

# Arm the Chicks

BY PENN JILLETTE

**B**EFORE WE EVEN GET STARTED, I HAD nothing to do with the title. I always use the word “women.” I almost graduated from high school in the ’70s, so I know the rules and I know I’m not young enough to use “Gurl” or “Grrrl.” I didn’t want *Regulation* to use the word “chicks” — it’s inappropriate for such a serious magazine. I am sorry. The editor picks the title. I didn’t even know he was going to use “Arm the Chicks” for this serious political piece until my subscription copy arrived in the mail. I’m as outraged as you are. Honest.

This column is not some “Modest Proposal.” (I didn’t know Jonathan Swift, and I’m no Jonathan Swift.) This is not satire. This is a *gedanken* — a thought experiment. Here’s the idea: To cut down on violence against women, we give a handgun to every woman in the United States. You like it?

(I’m not sure what to do with transsexuals. My gut tells me to let the transsexuals have a gun, just to cut down on vanilla creeps making stupid jokes about them. I’ll form a subcommittee to look into it.)

Look at women in prison now. (There are lots of Larry Flynt Web sites for that.) There just aren’t many women in the stir (and still they won’t date you). According to the Department of Justice, women account for only about 8.5 percent of the U.S. jail and prison population of 1.9 million. If you take away prostitution and drug busts (and we should) the proportion gets really low — only 3.8 percent of violent offenders in U.S. prisons are female. Guns don’t kill people. Women don’t kill people; men kill people. And men kill and rape a lot of women. Let’s arm the most likely victims.

I know; TV news crybabies yap that the safest course of action when confronted by a criminal is for the victim to behave passively. But they’re as wrong about that as they are about their choice of hair care products. They get that “fact” from the Department of Justice’s National Crime Victimization Survey, which lumps all “active” behaviors together. “Active” is anything other than standing there like a victim-stump — including standing there like an irritating-yelling-victim-stump. Maybe we need a few more innocent women standing there like scary stumps with automatic weapons.

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What the meat puppets don’t tell us is the Victimization Survey also reports the probability of serious injury from an attack is 2.5 times greater for women offering no resistance than for women resisting with a gun. Women are usually smaller than the bad guys, so any resistance short of a gun can be really dangerous. A woman doesn’t want to confuse and irritate her assailant; she wants to make the scumbag’s choice very clear to him: Stop raping and run away.

AEI researcher John Lott has shown that rape rates declined two percent faster per year in states that enacted right-to-carry laws. It seems just the possibility that a potential victim could have a gun scares the evil loser schmucks out of their crimes. Imagine the stats if we turned that possibility into a probability.

Every woman could do whatever she wants with her “Female Anti-Violence Device.” She could leave it home if she wants, or if she cares about pleasing me (and who doesn’t?), she could get one of those garter holsters. The only things she couldn’t do is sell or give it to a man. Women’s heaters would be marked — I’d like to make them all pink, but that’s in worse taste than the title, so let’s make them a plain shiny metal color, like Steely Dan (not the band).

I don’t care how we’d pay for this; either charity or government money would be fine. To encourage liberals to come on board, let’s have the government raise taxes to pay for it. Free guns and higher taxes — that, my friends, is bipartisan.

In 2000, there were 100 million women in America between the ages of 20 and 84. (That’s just my taste in women; if you want the numbers for 18-95, do your own research.) With the price of an inexpensive pistol at \$245, it would cost \$24.5 billion to arm all those women. (Of course, when the government buys in bulk, it’s gonna cost a lot more.)

Now, \$24.5 billion is pretty pricey, even for a government spending other people’s money. But we could spread that out by phasing the program in slowly. We’ll start by giving guns to women who just turned 20 — that way they’ll be fully strapped at their coming out. That means that we’d only hand out about 1.8 million guns a year, at a cost of \$449 million. That’s chump change for government protection — state and local cops cost about \$56 billion a year. And think of how much sexier, I mean safer, the country would be.

So, what do you say? Let’s arm all the women . . . well, except maybe the women I’m dating. **R**