

[Should we have open-carry?](#)

Written by Nikhil Arora

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The BBC news on Thursday night featured a report on the upcoming Supreme Court decision on the Chicago gun ban; litigation launched after the successful case of [DC v Heller](#), which overturned a similar outright prohibition on handguns in Washington DC.

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The legal argument is actually very interesting, and detailed opinions on it can be accessed at the Cato Institute [here](#). However, even for those who don't share my academic interest in 2nd Amendment jurisprudence, the BBC's report was worth watching. It largely focussed on the effect of laws already in force in Wisconsin, which allow the open-carry, but not concealed-carry, of handguns. It showed how responsible, law-abiding citizens carrying guns openly leads to people both feeling and being safer.

The story that ran slightly later in the news concerned the jobs due to be lost at train station ticket offices across London, chiefly because of the advent of the automated Oyster card. The RMT Union gave its predictable little spiel arguing in effect for swapping motor cars for cycle rickshaws, because they don't understand the economic benefits of technological advancement. However, a lot of customers interviewed by the reporter did seem genuinely concerned that a lack of visible staff at stations would lead to an increase in crime.

That's when the connexion between the stories struck me. Why don't we stop relying on low-paid staff at stations to provide visible security, and instead have open-carry firearms laws?

Open-carry is very 'visible' – far more so than staff in neon jackets on station platforms, or standing behind ticket counters. It allows people to take charge of their own security. In addition, it empowers people to look out for one another as good neighbours, rather than relying on there always being someone official on hand to bail them out. It also means that criminals, who in our country seem to have no qualms about carrying and using knives to assault innocent citizens, would be placed at a disadvantage – far more of a disadvantage, in fact, than they are if, carrying knives, they are confronted by a station clerk, not carrying a knife.

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We can't possibly allow that here.

Robbers, burglars, murderers and rapists would hate it!

Thank God for New Labour.

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