

Movie Review: Assaulted: Civil Rights Under Fire

By [Nick Leghorn](#) on June 6, 2013

[Kris Koenig's](#) Kickstarter funded documentary, *Assaulted: Civil Rights Under Fire*, started life as a film about the state of gun control in California. But thanks to the post-Newtown gun control fervor on a national level, the project blossomed to encompass the entire debate and not just the trainwreck that is California. The film is coming out on June 20th with Ice-T as the narrator, but they gave us an advance copy to review. So, will those of us who invested be getting our money's worth of 2A-defending goodness? . . .

The entire time I was watching this film, I kept asking myself "would my mother watch this?" As many of you know, my mom is a staunch gun control advocate and firmly under the spell of the MAIG/Brady/HuffPo/CSGV anti-gun axis. And the reason I was using her as a litmus test was that she's pretty much the poster child for the kind of low-information voter who might be swayed by the right argument — hopefully at least some of the audience who will see the movie. But honestly, I just don't see that happening.

The documentary is smoothly polished, well thought out and it cogently presents the argument that gun rights are a fundamental civil right. The producers provide support in both historical and legal terms. They even went so far as to include a re-enactment of the Battle of Athens, courtesy of Bagwell Entertainment, to bring the story to life.

The addition of Ice-T as a narrator was a nice touch, keeping the movie as far away from the "old fat white guy" stereotype as possible. And throughout the film, Kris obviously opted for as many non-OFWG representatives as possible to speak about guns, which is fantastic for our image. But in this case, Ice-T may not have been the best choice. Morgan Freeman he is not, and his speaking style becomes distracting at times.

As for content, for someone who believes in gun rights, this film was a confirmation of all of your beliefs. It presented all of the arguments that I found personally persuasive when I was formulating my own position on firearms, and does it in a way that's approachable and logical.

But that I think might be the documentary's downfall: it's heavily weighted toward the pro-2A side. Even the title of the film, "Civil Rights Under Fire," portrays gun control as an assault on American's fundamental civil rights. And while I agree that it is, that's probably not a title that will be packing the theaters with many Moms Demand Action members.

Gun control advocates will be looking for a "balanced" examination, something closer to the "investigation" of the AR-15 that [CNBC released recently](#). A vehicle in which the Brady Campaign and MAIG will be allowed their time on the soapbox to preach their message of civilian disarmament, and be treated as valid opinions. But the only time that happens is in one segment where a Brady Campaign spokesman discusses the features that make a firearm an "assault

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weapon.” And after every feature Kris immediately follows it up with a swift and succinct rebuttal from gun guys pointing out how idiotic the Bradys’ opinion is.

Don’t get me wrong, I enjoyed it almost as much as watching Carolyn McCarthy talking about the shoulder thing that goes up. But for a gun control advocate, it’s like watching someone kick your puppy.

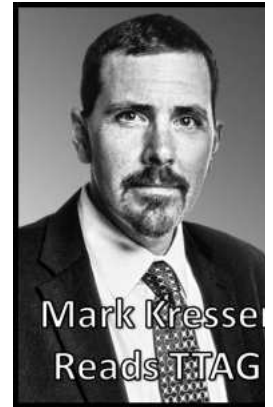
Yes, documentaries are supposed to advance an idea or agenda based on evidence provided, and Kris’ film does that beautifully. But for that same reason, I can very easily see the gun control advocates labeling this as “propaganda” and advising their true believers that anyone who even watches it is a whackjob. It’s a film that presents facts, history and logic in a debate where emotion has swayed so many people into abandoning their right to self defense, and while it tries to pluck those same emotional strings it falls short in that sense. Emotion based voters, like my mom, will not be swayed.

This film is fantastic for those who love their firearms-related civil rights. It will strengthen the resolve of gun owners to fight for their rights, and it might even get some people off the fence who were previously ambivalent to the cause. But I don’t see this making any progress among those who have long been drinking the civilian disarmament Kool-Aid.

Overall Rating: * * * *

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About Nick Leghorn

Nick Leghorn is a gun nerd living and working in San Antonio, Texas. In his free time, he's a competition shooter (USPSA, 3-gun and NRA High Power), EMT-B and enjoys mixing statistics and science with firearms. Now on sale: [Getting Started with Firearms](#) by yours truly!

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30 Responses to Movie Review: Assaulted: Civil Rights Under Fire



utdmatt says:

June 6, 2013 at 19:02

OMG you guys broke the website by posting this article 😊

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Loyd says:

June 6, 2013 at 19:14

Glad I'm not the only one with this problem.

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Daniel Silverman says:

June 6, 2013 at 19:11

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Well I don't think much of anything could be spoon fed to the low information voter. Many are to far gone.

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William says:

June 6, 2013 at 19:25

Problem with your theory: things that are too far gone generally don't come back....

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Daniel Silverman says:

June 6, 2013 at 19:34

It isn't impossible to change, not my point, but many folks are steadfast in their ideology, beliefs, misinformation, etc. Do we really need to cow down to them, or appease them in some way? Why should we be thinking twice and tripping over ourselves in order to some how convince those who don't care? Most don't, those that do will sit and listen and learn. Fence sitting gun owners are a good example. They have skin in the game and to them it is of interest and they will listen. My sister would simply go running out of the theater screaming.

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joe on Brady Campaign: Spree Killings Won'
Needle on Gun Control
B on Question of the Day: Is It Time for the I
Out of Its Hidey-Hole?



Pascal says:

June 6, 2013 at 19:19

I just received my T-shirt today. Cannot wait for the DVD.

I never thought this would convince the anti-gun crowd. Not sure how this is different that when Michael "I am a fat ass" Moore tries to give his views on film. The difference being is probably Moore lies and makes stuff up in his films like any good progressive would do. But in the same vein, Moore ONLY shows one side of the story....and his films are the same way. The believers go watch, the rest do not care.

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BLAMMO says:

June 7, 2013 at 07:43

I didn't get no stinking T-shirt. Maybe I didn't donate enough. I think I donated \$10 which is supposed to enable me to "download" the DVD.

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Brooklyn in da house says:

June 6, 2013 at 19:38

Living in the Bay Area now coming from NYC I can tell you from my first hand experience with hardcore antis that there is no swaying them. No matter how many facts, stats, articles or simple common sense you feed them they just wont listen. I think this flick will help with people on the fence about right and wrong as well as give us something to look forward to watching.

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Anon in CT says:

June 6, 2013 at 19:50

Exactly - we don't need everyone, but a super-majority would be awfully nice.

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Kevin P. says:

June 21, 2013 at 16:40

Exactly

[Reply](#)



AlphaGeek says:
June 6, 2013 at 19:52

On heavily partisan issues like this, it's rare to find a middle-ground media vehicle which nonetheless is persuasive in converting people to a particular viewpoint. The usual result, instead, is something that pisses off the true believers and does nothing to shift the views of the undecided.

As I was reading this review (and it's a good review, to be sure) I kept thinking that I could summarize the whole thing as "This is *Religulous* for 2a rights supporters". And that's not a bad thing. 😊

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g says:
June 6, 2013 at 19:55

Good review, but I think in terms of strategy, documentaries like this need to be aimed at the vast majority of folks in the middle / fence-sitters on the issue of gun control. People who haven't made up their mind are waiting to be convinced – why not show them documentaries like this or YouTube videos by folks like Colion Noir or AmidstTheNoise?

Hardcore, anti-gun folks won't be convinced by anything – even if they were mugged at knife point, they'd claim a gun is useless and they'd rather get stabbed than risk shooting a criminal. It's sad to hear, but you can't believe how many anti-gun people believe it's better to get victimized than defend yourself..

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Accur81 says:
June 6, 2013 at 20:02

Well, I'll give it a shot and see it in a theatre regardless. Low information voters are often so 'ferociously stupid' (a phrase I coined myself after watching LA drivers for an extended period of time) that nothing other than "demand a plan" will resonate. After all, if Hopsy / Changey can convince half our nation voters, the future could be pretty damn bleak.

With the budget available, a perfectly polished masterpiece was unlikely. If the film galvanizes gun advocates, enlightens some non-shooters, and is relatively entertaining, than it has accomplished its mission admirably.

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JTPhilly says:
June 6, 2013 at 20:16

I think you're onto something there. If this film galvanizes the People of the Gun while presenting intelligent, logical, and unemotional points, it will have been a great success.

Great review, and I can't wait for my DVD.

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Tom in Oregon says:
June 6, 2013 at 20:44

Agreed. I like the "galvanizing" adjective.
Hopefully this will get the folks who are shot gunners and don't understand the AR, or HK51 to come together as we all should, and fight these people harder than we ever have.

Great review Nick.

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Nigil says:
June 6, 2013 at 20:25

Thanks for the review. I personally will try to buy a copy of the DVD when available, for the following reason:

Irresponsible Gun Owner...

Law and Order

Media

News

NRA

NRA Convention

Open Carry

Personal Defense

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While it may not draw on-the-fencers, and especially not fervent anti-gunners, I see it as a tool for the pro-gunner to use when dealing with those they personally know. Like your mom, for instance. Or I could be having a discussion with a friend with little or no experience with the facts, and then say 'hey, let's watch this documentary. It's full of good info.' That can be very helpful for those of us who aren't as well spoken, or can't remember every great argument or relevant fact.

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DroppinTruthBombz says:

June 6, 2013 at 21:04

Here's to hoping it shows up on Netflix...LULZ

I'd buy a copy if it were on DVD. I wanna see it!

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ready,fire,aim says:

June 6, 2013 at 21:41

June 20th should be "Take a anti to the movies day" you treat them to the ticket and popcorn... sit back and watch the movie together....stranger things have happened who knows maybe just maybe they might see a shimmer of light

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SC Jeff says:

June 6, 2013 at 22:12

I wonder if some idiot would dare to try a mass shooting at a theater playing this movie.

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ready,fire,aim says:

June 7, 2013 at 07:22

please don't feed the mind of the criminally insane

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505markf says:

June 6, 2013 at 22:55

Just thought I'd share this – I have not personally "turned" an anti-gunner, but I have seen it done a couple of times. All it took was getting them to the range to shoot in a friendly, understanding, and completely supportive way. I am absolutely convinced that two things drive the anti's: fear of guns and lust for security (at all costs). Guess what every anti I have ever seen does the first time they pop a couple of rounds downrange? They smile. It is something that has to be experienced. Granted, that may not overcome the other drivers – lust for security – but hey, sometimes you win just by opening peoples' eyes a bit.

I'll see the movie on DVD – not in one of those markets – and I welcome it as an opportunity to preach to the faithful. Remember what the pastor said about preaching only in church – if I can save every member of the choir that would be a success. We all have an opportunity to not just be gun rights supports, but could become true gun rights and civil rights activists (though that carries a bad connotation perhaps).

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DroppinTruthBombz says:

June 7, 2013 at 00:07

I agree. Get 'em liking and comfortable with guns, encourage them to get their permit and re-examine the necessity of firearms in our day and age...once they jock up for real, it'll finally dawn on them and the ignorance will die forever.

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Roger Dane says:
June 7, 2013 at 09:39

You are correct. About 16 months ago a female friend of my wife's asked if I would be willing to do a 'rank beginners' "intro" to firearms (I do some) class for five over 65, female and liberal group she played cards with (wife's friend is a shooter). I said yes but as the date approached I wondered what I got myself into and was thinking how I would handle the issues (I normally cover the 'argument' in all classes but never had one made up of this demographic). The women where nice, I put a single pistol, slide open, mag out on a table and told them (with a chuckle) to let me 'know when it moved' and began the class. It was 8 hours, no fire, historical background of firearms in the world and mostly in America, the roles played, etc, you know. By lunch they were all excited about understanding that ARs were not assault rifles, magazines did not mean you were a robotic killer even if they held more than ten and safety and proficiency before anything was paramount! They got to examine several types of firearms and breakdown some pistols, learn differences and actually dry fire 'examined and empty' firearms. By the end of the day the ALL wanted 'live fire' range classes and each wanted to be told where to purchase. This was in CA! So you are correct... fear and (often) friend's outlooks and attitudes dictate.

[Reply](#)



joe liberto says:
June 7, 2013 at 15:17

my mom was never into firearms, she wouldnt ever talk about them bad or good and she never owned one. one day i was discussing with her sisters about my reasoning to carry a concealed firearm. i offer to take them to a range and have a nice fun safe day of shooting. it turns out the club was having an nra day not to far from that date, so they all signed up and loved it. shortly afterward i took my dog(he a big dog) with me outta state, when i can home my mom had put one of my shotguns in her room leaning against the wall,"i heard a million noises and didnt feel safe" was her reasoning. went out and got her a little revolver that never leaves her nightstand. i believe shooting in a safe enviroment is exactly what is needed to change minds

[Reply](#)



rightontheleftcoast says:
June 7, 2013 at 02:14

Thanks Nick. Good review. I agree on a couple points-

yeah, Ice-T- ok, try to bring in the younger gen- but whats that game, is it COD, where he is narrating scenes- god I want to puke hearing the guy, not because he is black, just that hokey ghetto attitude gets sooooo old.

Convincing yer Ma, ya- thats a tough one. Once you join the cool kids club, and stick with it past age 30 years, despite the facts, more likely than not, you are stuck on stupid.

Whats that saying – a conservative is a liberal mugged by reality.
Heres hoping she doesnt ever get mugged.

Here's hoping a lot of liberals/grabbers don't get mugged, but I am afraid its gonna get a LOT worse before it gets better.

Might just come down to Darwin's Law in the end.

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Gyufygy says:
June 7, 2013 at 08:17

Here's a version I liked:

A liberal is a conservative who's never been mugged.
A conservative is a libertarian who's never been arrested.

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Alex says:

June 7, 2013 at 09:47

What Kris has done to “Civil Rights Under Fire” is the same thing Michale Moore did for “Bowling for Columbine”. You said, “Gun control advocates will be looking for a “balanced” examination, something closer to the “investigation” of the AR-15 that CNBC released recently.” The truth is, they really aren’t...we’re way past that. The idea’s that these anti gun nuts have (Like my mom too) have already solidified, as have our ideas. This movie may get some open minded people to second guess the garbage that has been fed to them by the mainstream media, but overall, it’s a feel good movie made fore people like me and you...and ultimately, if it is informative, it gives us the knowledge we need when speaking with those who are against us.

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Dshim83 says:

June 7, 2013 at 13:25

I see your point regarding having a film that can better target the mainstream; I hope that you’ll give a review to “A Girl And A Gun” when it goes up in theaters and on-demand next month.

<http://www.agirlandagunfilm.com/trailer/>

From what I’ve been able to glean, the filmmaker really didn’t go into the film trying to push one agenda or the other, and seems to have really focused on capturing an accurate picture of female gun ownership in America. I’m psyched to see it.

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JWhite says:

June 12, 2013 at 16:45

I helped fund the kickstarter project.. what happened to my DVD copy?

[Reply](#)



Kevin P. says:

June 21, 2013 at 16:44

Repeat after me:

Hard core anti-gunners will NEVER BE CONVINCED BY ANY AMOUNT OF REASON OR LOGIC.

The people we need to go after are the great middle: People who are not dogmatically anti-gun, but are weakly anti-gun because of the propaganda fed to them by the media.

I was once myself such a person. I got involved in the gun debate, and the reading and arguments I did convinced me to come over to the pro-gun side. Since then I have taken over 30 people shooting, and have inoculated almost all of them against the anti-gun virus. Some of them have become gun owners and shooters, most have not, but almost all of them are much more pro-gun than before.

I contributed to this documentary but have not yet had a chance to watch it. If it appeals to the great middle, then it will have accomplished its mission.

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