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Write Winger: Solutions for the Politically Oblique

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## **Chapter 6 GUNS AND BUTTER**

Of all the illogical, asinine, knee jerk reactions we get these days, none is more prevalent than a liberal's response to guns. Handguns, long guns, short barreled guns, small guns, automatic guns, military looking guns, shotguns, or any other gun not included in the categories above. Whenever the subject is up for legislation the liberals and the conservatives haul out their big guns to defend their particular positions.

The liberals appear to believe everybody who owns a gun is either gunning for liberals or is a total incompetent. Liberals, who put their faith in big mama government, believe as the Bolsheviks did. "Get rid of the guns in private hands and we ....(Bolsheviks)...will be safe from them, the rabble...(people)." Small wonder they're nervous about conservatives having guns.

Conservatives, on the other hand, believe that the Constitution protects the right of the people to own guns. Further, they do not place responsibility for gun violence on the inanimate object. "Guns don't kill people....etc." Each group trots out their favorite set of statistics in order to make their point. Liberals tell us that every home with a gun is a deathtrap for small children. Conservatives tell us that every home with a gun is a deathtrap for criminals, IRS agents and Jehovah Witnesses. It's tough for a person to decide where the greater danger lies.

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I say its butter!

Butter and its related components are a direct cause of obesity and heart disease. Both the anti-gun groups and the pro-gun groups will agree on one thing. Most deaths by gunshot are perpetrated by someone you know. This is true everywhere but in Southern California and Washington, DC. Be that as it may, based on the sheer disparity in the national statistics, what is needed is more guns and less butter. The medical journals all tell us that many more people die as a result of clogged arteries and other fat related conditions than die from gunshots.

Further, guns, when placed in a holster under a well tailored suit or tucked discretely into your belt, under that sweater dear old Aunt Doris gave you, still looks natural. Even though the gun, when improperly carried, can leave an unsightly bulge, butter, by contrast, can force you to buy clothes made by Omar the tent maker.

Butter causes untold misery. It makes teenage girls fat. It makes teenage boys breakout. Your whole fat afflicted life is spent trying to squeeze into fashionable clothing from the Gap made to fit survivors of the Ethiopian famine. It makes your entire life experience miserable. You waddle from one heart break to another and then you die in some sterile operating room with some HMO, minimum wage, Medicaid doctor trying to find you heart under all that blubber. I'll take my chances with an unlikely chance encounter with a gunman any day.

Butter also comes from cows. In order to produce butter, cows must consume literally tons of grass, weeds, flowers, grain and those little florescent orange wire flags surveyors are always leaving in pastures.

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Just as milk is a byproduct of this process, so is methane. Methane is released into the atmosphere due to the inefficiency of a cow's digestive system. They fart a lot.

Methane is a greenhouse gas and when released in sufficient quantities the temperature in places like Cleveland rises. The people in Cleveland purchase more air conditioners, that break down when they freeze during the winter, releasing the coolant. This destroys ozone that causes a hole in the ozone layer over the South Pole. Temperatures in the third world go up and they purchase cheap air conditioners filled with all that black market coolant we aren't allowed to sell to Americans anymore. These break down releasing more coolant. The result? Sunburned penguins! Not a pretty sight.

Before you say "ah, but what's a few sunburned penguins compared with the life expectancy of trailer trash children in Mobile?" Let's just stop right here and talk about the "stranger" factor. One of the biggest fears we have, is of "strangers." We all listen to the news. We know that a stranger lurks behind every bush, ready to abduct our kids, poison our pets, steal our stuff, rape our women, key our car doors, or shoot us in random drive-bys.

But still, any policeman not yet under indictment for violating some criminal's civil rights, will tell you that most crimes of violence using guns are perpetrated by mom or dad, brother or sis, husband or wife or the neighbor's husband and/or wife. It's not strangers with guns that present the problem.

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But! How many people do you personally know in the food industry? Just who is it who is feeding you and your children all this butter anyway? That's right! Strangers!

Butter is more insidious than guns. You get shot with a gun, you don't like it. You survive, you stay away from guns. You don't survive, your troubles are over and more often than not your relatives can sue the gun makers, the bullet makers, the neighbor's husband's insurance company and the gun shop owners. You die from too much butter; your family has no recourse for litigation. There's nobody to sue. Betty Crocker has never lost a case. You endure a lingering obesity, your chest hurts, you can't afford clothes, shoes don't fit because you have fat feet, children laugh at you. Children almost never laugh at people with gaping head wounds.

I personally believe that people should be held accountable for their own actions. I do not concern myself with how many or what type of guns people wish to purchase, hang on their walls, or even strap on and wear to city council meetings. What concerns me is the use of the guns. If you are not impaired mentally, and you haven't hurt anyone, what you possess is none of the government's or the news media's business.

As soon as you use the gun illegally you should be prosecuted to the full extent of the law for the crime you committed. If convicted, you should get an additional 20 years in prison without parole for abusing your right to be armed and another five years for subjecting the rest of us to the incessant whining of the crybaby liberals.

As for butter, I feel the same about butter as I feel about any other self inflicted injury whether it be shooting yourself, smoking, getting

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pregnant, or drinking until you trip over your own liver. I don't care that you do it, just so long as my tax dollars aren't used to pay for fixing it.

The public medical dollar should be reserved for people whose injuries or illnesses are caused through no fault of their own. That doesn't mean that we get to blame the tobacco industry, the liquor industry and Hollywood because you smoke, drink and have unsafe sex. As an individual human being, you have a responsibility for yourself and that includes not doing stupid stuff like eating too much butter.

If you must eat mass amounts of butter, please, stay off the beach.

## Chapter 26 THE DOG

If it wasn't for dogs, movie makers would have to come up with a whole new way to define the bad guy. The bad guy in movies always hates dogs. He kicks a dog, shoots a dog, kills a dog. This automatically causes this fellow to lose all sympathy from an audience. The bad guy can run a school bus full of children off a cliff and still redeem himself as long as there are no dogs aboard.

Dogs are special. There is no great national debate like there is with cats between those who like dogs or don't like dogs. Even people who don't have or even wouldn't have a dog still like them. Dogs are sweet. Dogs are loyal. Dogs are a lot of things but aloof isn't one of them. Dogs love us even when every person in the world thinks we are scum-o-the-earth. Even Clinton has a dog.

The only truly traumatic event of my childhood that I can recall with absolute clarity is the day I killed George, the dog. I was six year old, it was 1961. We lived on a small farm then (about 15 acres) where we mostly grew scrub oak and large rocks. We had moved there in the summer of 1959. I can remember vividly the first night in our four room house. We were invaded after dark by an infestation of bugs. Roaches, ants, silverfish, a centipede here and there. My mother and older brothers

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were up all night spraying cans of insect poison and killing them with shoes.

They were everywhere. I was only four at the time and hid under my covers the whole night. I am reasonably sure the insect spray caused the genetic changes that made me what I am today. If I ever get rich and famous, I'm going to invest heavily in the Black Flag company and send them a thank you note.

That same summer the water well dried up and we spent the rest of that year without running water in the house. We had to use the great outdoors or a stall in the barn as a restroom. We were at one with nature and let me tell you, the animals and the "Earth Firsters" can have it. We kept a watercan in the kitchen for drinking, that we filled up at a little family store about two miles to the east towards Whitesboro, Texas. We had another well from which we had to draw water with a rope, pulley and a long bucket.

This water wasn't potable for humans but we could bathe in it once a week and water the animals. We had a cow, some chickens, a collie dog named Lassie (hey it was the 50s and we were little kids), and a couple of cats. We brought Lassie with us from our last home in Prague (pronounced PRAAG), Oklahoma.

Our farm fronted Highway 82. If you traveled west you end up out in Lubbock (pronounced Lub Bick) and beyond, east takes you to Texarkana. It's a four lane highway. It ran by the front of our house and the speed limit at that time was 70 MPH. It was a dangerous road. Now that the speed limit has changed back to 70 MPH, I imagine it's a

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dangerous road again. Dogs and highways, kind of like baby chicks and buckets of water....well never mind.

Our neighbors on the north side of the highway were Marshall and Dosie Chapman and their little boy Michael had been run over and killed on that highway, when he was only six years old, back before we moved there. They had a daughter, Jorene, who was married and lived out in Lubbock. There was always a sadness about them when the subject of their son came up. It must have broken something deep inside them but they relied on a strong faith to go forward with their lives. They had a dog named Smokey who never barked. He got bit on the nose by a snake once and his head swelled up like a watermelon, but he never ever barked.

My mother worked for the State School for Girls back then and the Chapman's kept us little boys over at their house while Mama worked. The State School for girls was a facility for juvenile delinquent girls who had done something awful like run away from home, get caught up with the wrong boy, or play hooky from school. That was 1960. Today that facility still houses juveniles. Mass murderers, robbers, rapists, and gang racketeers. But hey! That's progress for you.

The Chapman's were fine people. Hard working, honest. They lived solely from their hard work, both on their farm and any outside work they could dig up. Marshall drove a delivery van on occasion when they needed the money. They grew all their own vegetables, traded with us for eggs, milk and butter. Marshall Chapman would take his money crops to the farmer's market in Gainesville and sell enough to buy meat for the winter months. They worked odd jobs for extra cash on other peoples

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farms, picking berries, and pulling cotton. They gave up nothing as they lived as they chose.

My brother Tommy and I went with them to do this work and it was our first exposure to hard work for low pay. I'm quite certain that my kids could never have these experiences because I think hard work for low pay is illegal now. It's interesting to be able to relate to my children the experience of dragging that long cotton bag between the rows and being paid a nickel a pound for my efforts.

Marshall Chapman was a big strong man. He had a profound faith. I cannot recall him ever raising either his voice or a hand against another person. He worked hard. He didn't have a strong education, but he was very smart. He taught himself how to graft English Walnut limbs onto plum trees. He grew cherries, strawberries and grapes in the hot Texas summers and he cross pollinated watermelons to produce new strains.

He learned how to recharge D cell batteries years before rechargeable batteries were ever marketed. He once took an old axle from a wrecked pickup truck, buried half of it in concrete and using some lumber, built us kids a great merry-go-round that lasted 20 years. He chain smoked Lucky Strikes. He died of lung cancer in 1968 when he was only 54 years old. He was like another dad to me. I miss him to this day.

Dosie Chapman was a farmers wife. She probably worked harder than Marshall. She was a twin and her sister was named Josie. Dosie canned anything Marshall could grow, she sewed all their clothes, did laundry with an old wringer washer. She worked along side her husband in the fields and baby sat us kids all day before we started to school and after school and in the summers as we got older. She shared her husbands

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strong faith and they went to church every Sunday and Wednesday night at the Harvey Street Baptist Church in Gainesville. She died in 1991 at the age of 77.

Smokey ran off and never came back in 1963. I think the highway got him.

Now I only relate this stuff because in today's world Dosie would probably be seen as unfulfilled because she didn't have a career or oppressed because she didn't work outside the home, or fooled into going to church because of the patriarchal nature of Christianity. She on the other hand would have probably chased you off her property with a stick for making such suggestions. This brings me back to the dog story.

At some point during that first year the highway took our dog Lassie. We were farm people and needed a dog or two around the place. We had always had collies so we got Cosmo. Cosmo was already a full grown dog when we got him. My brother David named him Cosmo from the television show Topper. At some point we were also given a puppy. He was a collie mix and we named him George. I was little when we got George and looking back it seems that he went from being a puppy to being a big dog in the blink of an eye.

My older brother Tommy and I were outside playing ball with the dogs. We were throwing the ball and the dogs would run after it, fight over it a little and bring it back. The distance from the area outside the back door of our house, down the gravel driveway to the highway was about two hundred feet. I wouldn't have thought that I could throw the ball that far.

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I shouldn't have thrown toward the road anyway. Tommy had been throwing it away from the road. When it was my turn I turned and hurled it in the direction of the highway. The hard rubber ball bounced down the driveway and just kept on going. The entire event couldn't have been more than a few seconds but it is deeply ingrained in my mind to the point that even today, looking back, it seems like an eternity.

I remember throwing the ball overhand and seeing the dogs, George and Cosmo take off after it down the driveway. I knew. I started to run towards the road at that same moment yelling for the dogs to stop, but they were after that ball. It bounced and rolled and bounced some more. It took it's last hop and landed in the middle of the east bound lane of the highway and rolled across into the center median. Cosmo was the fastest. He ran across the road and was looking for the ball in the high grass. George stopped in the middle of the road. He just stood there.

I was running and yelling. Trying to get George to get off the road. Cosmo was still in the ditch between the east and west bound lanes. I couldn't see Cosmo, I could only see George standing very still, looking first at me and then at Cosmo.

I was picking up some gravel from the driveway to throw at the dog, but my oldest brother grabbed me from behind before I could throw it. I was almost on the highway. There was a car coming. A white 1960, Ford Fairlane. It had come up over the rise just west of where Michael Chapman was killed. It was coming fast and we were all yelling and crying for George to get off the road. The car started to slow down just a little bit.

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The car was traveling around 75 MPH when the impact occurred. George never moved. He never looked in the direction of the car. The impact was loud enough that it still rings in my ears and George was thrown about 50 feet to the side of the road closest to where I was standing. The car took another quarter mile to stop. They had broken their headlight and dented the grill. George was killed instantly and I knew I was the one who had killed him.

Mama gave me a whipping with a belt and I deserved it. From then on, she kept the dogs tied up or in a pen she had built out by the garage. Cosmo used to climb the 8 foot chain link fence and get out. We finally lost him to the highway as well. That was the last outdoor dog we would have. We moved away from the farm in 1965 and became town kids. I saw the Chapman's from time to time and went to Marshall's funeral three years later.

I lost something that day besides a good dog. I lost the sense of my own innocence in the events surrounding me. I was always painfully aware from that day forward that all our actions have far reaching consequences. We are morally obliged to be responsible for all our actions, because even something as insignificant as throwing a ball for the dog can lead to tragedy.

That scene is forever etched into my memory and I often hesitate and remember whenever I am about to do some little something with the kids or with a pet. I remember that cause and effect are often terribly mismatched.

Today we have Gracie. Gracie is a lab mix. We got her from a shelter. She is a pet. She doesn't have rights. She will never have rights barring

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some pretty strange legislation. The purpose of dogs is to provide people with companionship and love. The purpose of dog owners is to provide a safe environment for the dog. The purpose of the Animal Rights Movement is to make asinine statements about the purpose of dogs and dog owners.

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