This publication was inspired by the whitewashed history this country is founded upon and the words of Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, in her recent book *Loaded: A Disarming History of the Second Amendment*. San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2018.

**Other sources cited in this publication:**
“Guns and Violence Against Women.” EverytownResearch.org, everytownresearch.org/reports/guns-intimate-partner-violence


There is considerable debate over the second amendment concerning the validity of an individual's right to bear arms but less attention has been focused on the larger intent behind writing it into law. There is a popular belief that the Second Amendment resulted from the Revolutionary War and was written into the constitution to protect the country from any foreign oppression and from the savagery of Indians.

However, the historical context that led to the creation of the Second Amendment is actually based on the process of land annexation and the mitigation of local populations through assimilation, genocide or slavery—much of which took place at the point of a gun. The colonists that built this country ousted the British for many reasons, but fundamentally, “what colonists considered oppressive was any restriction that British authorities put on them in regard to obtaining land.” (Loaded, Dunbar-Ortiz, 24)

The Second Amendment is actually a sacred religiopolitical covenant between the Nation-State and the settler invaders of this continent that recognizes the fundamental Christian ideology of capitalistic land expansion through ethnic cleansing and slavery. It is an exemplification that this country is founded on generations of European invaders with a maniacal lust for Indian killing and slavery. It is an exemplification that the Second Amendment is actually based on the process of land annexation and the mitigation of local populations through assimilation, genocide or slavery—much of which took place at the point of a gun. The colonists that built this country ousted the British for many reasons, but fundamentally, “what colonists considered oppressive was any restriction that British authorities put on them in regard to obtaining land.” (Loaded, Dunbar-Ortiz, 24)

In essence, extreme violence was a god-given right and an obligation of the average settler citizen that took on the singular role of a vigilante and that formed into small groups that cleared the way for the rise of the American government. The average citizen was a raider, a marauder, a pirate and an Indian Killer and the average colony was a settler militia, an armed band of thieves, and a slave patrol.

The Nation-State did not create the Second Amendment to protect its citizens from invasion but to allow its citizens to invade. It is written permission to continue on with the doctrine of discovery, manifest destiny, westward expansion, i.e., the work of the white supremacist. As Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz writes, “The astronomical number of firearms owned by US citizens, with the Second Amendment considered a sacred mandate, is also intricately related to militaristic culture and white nationalism. The militias referred to in the second amendment were intended as a means for white people to eliminate Indigenous communities in order to take their land, and for slave patrols to control Black people.” (Loaded, Dunbar-Ortiz, 57)

Today, gun violence inflicted upon People of the World Majority and LGBTQIA2S+ Peoples is a societal problem in the US that stems from the culture of invasion supported by the second amendment. According to the National Council on Family Relations, “the White experience of gun violence is often vastly different from that of racial/ethnic minorities in urban settings.” For instance, gun violence has a “disproportionate impact on Black, American Indian/Alaska Native, and Hispanic women. In addition, segments of the LGBTQ community and people with disabilities are highly vulnerable to severe forms of relationship abuse, but there is alarmingly little data...” (Everytown) The murder of Black Trans Woman is startlingly high and “it is clear that fatal violence disproportionately affects transgender women of color, and that the intersections of racism, sexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and uncheked access to guns conspire to deprive them of employment, housing, healthcare and other necessities, barriers that make them vulnerable.” (Human Rights Campaign)

Lethal police violence in the US is also mainly perpetrated by the use of a gun. Maggie Koerth from Fivethirtyeight, reports that “depending on the year, either Native Americans or African-Americans have the highest rate of deaths by law enforcement. The fact that Indigenous Peoples have such high police murder rates is not a well-known statistic because the population is smaller and because violence to Indigenous folk is not of particular interest to mainstream media. According to a CNN review of the Center for Diseases Control, “for every 1 million Native Americans, an average of 2.9 of them died annually from 1999 to 2015 as a result of a legal intervention”. For the Black population the number is 2.6, for the Latinx it is 1.7, for Whites it is 0.9 and for Asians it is 0.6."

This is a startling statistic because Native Americans only make up 0.9% of the population. Furthermore, these deaths are most likely under-reported just like the other epidemics that Native Americans face, such as missing and murdered women, abuse, rape, stalking, runaway children and violence committed by non-tribal members. In fact, the deadliest mass shooting in US history, known as the Wounded Knee Massacre, occurred in 1890 when United States Army troops murdered up to 300 Lakota, including women and children. According to Matthew Fletcher, director of the Indigenous Law and Policy Center, “The data available likely does not capture all Native American deaths in police encounters due to people of mixed race and a relatively large homeless population that is not on the grid.” (CNN)

The notion that there is a rise in gun violence in this country is actually a misunderstanding of history. There was just a period in time in the late 19th and early 20th century where guns were not as essential for the coercive control of brown and Black folks as the government had created reservation internment camps and implemented Jim Crow laws to segregate “problem populations”. There has also always been intentional media silence in settler society regarding violence to Brown, Black and non-cis people. However, the rise of the NRA, gun lobbying and the mass production of automatic weapons tied to a long-held gun fetish in the American imagination has given white supremacists updated permission to dust off their ancestors’ weapon of choice and reenact the violence that this country was founded upon. America is a young country that lacks a distinct culture of its own, but one thing is certain—Americans covet their sacred right to free real estate, cheap labor, and the gun, thus, the Second Amendment is but permission to steal, kill and dominate in order to fulfill this expectation.