

investment of my limited time on earth was to spend it with people I love. I suppose it's possible I'll lie on my deathbed regretting that I didn't work harder and say everything I had to say, but I think what I'll really wish is that I could have one more beer with Chris, another long talk with Megan, one last good hard laugh with Boyd. Life is too short to be busy.

MLA CITATION

Kreider, Tim. "The Busy Trap." 2012. *The Norton Reader: An Anthology of Nonfiction*. Ed. Melissa A. Goldthwaite et al. 14th ed. New York: Norton, 2016. 210–14. Print.

QUESTIONS

1. Tim Kreider writes against the American penchant for "busyness" and in favor of idleness. What reasons does he give for being against "busyness"?
2. In paragraph 7, Kreider claims, "I am the laziest ambitious person I know." What details of the essay reveal his ambition? What anecdotes of other writers and inventors support his case?
3. Kreider admits in paragraph 2 that being busy is not the same as being tired. What kind of people fall into the category of "tired"? Does this op-ed address their situation, or is it written for another kind of reader? How can you tell?
4. Take a position against Kreider's and argue for the value of keeping busy. You might include examples from your own life or the lives of friends and family.

MOLLY IVINS
*Get a Knife, Get a Dog,
but Get Rid of Guns*

UNS. EVERYWHERE GUNS.

Let me start this discussion by pointing out that I am not anti-gun. I'm pro-knife. Consider the merits of the knife.

In the first place, you have to catch up with someone in order to stab him. A general substitution of knives for guns would promote physical fitness. We'd turn into a whole nation of great runners. Plus, knives don't ricochet. And people are seldom killed while cleaning their knives.

As a civil libertarian, I, of course, support the Second Amendment. And I believe it means exactly what it says:

A well-regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed. Fourteen-year-

Molly Ivins wrote this op-ed when she was a regular columnist for the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, a local daily newspaper serving Fort Worth, Texas, and its surrounding areas. It was later included in Nothin' but Good Times Ahead (1993), Ivins's collection of essays examining American politics.

old boys are not part of a well-regulated militia. Members of wacky religious cults are not part of a well-regulated militia. Permitting unregulated citizens to have guns is destroying the security of this free state.

I am intrigued by the arguments of those who claim to follow the judicial doctrine of original intent. How do they know it was the dearest wish of Thomas Jefferson's heart that teenage drug dealers should cruise the cities of this nation perforating their fellow citizens with assault rifles? Channeling?

There is more hokey spread about the Second Amendment. It says quite clearly that guns are for those who form part of a well-regulated militia, that is, the armed forces, including the National Guard. The reasons for keeping them away from everyone else get clearer by the day.

The comparison most often used is that of the automobile, another lethal object that is regularly used to wreak great carnage. Obviously, this society is full of people who haven't enough common sense to use an automobile properly. But we haven't outlawed cars yet.

We do, however, license them and their owners, restrict their use to presumably sane and sober adults, and keep track of who sells them to whom. At a minimum, we should do the same with guns.

In truth, there is no rational argument for guns in this society. This is no longer a frontier nation in which people hunt their own food. It is a crowded, overwhelmingly urban country in which letting people have access to guns is a continuing disaster. Those who want guns—whether for target shooting, hunting, or potting rattlesnakes (get a hoe)—should be subject to the same restrictions placed on gun owners in England, a nation in which liberty has survived nicely without an armed populace.

The argument that "guns don't kill people" is patent nonsense. Anyone who has ever worked in a cop shop knows how many family arguments end in murder because there was a gun in the house. Did the gun kill someone? No. But if there had been no gun, no one would have died. At least not without a good foot race first. Guns do kill. Unlike cars, that is all they do.

Michael Crichton makes an interesting argument about technology in his thriller *Jurassic Park*. He points out that power without discipline is making this society into a wreckage. By the time someone who studies the martial arts becomes a master—literally able to kill with bare hands—that person has also undergone years of training and discipline. But any fool can pick up a gun and kill with it.

"A well-regulated militia" surely implies both long training and long discipline. That is the least, the very least, that should be required of those who are permitted to have guns, because a gun is literally the power to kill. For years I used to enjoy taunting my gun-nut friends about their psychosexual hang-ups—always in a spirit of good cheer, you understand. But letting the noisy minority in the NRA¹ force us to allow this carnage to continue is just plain insane.

1. National Rifle Association.

I do think gun nuts have a power hang-up. I don't know what is missing in their psyches that they need to feel they have the power to kill. But no sane society would allow this to continue.

Ban the damn things. Ban them all.

You want protection? Get a dog.

MLA CITATION

Ivins, Molly. "Get a Knife, Get a Dog, but Get Rid of Guns." 1993. *The Norton Reader: An Anthology of Nonfiction*. Ed. Melissa A. Goldthwaite et al. 14th ed. New York: Norton, 2016. 214–16. Print.

QUESTIONS

1. What do you think of Molly Ivins's examination of the Second Amendment? What kind of evidence would convince you even more of her argument? Why doesn't Ivins provide more evidence?
2. Characterize Ivins's language. What words, phrases, or structures seem typical of her style?
3. Write a response in which you examine the analogy between guns and cars. How well does it hold up? Where does it break down?

DAVID EPSTEIN

Sports Should Be Child's Play

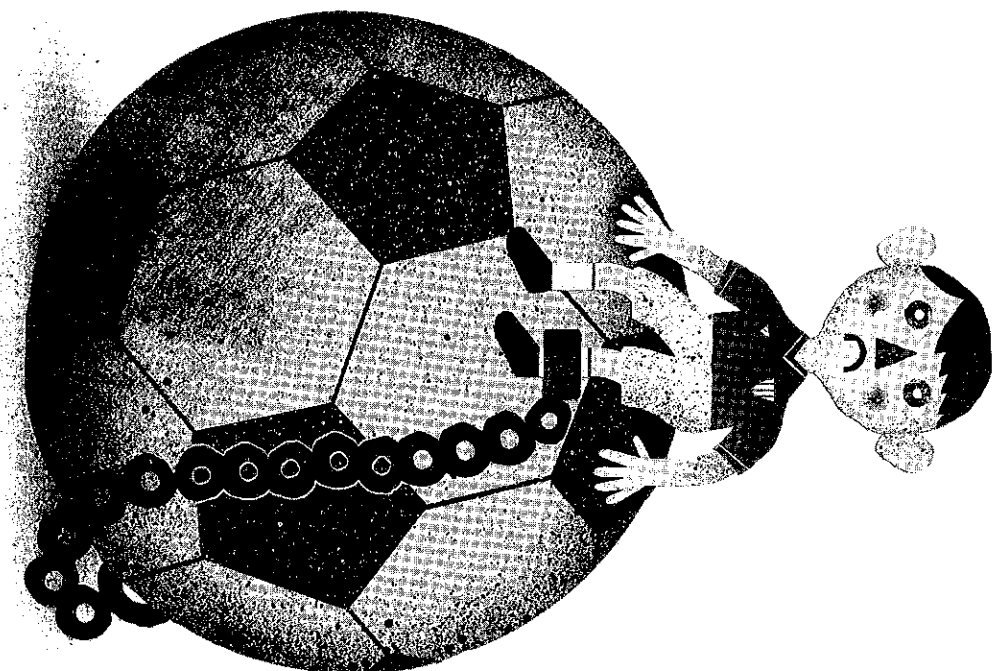
THE NATIONAL FUROR over concussions misses the primary scourge that is harming kids and damaging youth sports in America.

The heightened pressure on child athletes to be, essentially, adult athletes has fostered an epidemic of hyperspecialization that is both dangerous and counterproductive.

One New York City soccer club proudly advertises its development pipeline for kids under age 6, known as U6. The coach-picked stars, "poised for elite level soccer," graduate to the U7 "pre-travel" program. Parents, visions of scholarships dancing in their heads, enable this by paying for private coaching and year-round travel.

Children are playing sports in too structured a manner too early in life on adult-size fields—i.e., too large for optimal skill development—and spending too much time in one sport. It can lead to serious injuries and, a growing body of sports science shows, a lesser ultimate level of athletic success.

Published in the New York Times (2014) shortly after the appearance of David Epstein's book, The Sports Gene: Inside the Science of Extraordinary Athletic Performance.



We should urge kids to avoid hyperspecialization and instead sample a variety of sports through at least age 12.

Nearly a third of youth athletes in a three-year longitudinal study led by Neeru Jayanthi, director of primary care sports medicine at Loyola University in Chicago, were highly specialized—they had quit multiple sports in order to focus on one for more than eight months a year—and another third weren't far behind. Even controlling for age and the total number of weekly hours in sports, kids in the study who were highly specialized had a 36 percent increased risk of suffering a serious overuse injury. Dr. Jayanthi saw kids with stress fractures in their backs, arms or legs; damage to elbow ligaments; and cracks in the cartilage in their joints.