

TRIGGER-Pulling: Shoot to Disarm, or Shoot to Kill?

By Dr. Michael Obsatz – January 2026

I remember the good old days, when movie cowboys would shoot the guns out of the suspects' hands. They did not shoot to kill. They shot to disarm. Which means that the suspects must have had guns and were a genuine threat.

These days, many shootings from law enforcement and ordinary citizens are intentionally meant to kill. Often, the enemy or suspects have no weapons in their hands.

We have a concept called trigger-happy — where there is an itching to pull the trigger and wound or kill someone. Fear is pervasive. Mental illness does not necessarily mean the person has no access to a deadly weapon.

When I was a child, I was bullied for over five years by a group of guys who carried knives. Today, those experiences would have resulted in my death due to gunfire to be sure.

We use words like "trigger" to mean "causing an impulsive reaction."

Such as "What you said triggered me to get angry or leave or act in a violent manner."

In these moments, thousands of people are killed by guns all over America. Guns are legal for many citizens. Police, National Guard and other safety officers shoot, injure and kill suspects daily.

Trigger-Pulling is epidemic these days. Pull the trigger, someone dies.

Fear and need for domination are rampant these days. Empire Consciousness pervades American culture. Guns are a symbol of power, control and dominance.

Violent videos and videogames glorify gun violence. The words, "revolution" and "revolver" have similar roots. What we need is not revolution, but evolution — movement from Empire Consciousness to Oneness Consciousness. Seeing the lovability in everyone, compassion, empathy, trust and belief that there is enough for everyone is the only antidote to Trigger-Pulling.