

## Menu of Evidence

### **Q: Should all forms of abortion become illegal?**

**Fact:** 1 out of 3 women in the U.S. have an abortion by the time they are 45 years old.

**Source:** Planned Parenthood

**Fact:** An abortion takes approximately ten minutes and consists basically of painkillers and a suction device.

**Source:** Planned Parenthood

**Fact:** Abortion first became illegal in the 1800's in part because early Anglo Saxon settlers were concerned that their population would be overrun by new immigrants.

**Source:** National Abortion Federation

**Fact:** By 1910 the newly formed American Medical Association successfully lobbied to end all abortion except in instances where a woman's life was in danger so that only doctors, not their competitors, could carry out abortions.

**Source:** National Abortion Federation

**Fact:** The prohibition of abortion from the late 1800's to 1973 resulted in women dying or suffering serious medical problems after attempting to self-induce their abortions or going to untrained practitioners who performed abortions with primitive methods or in unsanitary conditions.

**Source:** The American Abortion Federation

**Fact:** In 1973, the Supreme Court decided in *Roe vs. Wade*, that Americans' right to privacy included the right of a woman to decide whether to have children and the right of a woman and her doctor to make that decision without state interference. That law still stands today.

**Source:** The American Abortion Federation

**Fact:** The medical definition of the start of pregnancy is about 10 days after conception, when the blastocyst implants itself in the inner wall of the uterus.

**Source:** [religioustolerance.org](http://religioustolerance.org)

**Fact:** At two months the embryo's face resembles that of a primate but is not fully human in appearance. Some of the brain begins to form; this is the primitive "*reptilian brain*" that will function throughout life. The embryo will respond to prodding, although it has no consciousness at this stage of development. The brain's higher functions do not develop until much later in pregnancy when the fetus becomes sentient.

**Source:** [religioustolerance.org](http://religioustolerance.org)

**Fact:** Many religious organizations define the beginning of life as the moment of conception.

**Source:** [religioustolerance.org](http://religioustolerance.org)

**Fact:** Some murder cases involving pregnant women have been treated as double-homicides.

**Source:** The case of The People of the State of CA vs. Scott Lee Peterson

**Fact:**

**Source:**

**Fact:**

**Source:**

## **Q: Should handguns be banned in the U.S.?**

**Fact:** In 2005 in the U.S., 11,346 persons were killed by firearm violence and 477,040 persons were victims of a crime committed with a firearm.

**Source:** National Institute of Justice

**Fact:** In 2006 in the U.S., firearms were used in 68 percent of murders, 42 percent of robbery offenses and 22 percent of aggravated assaults nationwide.

**Source:** National Institute of Justice

**Fact:** Nonfatal firearm-related crime in the U.S. has fallen significantly in recent years, from almost 1.3 million victims in 1994 to 477,040 victims in 2005.

**Source:** National Institute of Justice

**Fact:** The percentage of gang-related homicides in the U.S. caused by guns in 2004 was 94%.

**Source:** National Institute of Justice

**Fact:** Last year there were 42 gun-related deaths in Great Britain (where gun laws are strict). This number includes homicides, suicides and accidental deaths. In 2005 (the latest year for which numbers are available) there were 30,364 gun-related deaths in the United States.

**Source:** New England Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence

**Fact:** There are approximately 1.5 million DGU's (defensive gun uses) by law-abiding citizens per year in the United States.

**Source:** 1994 Department of Justice survey *Guns in America: National Survey on Private Ownership and Use of Firearms*

**Fact:** In 1994, 35% of American households owned guns, which means that an estimated forty-four million Americans owned nearly two hundred million guns, enough to provide every adult in the United States with one gun at that time. However, only 25% of adults actually owned a gun, because a majority of gun owners possessed two or more guns. In fact, the majority of American males do not own guns, and only about one woman out of ten is a gun owner.

**Source:** 1994 Department of Justice survey *Guns in America: National Survey on Private Ownership and Use of Firearms*

**Fact:** Ages eighteen to twenty-four are peak years for being a crime-gun possessor.

**Source:** ATF (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives)

**Fact:** Handguns make up only 33% (sixty-five million) of the guns owned, but as shown in Figure 2.1, handguns are used in the majority of crimes involving guns.

**Source:** *Crime Gun Trace Reports* (2002), by the ATF

**Fact:** In 1871 the NRA was created and is concerned with training and marksmanship. The NRA defends its position on firearms with the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

**Source:** The National Rifle Association

**Fact:** The Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution reads "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."

**Source:** The United States Constitution