

Up in Arms: Gun Imaginaries in Texas

Edited by

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Imaging Texas Gun Culture: A Photo Essay

Albion M. Butters, Benita Heiskanen, and Lotta Kähkönen

The following presentation of 17 full-color photographs (courtesy of the John Morton Center for North American Studies) displays both formal and informal imaginaries of Texas gun culture, providing a visual context for the various subject matters discussed in the chapters of the current volume. This set of images was collected during fieldwork in Texas in 2018–2019 during the research project on Campus Carry conducted by the John Morton Center for North American Studies at the University of Turku, Finland. As such, it encompasses the “before and after” of the implementation of the SB 11 legislation, providing an alternative interpretative lens onto the conceptualization and experiencing of firearms in the campus space, as well as related aspects of gun culture in the Lone Star State. Through the visual materials, we get a broader and more complex understanding of the ways in which people take a stand on policymaking. Moreover, the visual imagery gives a useful tool to penetrate official discourses and historical imaginaries that might not be revealed otherwise.

This chapter provides an important linkage between theoretical discussion and an experiential component, which focuses on both the research subjects’ and scholars’ spatial maneuvering within and outside of academia and other areas of Texas. By presenting the photographs without any interpretation, aside from very brief captions, we seek to give readers the opportunity to encounter the images as we did, not imposing closure and letting them speak for themselves.



FIGURE 9.1 George Washington Statue and the UT Tower



FIGURE 9.2 View of the Main Mall from the UT Tower



FIGURE 9.3 Bullet Holes atop the Tower



FIGURE 9.4 Tower Bullet Hole Ornamentation



FIGURE 9.5 Turtle Pond Memorial



FIGURE 9.6 Turtle Pond Granite Memorial



FIGURE 9.7 “Gun-Free UT” Signage, Garrison Hall and West Mall Office Building, UT Austin



FIGURE 9.8 “Gun-Free UT” Vigil at MLK, Jr. Statue, UT Austin



FIGURE 9.9 Non-official Sign, Faculty Office, UT Austin



FIGURE 9.10 Non-official Signs, Faculty Offices, UT Austin

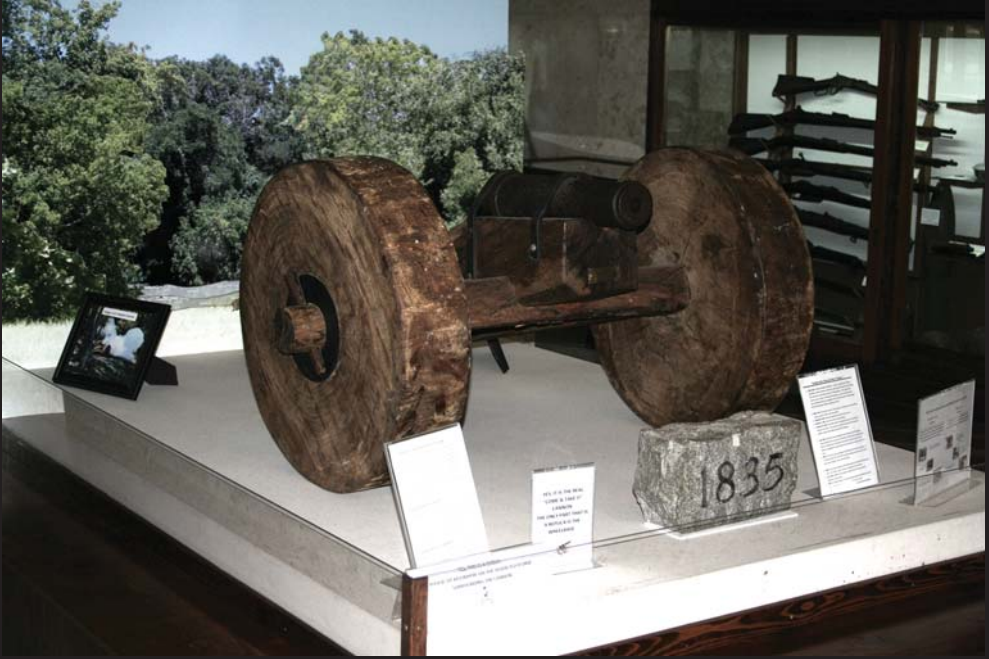


FIGURE 9.11 The Historical “Come and Take It” Cannon, Gonzales Memorial Museum, Gonzales, TX



FIGURE 9.12 “Come and Take It” Exhibit, Bullock Texas State History Museum, Austin, TX



FIGURE 9.13 "Texas Ranger," Texas Capitol



FIGURE 9.14 "I Shall Never Surrender or Retreat," Alamo Statue, Texas Capitol



FIGURE 9.15 “March For Our Lives” Protest Sign, Texas Capitol



FIGURE 9.16 "March For Our Lives" Protest Signs, Texas Capitol



FIGURE 9.17 Gun Shirts, Austin, TX