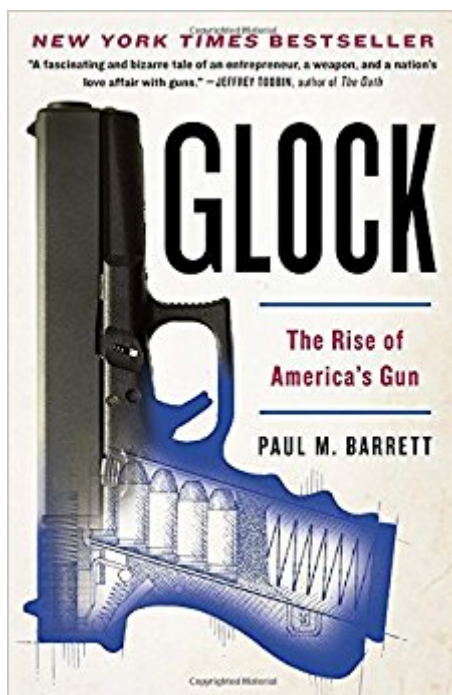


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# Glock: The Rise Of America's Gun



## Synopsis

The Glock pistol is America's Gun. It has been rhapsodized by hip-hop artists and coveted by cops and crooks alike. Created in 1982 by Gaston Glock, the pistol arrived in America at a fortuitous time. Law enforcement agencies had concluded that their agents and officers, armed with standard six-round revolvers, were getting "outgunned" by drug dealers with semi-automatic pistols; they needed a new gun. With its lightweight plastic frame and large-capacity spring-action magazine, the Glock was the gun of the future. You could drop it underwater, toss it from a helicopter, or leave it out in the snow, and it would still fire. It was reliable, accurate, lightweight, and cheaper to produce than Smith and Wesson's revolver. Filled with corporate intrigue, political maneuvering, Hollywood glitz, bloody shoot-outs and an attempt on Gaston Glock's life by a former lieutenant, Glock is not only the inside account of how Glock the company went about marketing its pistol to police agencies and later the public, but also a compelling chronicle of the evolution of gun culture in America.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

As most people probably know, America's gun, so called here because it is the sidearm most favored by law enforcement, the criminal element, and the entertainment industry, is not an American weapon. It's Austrian, designed 30-odd years ago by a radiator-factory manager who didn't know enough about guns to know he was breaking all kinds of rules when he built the thing. The Glock, named for its inventor, was a lame-duck entry in an open competition to design a new sidearm for the army. To the surprise of everyone, the Glock was named the winner.

A handful of years later, the FBI, reeling from the massacre of several of its agents by better-armed criminals, was in the market for a new, more effective sidearm. They, like the Austrian army, chose the Glock for its simplicity of design, its near-perfect performance, and its ability to hold more ammunition than the standard revolver. This was the jumping-off point for a marketing blitz that catapulted Glock to international superstardom. The book is an informative, frequently surprising account of the evolution of America's gun culture and the gun that helped define it. --David Pitt --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

"This book from a top-notch reporter will enlighten you about both gun culture and business culture. It's fascinating, even-handed, and packs considerable punch!" -- Bill McKibben, bestselling author of *The End of Nature*, *Deep Economy*, and *The Age of Missing Information*

"Glock is a riveting tale with masterful pacing and meticulous research. Paul Barrett knows his subject intimately, and it shows. . . . It's a must-read for anyone with an interest in handguns or the firearm industry or even American pop culture." -- Cameron Hopkins, editor in chief, *Combat Tactics* magazine; *American Rifleman*'s Industry Insider blog

"With his customary insight and crystal-clear style, Paul Barrett has told the story of how a simple toolmaker from Austria came to be the dominant force in the manufacture and sale of pistols in the United States. . . . Glock is not at all just for the gun enthusiast. This book is for anyone concerned about the level of gun violence in America, and that should be all of us." -- Richard Aborn, president, Citizens Crime Commission of New York City; former president, Handgun Control, Inc.

"Glock is a great read. Very informative from both a technical and historical standpoint --warts and all." -- Frank A. DiNuzzo, chief firearms instructor, New York State Police (ret.); chief instructor, Glock, Inc. (ret.)

"Paul Barrett's Glock is a fascinating and bizarre tale of an entrepreneur, a weapon, and a nation's love affair with guns." -- Jeffrey Toobin, staff writer, *The New Yorker*; author of *The Nine: Inside the Secret World of the Supreme Court*

"Colt, Smith & Wesson, Winchester, Remington: These were the American firearms industry's major players for 150 years. In the 1980s they were joined by a foreign upstart, Glock, which soon overtook them all. Paul M. Barrett ably investigates Glock's seemingly inexorable rise to power, profit, and predominance in this riveting story of how a plastic Austrian pistol...transformed into America's chosen gun." -- Alexander Rose, author of *American Rifle: A Biography*

"It's a story that pulls back the curtain on a secretive company that was apparently willing to do whatever it took to be successful."

And it's a heckuva good read. • Jim Shepherd, The Outdoor Wire "Barrett is right on target, delivering a well-oiled, fact-packed, and fast-paced history of the Glock." • Publishers Weekly "Offering huge discounts and shrewdly marketing to police from its facility in Smyrna, Ga., [Glock] employed Gold Club strippers and Dallas Cowboy cheerleaders to attract crowds, entertain clients and lend the pistol a sexy cachet that grew exponentially when it popped up all over TV and movies as the gun of choice for cops and killers alike. . . . A colorful case study of the manufacturer who beat long-entrenched, legendary brands at their own game." • Kirkus "An informative, frequently surprising account of the evolution of America's gun culture and the gun that helped define it." • Booklist "How a pistol developed by an unknown engineer with little firearms experience became the dominant, if not iconic, law enforcement handgun in the United States." • The Washington Post "Gun enthusiasts and gun detractors will almost surely read the saga of Glock, told expertly by journalist Paul M. Barrett, with divergent views...His authoritative voice permeates the nonfiction narrative. His own views about Glock and other weapons merchants are not easy to decipher, which is perhaps one of his book's many strengths." • Dallas Morning News "An engaging history of the most famous handgun in contemporary America. Barrett..[has] impressive knowledge of criminal and weapons history in the United States, as well as of Glock's business practices." • The New York Times Book Review "It's rare for a nonfiction book to read like a thriller, but that's what happens with "Glock." The book covers an intriguing and important topic, and it does so with panache and accuracy. Anyone interested in guns or gun control should read it." • The Washington Times "With an almost breezy, extremely readable style journalist Paul Barrett has written the definitive biography of a gun that has become the standard for American firearms." • Florida Times Union "Smart and engrossing." • San Francisco Chronicle "A compelling tale|a fascinating look at one man's extraordinary success." • Wall Street Journal "The sometimes shocking details about Glock|moves the reader from one anecdote to the next. . . . certain to fascinate audiences regardless of their thoughts on the Second Amendment." • Atlanta Journal-Constitution

I just bought a Glock 17. I was looking for practical and technical information about it. This isn't that book. So why 5 Stars? I have an MBA. I launched several entrepreneurial companies. I read suspense novels. This book appeals to all. Gaston Glock was the penultimate entrepreneur. I enjoyed the book as an MBA Case Study. They did a lot of things right. Some appear to be

brilliance and others luck. It discusses the peculiar twists and turns of a closely held family company. I have consulted for several similar companies so the stories ring true. Family members are either elevated or banished. In this case both. But it is also a treatise on apparent moral corruption. The book also deals with unintended consequences. It follows 25 years of political give and take on gun control. There are numerous examples where government action results in 180 degree outcomes. Attempts to limit guns increased the number of guns in circulation. My take is that this was extremely well researched and unbiased. In the early chapters, it sounded kind of a puff piece pitching the company. But in the summary and afterward, it is critical. All in all, the author, a Bloomberg and Wall Street Journal reporter who followed Glock for 20 years, seems unbiased. He doesn't come across as a "gun nut", claiming little experience or affinity with guns. He is neither anti gun nor an NRA proponent. The examples and statements are well researched. While it is Glock focused, it is a history of gun laws in the latter 20th century US. Interesting political SCI book. But as a novel, you would reject it as too fantastic. Some of the accounts: Sex Embezzlement Politics Payoffs Legal Thrills Management Strategy Jealousy Again, if a novel you'd say it is too far out there. This could never happen. But it did. You can't make this stuff up. Still glad I bought a Glock technically, but less enamored with the company.

Book just as described. Very satisfying, especially for people interested in firearms, their technology and development, but including corporate, marketing, and government/law enforcement procurement processes. I flew right through this book. I wish this book was around when I getting my Business Administration degree; I would have loved to write a report about it. Author Paul M Barrett delivers a surprisingly, reasonably balanced treatment of the story of Gaston Glock, his invention, company, and the firearms culture. Surprising, considering his background working for an obviously left-wing media company. He did digress a few times with some of the usual tired, inaccurate, and unfair usages of hot button terminologies other than anti firearm freedom optics. But Barrett did reach out to recognized firearm authorities for their input and even participated in firearms training. He did concede a fair amount to the truths of the law abiding civilian community. Mr. Barrett, when feasible in a few years, please write a follow up to this book.

Paul Barrett provides a well documented and irreverent look at the most improbable rise to market domination of any firearm (or any product of any kind) in American history. Today, just about every law enforcement officer in America carries either a Glock or a Glock clone. Just how a plastic semi-auto made in Austria successfully ended the reign of the Smith & Wesson revolver as

"America's gun" is a fascinating question, whether you're a gun enthusiast or a gun control advocate. Both audiences will find the story compelling, and Barrett is a true journalist, telling the story without any spin in either direction. In fact, after reading the entire book I still couldn't tell you where his personal loyalties lie in that particular debate. "Glock" is the story of an eccentric Austrian engineer who went from making brass fittings for windows and doors to taking a long shot at designing a pistol for an Austrian military contract (his first ever firearm design), to exploiting an American law enforcement market in dire need of innovation, and all the sordid details that turned a lucky break into a firearms empire. Who would enjoy this book? Firearms enthusiasts (Glock "fan-boy" or otherwise); gun control advocates; anyone in the above two categories seeking better understanding of the firearms industry, the "gun lobby", and the relationship between the two; people interested in business, specifically case studies of quirky executives. Barrett's style is very readable and makes the book a pleasure to read no matter which of the above categories you happen to fall into.

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