

Federal Censorship of Printable Firearms Essay

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During WWII the United States Army designed and produced a pistol called the FP-45 Liberator. The name FP-45 was an abbreviation of “flare projector .45 caliber” and the minimally designed 23 pieces were disguised with misleading labels such as the barrel being “tube” and the firing pin being a “control rod”, which was intended to cover the operation during production. More than a million were produced within six months by the General Motors Corporation. The pistol itself was not an effective [firearm](#), being clumsy and poorly made. The intention was not for these firearms to be used in front line warfare, but to be distributed to allied forces behind enemy lines, immediately providing aid for guerrilla insurgents thought by the enemy to be unarmed. The entire project was assigned to the U.S. Army Joint Psychological Warfare Committee, being proposed as a psychological tactic against unsuspecting enemy troops more than an aid to allied firepower. To serve this purpose, the Liberator was designed to be quickly and cheaply made, and easily assembled by and distributed to allied troops. The same concept of minimal resources being required and mass distribution was applied on May 6th, 2013 when the first widely available online printable firearm was released by the organization Defense Distributed; a single shot handgun made from inexpensive plastic filament and named “The Liberator”. Within two days it was downloaded over 100,000 times and by the third day was demanded to be pulled from the site by the U.S. Department of State.

The files were revoked in compliance with the demands, but in the short time that the files were available through the original Defense Distributed website, they were downloaded by people around the world, and...

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