

Much of the information in this publication was inspired by the words of Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, in her recent book *Loaded: A Disarming History of the Second Amendment*. San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2018.

Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz is the author of many books, including *An Indigenous Peoples History of the United States*. Her body of work is held in high esteem by the women of Seeding Sovereignty for its integrity, honesty and academic activism.



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Created by Christine Nobiss

Art by Jackie Fawn

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## The Second Amendment

*A Sacred Covenant of Ethnic Cleansing and Slavery  
Between the Nation State and Settler Militias*



There is a myth that has infiltrated the core of the American imagination. It is the belief that the Second Amendment is a result of the Revolutionary War, thus, a right to self-defense and to protect the country from any enemies that might arise. It is also believed that if the government fails to protect its citizens, the citizens have the right to revolt. **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." (Dunbar-Ortiz, 24)

The Second Amendment is actually a sacred religiopolitical covenant between the Nation State and the settlers of this continent that recognizes the fundamental ideology of land expansion through ethnic cleansing and slavery. It is nothing more than recognition that this country was founded on the actions of generations of Europeans with a maniacal lust for Indian killing and the control of Black people. Men were expected to bear arms (at one point it was the law) in order to protect themselves, their families, the State and the process of westward expansion. In essence, extreme violence was a god given right and an obligation of the average "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 ranger, a frontiersman, a marauder, a pirate and the average colony was a settler militia, an armed household, 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 civilians, 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." (Dunbar-Ortiz, 57)

This violent approach to Indigenous and Black populations is still practiced in current day American society. **For instance, Native Americans have the highest police murder rate per ethnic group in the country and the vast majority of these deaths are through the use of a firearm.** According to a CNN review of the Center for Disease 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. However, these deaths are probably 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. 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."

**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 essential for the coercive control of brown people as the government had created reservation internment camps and implemented Jim Crow laws to segregate "problem populations". 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 and 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.

For more information on Native Lives Matter, Black Lives Matter and to challenge racial and economic injustice go to the Equal Justice Initiative at [eji.org](http://eji.org)

To demand that our lives and safety become a priority and that we end gun violence and mass shootings in our society, go to [csgv.org](http://csgv.org), [marchforour-lives.com](http://marchforour-lives.com), [sandyhookpromise.org](http://sandyhookpromise.org) or [momsdemandaction.org](http://momsdemandaction.org)