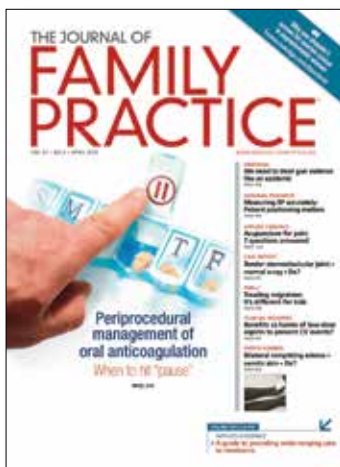


Gun addiction

I'd like to add several comments to Dr. John Hickner's editorial, "We need to treat gun violence like an epidemic" (*J Fam Pract.* 2018;67:198).

First, when I hear gun rights advocates (GRAs) discuss the shooting deaths of innocent fellow Americans, I hear the same type of language that I hear from people with substance, tobacco, or alcohol use disorders. They blame everyone else rather than looking at themselves and what their love of weapons does to those around them. When confronted with ever-increasing numbers of gun-related deaths, they say, "Guns don't kill people; people kill people." But when used in the way they were intended to be used, guns—especially semi-automatic weapons—will maim or kill people.

And GRAs will not give up their gun rights—even if it means that their friends,



neighbors, or relatives might die. GRAs ignore the unalienable rights described in the Declaration of Independence that guarantee "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness"—rights that are potentially annihilated when a person is the target of a loaded gun.

Because GRAs will not give up their weapons voluntarily, the only way to escape the continuously widening web of gun violence is to repeal the Second

Amendment and allow local communities to vote either in favor or against gun control, setting whatever limits they deem appropriate on gun possession. Repealing the Second Amendment will not eliminate the killing of innocent Americans, but hopefully it will reduce the number of people who die from gun violence.

W.E. Feeman Jr., MD
Bowling Green, Ohio

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