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Newsroom

Bogus: NRA Money Shaped Gun Law

In a front-page Washington Post story, Professor Carl Bogus says NRA money took the "individual right to possess a firearm" from the fringes to the mainstream.

From the Washington Post: "NRA money helped reshape gun law" by Peter Finn



March 13, 2013: In 1977 ... it was ... a wacky notion: that the Constitution confers an individual right to possess a firearm. ...

More than 35 years later, no one is laughing. In 2008, the Supreme Court endorsed for the first time an individual's right to own a gun in the case of District of *Columbia v. Heller*. ...

For proponents of stricter gun control, the NRA's encouragement of favorable legal scholarship has been a mark of its strategic, patient advocacy.

"I think this was one of the most successful attempts to change the law and to change a legal paradigm in history," said **Carl T. Bogus, a professor at Roger Williams University School of Law in Rhode Island** and the editor of "The Second Amendment in Law and History," a collection of essays that challenges the interpretation of the individual right. "They were thinking strategically. I don't think the NRA funds scholarship out of academic interest. I think the NRA funds something because it has a political objective."



... Before the *Heller* decision, the Supreme Court and lower courts had interpreted the language as “preserving the authority of the states to maintain militias,” according to a Congressional Research Service analysis.

“It was a settled question, and the overwhelming consensus, bordering on unanimity, was that the Second Amendment granted a collective right” enjoyed by the states, not individuals, **Bogus said**. Under this interpretation, the Constitution provides no right for an individual to possess a firearm. ...

For full story, click [here](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/nra-money-helped-reshape-gun-law/2013/03/13/73d71e22-829a-11e2-b99e-6baf4ebe42df_story.html). [http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/nra-money-helped-reshape-gun-law/2013/03/13/73d71e22-829a-11e2-b99e-6baf4ebe42df_story.html]