

My name MaryJo Ericson. I am a photography major at Parsons. I love both digital and film photography. I also love exploring mixing other mediums with photography. I like to photograph people, especially in the studio. Besides photography, I am also interested in graphic design and interior design.

For this assignment, I first watched *Robo-Cop*. I hated this movie. I am not a big fan of Science fiction and I also hate violence. My research project was based around gun control. Gun control is a relevant topic in today's political climate and action needs to be taken. When researching this topic, I found myself reading a lot of information about possible solutions. These articles talked about other countries that do not have these issues or fixed them once they became a problem. They also talked about why nothing has happened regarding gun control despite the many mass shooting that happen in a year.

Since the studio project had to somehow relate back to the movie and I was not allowed to do the ideas I had originally intended, I decided to do a spoof on what would happen if teachers were actually armed. This is something that President Trump has talked about, but many Americans think that this would do more harm than good. I took this to an extreme and decided to replace teachers with "robo-teachers". For the map portion that we were required to do, I made a map of all the mass school shootings in the United States since 2000. That was the introduction to why this is a problem. At the problem I wrote that what follows this map is the government's response. It starts with a teacher receiving a pink slip. This happens to many of American workers every day when their job can suddenly be done by a machine. Then it shows the school supply list for the next year. On it are basic necessities such as pencils and crayons, but the last item are bullets. The next page shows a robo teacher (digitally done)

sitting behind a desk (drawn with pen, by hand). I wanted the robot to look out of place and intimidating. The page next to it shows a television with breaking news about the robot malfunctioning. This malfunction leaves an entire class dead, concluding that the issue has not actually been solved.

My research paper to go along with this, talks about rational ideas that have been proven to work that can end gun violence. I did research mostly on Japan and Australia. Japan has always had strict gun laws which is what makes it so easy to enforce the rules. To make my argument stronger, I showed examples from Australia. Australia did not have gun control before 1996 but put laws in place and have not had a mass shooting since. I conclude by talking about the argument that mental illness needs to be better regulated rather than guns, but I disprove that theory by listing statistics of what percent of mass shooters have mental illness.

This project has taught me a lot about gun violence, how to stop it and why there has not been a lot of action towards it in the United States. I think that creating art about sensitive topics can make it easier to talk about or at least create conversation. In the future, I want to do more work relating to activism. I want to create a zine with my original idea because I think it would be stronger and have a bigger impact. Even if no one sees my work, it made it more interesting for me to learn about and now I have a lot of information that I can use when people talk about this topic.