



## *Issue 1*

*The Entertainment Industries Council, Inc. (EIC) think this information, the first in a series of bi-monthly emails we'll be sending out, might be of use to you when considering potential story lines. Cognizant of the criticism and scrutiny being generated in Washington toward the creative community, we recently convened a Round Table of writers, directors, producers and other industry professionals to brainstorm alternative approaches to traditional "shoot-em-ups" -- approaches that are more aligned to what actually happens in the real world.*

*Hopefully, these depiction suggestions will not only be the impetus for fresh story ideas, but will imbue scripts with a realistic sense of gun violence consequences for people on both sides of a pointed weapon. They are designed to enhance the creative process -- not limit it.*

## DEPICTION IDEAS

Attempt to highlight alternative resolutions to conflict rather than relying on gunplay as the only or automatic means of settling confrontations. Clashes can be resolved by other less lethal means, perhaps by characters using their wits and cunning to overcome opponents.

Consider highlighting the emotional consequences for the shooter, such as feelings of guilt, remorse, personal angst, and so on.

Consider incorporating such real-life scenarios as:

- The shooter or possessor of a gun being accidentally injured by it.
- A gun accidentally misfiring while being loaded or unloaded by a criminal or other user.
- A gun misfiring and injuring someone after being accidentally dropped.

Consider the story potential that may exist in a family filing suit against a gun manufacturer for injuries or death sustained by a defective firearm that misfired.

Try emphasizing the fact that introducing a gun into an argument lethalizes anger: What could have been resolved with just harsh words, or even cuts and bruises, may end up with a death. Guns don't allow for cooling off or reconciling once the momentary or situational anger subsides.

Consider reflecting the reality that homeowners often freeze up or tremble so badly when trying to use a gun in self-defense that they are unable to deploy it. Or show them as being too frozen in fear to even get the gun.

Where appropriate to the story, consider portraying a teenage girl threatening to break up with her boyfriend unless he gets rid of his gun -- or a boy doing the same with a gun-owning girlfriend.

Explore depiction of legal prosecution or civil action taken against parents for negligently leaving a gun available to a child who then uses it to either intentionally or unintentionally harm themselves or others.

Attempt to provide a positive role model by showing parents making gun safety inquiries of other households where children visit, asking about storage, accessibility, and so on.

## SOME RELEVANT INFORMATION

In 1998, 30,708 people were killed by guns in the U.S. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, July, 2000).

A total of 3,792 kids 19 years or younger were killed by gunfire in 1998 -- enough for more than 246 Columbines (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, July, 2000).

In 1996 and '97 more Americans were killed by firearms than were killed in the entire 11 years of the Vietnam war (Firearm Injury Center, University of Pennsylvania Medical Center, 1999).

For more information on gun violence, safety, and injury prevention, please contact Entertainment Industries Council, Inc. at (703) 481-1418 or [eic@eiconline.org](mailto:eic@eiconline.org).