems like I'm searching for my car, when I'm actually looking for any suspicious looking thugs who might be hanging around. You might think I have misplaced my vehicle at first glance, but I am aware of everything around me. If you even notice my presence, you might think I seem paranoid, but I take notice of everything in my environment for good reason.

I am a lifelong firearm enthusiast who was taught basic firearm safety even before first grade. Not only have I taken gun safety and marksmanship courses, I have taught many new shooters how to shoot accurately and safely. I actively seek out all of the pertinent information I can on the subject. I could load and unload a semi-automatic handgun safely and correctly before I could do long division out on paper in elementary school.

Sometimes I'm a veteran of the United States Military who has killed other men in the heat of combat or in self-defense. Sometimes I'm an off-duty law enforcement officer, sometimes a firefighter or EMT. Most often I'm an active member of the National Rifle Association, Gun Owners of America, the Second Amendment Foundation, and Jews for the Preservation of Firearm Ownership or another pro-gun group.

I am often a member of the [United States Concealed Carry Association](#) and have multiple issues of [Concealed Carry Magazine](#) on my coffee table because I can't bring myself to put them away.

I have had my criminal, narcotics and mental history record checked dozens of times, which remains clean as a whistle and will continue to be such, because I ALWAYS obey the law. I have the safety and well-being of everyone around me as a top priority at all times. I am also a woman, much more often than you might think.

I would rather carry a loaded handgun on my person every day of my life and never even have to think about it, than to desperately need it once to protect someone from a violent crime, by a thug who should be behind bars and not have one with me when I need it.

I am unafraid and courageous at all times. I am not paranoid, contrary to the thinking of those who oppose my ways. My constant and persistent alertness and visual scanning of everyone around me has become part of my physical make-up and should never be confused with paranoia or fear.

I am the guy that your punk nephew just pushed by on the escalator and gave a taunting look to, but you need not worry about his anti-social tendencies, I am completely self-controlled. I have learned to control my emotions and my anger at all times. I am much more likely to put up with verbal abuse from an idiot punk when armed, than on the occasion that I go unarmed.

I am the woman who is buying perfume at the department store counter and I am the young woman buying diapers at Wal-Mart for my baby. I am the elderly woman who is looking through the clearance rack of clothing at Kohl's and I am the middle aged balding man who is entering the men's room at Target as you're standing there at the sink washing your hands. But you need not be worried, for I am friendly, honest and upright.

You are barely aware of me as you pass by me, let alone do you think that I may be armed. But I notice everything about you. Your height, approximate weight, your face, what kind of clothing you're wearing, your shoes and your demeanor all come to my attention. But you need not fear me or concern yourself. I am very likely one of the nicest people you have ever met.

I am proficient with my firearm. I practice with it often. I am concerned with utilizing proper tactics, movement and firearm safety at all times. I have sought out competent training in basic self-defense and sometimes I'm even familiar with martial arts. I read a lot of books on the subject of guns, concealed carry and armed self-defense written by international experts and I am quite knowledgeable on the subject myself.

When you're grocery shopping in Condition White and solely concerned with deciding what cut of steak you will make for dinner tonight, I'm totally aware of my surroundings. I see you, even though you don't notice me at all. I know what time it is, and where I am at

all times without looking at my watch. I'm aware of everyone in front of me, beside me and to my rear as well. I am alert, watchful and wary all the time and I stay in Condition Yellow always.

I'm aware of self-defense law in my home state and I know what is within the law and when I can and cannot defend myself and others with deadly force. I have rehearsed in my mind a myriad of scenarios where I might have to utilize the gun I'm carrying and in my mind's eye, I have ALWAYS come out on top. I have rehearsed shoot/don't shoot scenarios in my mind and always make the right choice. Both my fear and my anger are always under my direct and conscious control.

I know what fear is and how it can adversely affect my ability to defend myself with deadly force if that ever becomes necessary. I know how to defeat and overcome the fear of personal injury or even death. I am mentally and physically prepared to take the life of another human being to protect my life or the life of a loved one, but I hope that day never comes. I would prefer to perish in battle than to helplessly witness the rape, robbery or murder of a loved one while unarmed.

I'm fully aware of violent crime and firearm statistics. I know that one in every thirty four (1 in 34) Americans is a convicted felon. I know that one in every eleven (1 in 11) women have a concealed carry permit and could be armed at any time. I know that the first gun was invented before the year 1300 and that about 25% of all American adults own one.

I do not carry a concealed firearm because I have inner feelings of inadequacy, lack masculinity, have inadequate genitals or lack bravado. I know that when facing three armed and violent thugs who are drunk or high on narcotics, or are hardened gangsters I know that I am inadequate without a firearm and intensive training, tactics and knowledge. I am neither inadequate nor paranoid. I am prepared, educated, trained and rehearsed.

You have nothing to fear from me, unless you are addicted to street narcotics and you haplessly and foolishly choose me or a member of my family to fund your next high, trip or drug deal. I know that in Dodge City, Kansas in 1876, there were only nine (9) murders, no rapes and no robberies and the 'Wild West' is largely only a myth created by

Hollywood. Today, we are in much more danger from random violent attack than back then.

I can usually pick out other people who lawfully carry concealed firearms in a crowd. Our eyes meet and there we both see awareness, alertness and preparedness and in a silent nod, we know that everyone in the vicinity is completely safe from violent attack.

Law enforcement officers have absolutely nothing to fear from us and they know it full well. Most police officers and deputy sheriffs know that they can trust concealed carry permit holders much more than the average man or woman. I am trustworthy, law abiding, honest and reliable. They know that if they are struggling with a violent felon on the roadside and one of us happens to drive by, that they can expect immediate and effective help from us.

If we see a 'No Guns Allowed' poster in the front window of your store, restaurant, office or retail establishment, rest assured that we are really insulted, but will likely remain silent about it. We will respect your wishes and take our business to your competitor who trusts us. Your insinuation that we cannot control ourselves while going about armed is offensive to us. We will make sure to tell our family and friends not to patronize your establishment as well. If you don't trust me with carrying a concealed firearm in your place of business, the feeling is mutual, I don't trust you either.

I know what the Bill of Rights is and its intent, I know what the Second Amendment says and I know what the Founding Fathers meant when writing it. I know that the first step to tyranny and dictatorship lies in nationwide firearm registration and confiscation and I will tirelessly resist such efforts. Nothing besides my relationship with God is more important to me than my family, friends and the freedom and liberty and personal responsibility which I cherish each day.

I'm fully aware how much it would alarm and upset you if you were to see my Sig Sauer P226 Elite, Glock 23 or Springfield Armory XD-M tucked inside my holster, without a badge and a uniform to go with it, so I'm always very careful to carry discreetly. The last thing I want to do is frighten you.

I watch you as you leave the pediatrician's office with your young children in tow and I discreetly look through the front window to make sure you get into your vehicle safely and drive away. Then I go back to reading my book or magazine.

I do not carry a gun because I am looking for trouble. Just the opposite is the truth. I try to avoid trouble. I do not frequent areas where thugs are likely to be hanging around. If I see a thug and he sees me, he will quickly realize by my confident demeanor, my walk and my alertness level that I could be a hazard to him and he leaves me and my family alone. He is looking for easier, more vulnerable prey like a lion on the plains of Africa searches for the weaker, less able and distracted animal to take full advantage of.

I know that law enforcement officers are usually great people and very valuable to our society, but I'm also aware that they cannot be everywhere and protect everyone. I'm also aware that they have no legal duty to protect any individual and that their job is to deter crime, gather the evidence after a crime has been committed and aid in the prosecution of a criminal after the fact.

I know that the commandment in Exodus 20:13 means 'You shall not murder.' It does not prohibit armed self-defense. In fact, the Bible regularly promotes everyone's responsibility to defend themselves. I am often very religious, but not always so. But I am always worthy of your trust and full confidence.

I do not carry a gun because I lack any amount of masculinity or bravado as I previously stated. I'm very aware of the fact that monsters don't always stay in fairy tales. I carry a gun because I am a rare sheepdog among many sheep. I also know that wolves really do exist and that they often look like the sheep upon which they prey. If I am able, I will allow the wolf to escape to have another chance to turn his life around. If he refuses to scamper away and instead chooses to attack, he will quite likely suffer the consequences of a long and sordid list of bad life choices.

I know that the safest response to an attack by a human predator is to confront him with armed and determined resistance. I also know that full compliance and unarmed

resistance are statistically less safe, quite contrary to the unusually bad advice that comes from the less informed talking heads on television.

I do not carry a concealed firearm because I am a bad guy or have evil intent. I carry because I know there are evil people who should be in prison, but instead are free and walking amongst us. In fact, a convicted violent rapist recently released early from his prison sentence, just walked by you yesterday and you didn't even notice his vacant and emotionless stare, but I did.

I do not carry a concealed firearm in public because I'm secretly wishing to shoot someone. I carry a concealed firearm in public because I want to die of old age in my bed, many years from now and not decades earlier in a robbery at a convenience store because I was unable to properly defend myself or my family or friends.

I am your neighbor, your friend, your constituent, your sister, your co-worker, your client, your patient, your grandfather and your uncle. Once again, I am everywhere and yet, I am nowhere at the same time. I blend in with the general public and you don't know I'm there. The good guys and gals need not concern themselves with me.

Violent habitual felons, drug addicts, rapists, child molesters and those willing or inclined to commit crimes in my presence should be very, very concerned. And according to most prisoner studies, career criminals fear us more than uniformed members of law enforcement or even long-term incarceration itself.

I carry a gun in public, because I am a rather rugged individualist. I refuse to be a kept man who willingly allows the thumb of big government to keep me as a penned-in sheep. It is my right to be such an uncommon man. I will not be abased, dulled or made spiritless and allow a Statist authority to look after me. I will not allow myself to cower before anyone or any agency who pronounces themselves master of my domain or my individual, personal, inalienable and natural liberties to go about my life while armed.

I have had family in America since the first Pilgrims stepped off onto dry land in Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1620. All these years, the torch of liberty and the flame of human freedom continue to burn. It is now my watch to see that the flame is never extinguished. Make no mistake however, that this flame is not burning as brightly as it

once was.

We have lost sight of the true liberty and freedom enjoyed by past generations and I will stand tall and proud and prevent this flame from being extinguished as long as I draw breath. This is why I carry concealed firearms in public and continue to support and defend the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution.

Marc Richardson

Owner/Webmaster

www.SaveTheGuns.com

Published 1/21/2014

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/savetheguns/>

<https://twitter.com/SaveTheGuns>

This document may be printed, posted, handed out, uploaded, downloaded and linked to as long as credit is given and is kept in its entirety.