

Jennifer Gollan - When Abusers Keep Their Guns

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[00:00:08] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Welcome to the Femtastic Podcast. This is your host, Katie Breen. Today. I am excited to speak to our guests, Jennifer Gollan, an award-winning reporter for Reveal from the Center for Investigative Reporting. Jennifer has spent the last year investigating and reporting on a series called When Abusers Keep Their Guns.

[00:00:29] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** And nationwide, the number of people shot to death by their intimate partners increased more than 20% from 2010 through 2019. And many of the shooters had prior convictions that actually made it illegal for them to possess a firearm yet. No one took away their guns or stopped them from obtaining another one.

[00:00:51] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** And further the federal government doesn't track the number of people who are shot and killed by intimate partners who are prohibited from having firearms. [00:01:00] So Jennifer and her colleagues from the center for investigative reporting found more than 110 victims over four year period who were gunned down by abusers barred from having weapons under federal law.

[00:01:13] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** And of course that number is almost certainly a. Under count. And we will talk a little bit more about why it's almost certainly a vast undercount. And of course the people dying here are women. It's mostly women who are dying at the hands of their domestic abusers. So Jennifer is here to dive into what she learned from her reporting in terms of where the gaps are in these gun laws, where the gaps are in enforcement of these gun laws that allows this to continue and how we can work to close them so that people who are not supposed to have guns are not getting guns and then killing people with. So I hope you enjoy this episode with Jennifer Gollan for reveal from the center for investigative reporting.

[00:01:59] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Also as [00:02:00] usual, a few quick asks before we get started. Number one, and this is my favorite ask of late is to DM me and let me know that you are listening to this episode so that I can say hi, a number two, please subscribe to Femtastic Podcast. Number three, please leave a rating and review of the Femtastic Podcast, especially on Apple

Podcasts and lastly, follow Femtastic on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, because there's lots of stuff popping off on the platforms all the time, much more often than a podcast episodes get released. Although I can't say that's true for Twitter because I don't use Twitter that often, but anyway, following social.

[00:02:42] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Okay. Thank you. And please enjoy this episode with Jennifer Gollan from Reveal. Hello, Jennifer. Hello. I'm so excited to have you on the podcast.

[00:02:55] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** I thank you so much for having me, Katie. It's so great to be here. Awesome.

[00:02:58] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Well, [00:03:00] so I discovered your work because I like reveal and I. Actually, I hadn't been listening to the podcast for a while, but I get that you revealed newsletters.

[00:03:11] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** And so I saw in my inbox there was a series going on about how abusers keep their guns and it sparked my interest and I was like, wow, this is right up my alley. Definitely want to talk about this. So that's how I discovered your work was the power of newsletters. And yeah, I, I. Very excited to dig more into all that you have learned in all of the incredible work you've done through that project.

[00:03:37] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** Thank you so much. I'm delighted to talk about it. It's been a year of digging through files and talking with real families and traveling the country and talking to lawmakers and government officials and essentially Coming to understand that there's this open secret and the [00:04:00] open secret is that we have federal and state laws on the books that prohibit abusers from having firearms, but they're not well-informed forest.

[00:04:12] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** So I guess we'll start off by like, how did you become interested in this.

[00:04:19] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** So during the pandemic, a couple months into the pandemic, I started to hear little hints from researchers about the. They suspected that domestic violence was on the rise and they were really worried about it. People were trapped with their abusers.

[00:04:39] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** They, there were lockdowns and this was back when, you know, people were being told basically that they their offices were closing schools were closed. And so I started to look into it and You know, I gathered data from many, many states looking at domestic violence

homicides, [00:05:00] and I started to run background checks on the perpetrators in these domestic violence homicides.

[00:05:07] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** And I started to realize that a lot of the perpetrators actually had criminal records and I was actually blown away by how many people had criminal histories that should have prevented them from having guns.

[00:05:22] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** I'm not super familiar with the laws around it. I know that there are a patchwork, like there's different laws in different states. And then I don't even know like what law is on the books federally about this. Like, I wasn't aware that there was one. So can you talk about, I guess first what the federal law says?

[00:05:47] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** So federal law says that if you're convicted of a felony, Or convicted of a misdemeanor, domestic violence offense. You can't have a gun. [00:06:00] Okay. And the federal law has some specific requirements that the misdemeanor domestic violence offense has to involve an intimate partner or someone you live with have been married to, or have had children with, or.

[00:06:18] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** Intimate partner like relationship. So it has some specific criteria. It doesn't apply to just casual dating partners. And the law is really clear. If you have one of these convictions, you can't have a gun.

[00:06:33] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** So yeah. How, how does that end up getting Prinz latered, I guess, into state law. Does the federal government have an enforcement mechanism for that?

[00:06:50] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** Okay. They don't have an enforcement mechanism. There's a law on the books, but it doesn't describe in detail at all, [00:07:00] how abusers or convicted felons are supposed to. Relinquish their firearms, how local authorities are supposed to go in and seize those firearms. Once they become prohibited because of a criminal conviction.

[00:07:15] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** And then at the state level, a lot of states have laws that mirror the federal law, as far as felons being prohibited from possessing guns. Some states have something on the books that mirrors the federal law, as far as misdemeanor domestic violence convictions and that prohibited. But there are only three states that actually require people who have convictions on their records to prove that they've relinquished their guns.

[00:07:47] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** So what we found is that there is this huge Gulf between the laws that are actually on the books. And the way it's actually unforced, which is patchwork [00:08:00] and sometimes not at all.

[00:08:03] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Yeah. And I think what's interesting about it too, is there's the issue of relinquishment. And then there separately, the issue of like buying new guns.

[00:08:12] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** And I, yeah, I guess there. Thorny and not necessarily enforced. But so I'm curious to learn more about that. So I guess on the federal level, let's say that, you know, someone lives in whatever state they get convicted or I'm sorry. They have a felony, so they're then technically not, well, is it any felony or just a domestic violence shelter?

[00:08:42] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** Any felony? Yeah. Most felonies, I should say. This applies to most felonies. Yeah. Okay.

[00:08:50] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** So then, like, let's say they break the law in like they, the state or whatever. Somehow someone finds out that they do have a [00:09:00] gun probably because they discharge it and hurt someone. Would the federal government ever.

[00:09:07] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Prosecute at a federal level. Cause I guess like you, you could be prosecuted for this breaking of the state law and the breaking of the federal law. But is that happening?

[00:09:19] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** Well, what we found in talking to federal prosecutors is there are so many of these cases and they can only get to so many, and this is, you know, but one of the areas that they have to deal with, and they only have a certain number of prosecutors to deal with the huge number of people that have guns.

[00:09:41] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** So they can't get to every case. Yeah. And then at the state level, for some states that don't have laws that mirror the federal laws, they don't feel like they're empowered to enforce that federal. So there's this disparity [00:10:00] and there's all sorts of things that go on. Like if a local law enforcement officer police officer stops, someone sees that this person has a gun and they were prohibited and they're violating federal law.

[00:10:14] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** They don't always report that to federal officials. And they've told us that because they're not empowered to enforce federal laws. So when we spoke with federal officials about all of these

cases, more than 110 cases that we found in which people were killed by intimate partners who are prohibited from having guns.

[00:10:35] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** The ETF told us that they're aware of this problem, that oftentimes it's too late. By the time they discover a, someone who has a gun illegally and they've already used it to kill somebody, the ETF also told us that they don't track the number of people killed by prohibited possessors, people who shouldn't have [00:11:00] guns because of their criminal records.

[00:11:03] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Hm. Okay. That's not great. In terms of, you know, I feel like we hear a lot about background checks. So in terms of like, if someone were to get a new gun and they did have a past felony conviction that would technically prohibit them from buying one, how does that system work? Cause I know. That seems very patchwork

[00:11:29] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** too.

[00:11:31] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** It is. It's a loophole written because yes, you have to undergo a background check. If you are a prospective buyer and go into a gun store and try to buy a gun. Is

[00:11:44] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** that in certain, like only certain states?

[00:11:48] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** It is a federal requirement. So it would apply in every gun store that you go into to buy a gun.

[00:11:55] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** You'd have to undergo a background check, but the loopholes come in, when it applies [00:12:00] to private transactions, you don't have to undergo a federal background check for those private transactions. If you buy a gun from her friends and et cetera, and so it's very easy to get again.

[00:12:15] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Hmm. Hmm. Okay. Well, and it's the I don't know, this is a sort of a non-sequitur, but it's making me think about like, when it comes to.

[00:12:30] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Like mass shootings. One of the common things that you've, that we have seen is that people who commit sort of mass shootings or try to have a history of domestic violence. And a lot of times like shouldn't have had guns in the first place.

[00:12:48] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** Yeah. The researchers have told us that this isn't just about. Family matter, private matter. This is actually about curbing [00:13:00] community gun violence because of the point you just made, because so there is a correlation and a tie between convicted domestic abusers and mass shootings, and it affects the safety of the broader community just in our review.

[00:13:20] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** Not just intimate partners, but children, police, officers, and other bystanders who were killed in these shootings involving people who were prohibited from having guns.

[00:13:34] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Gotcha. Well, so I mean, what it's, it sounds like enforcement is the issue here because there are. Laws. So how do we actually enforce this?

[00:13:55] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** Well, that's a good question. I think it is a matter of [00:14:00] priorities. And when we took our findings to the ATF, the ATF interim director said that he has agency does not track the number of cases involving prohibited possessor. Who killed their partner. So that would be a place to start is to actually start tracking it because once you have the data, then that can inform public policy decisions.

[00:14:28] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** I think there is there are some. Lawmakers on the Senate side with an introduction of the Senate Bawa version of the violence against women act this week who are trying to address this issue. And there are a couple of tools that they would like to use to basically expand the reach of federal officials, prosecutors, and law enforcement, ETF to disarm abusers who shouldn't have.[00:15:00]

[00:15:00] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** So these are I think incremental steps that actually may go a long way to addressing some of the problems that we have reported on.

[00:15:11] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Yeah. Well, and I wonder, like, does any of the enforcement mechanisms have a way of.

[00:15:24] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Cracking on an ongoing basis to make sure that the person hasn't acquired a gun. Cause it's like, oh, like maybe we could enforce relinquishment, which would be something that is, seems like a low bar, but obviously hasn't been done. But then what about like, if, how do you know if they've gotten new guns?

[00:15:41] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Cause I know in your reporting, like you've told stories about. People who have said like, oh, like my ex-husband is abusive. He's like been convicted, but I know he has a gun.

[00:15:54] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** Yeah. That's a really good question that the department problem is there's no national gun registry. [00:16:00] So when a defendant goes into court and the judge asks them, have you acquired any other guns or do you have any guns in the house?

[00:16:09] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** The judge doesn't have a way to go verify that that defendant or offender is actually telling the truth. When they say things don't have any other guns we are relying on this honor system is what everyone called it. And everyone, I mean, researchers and law enforcement, even prosecutors all said this is the honor system we're relying on abusers themselves.

[00:16:33] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** And felons, to be honest and say they don't have any guns or to give them up, if they are convicted of an offense,

[00:16:43] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** what is sort of like the punishment, if they are somehow caught having gun when they're not supposed to.

[00:16:53] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** Yeah. There are some federal standards. That would apply and some federal penalties if [00:17:00] you are caught with a firearm and they actually prosecute you for it, what we found is that, for example, we looked at this case in Florida and they, there is someone named Chad Apshire and he is accused of murdering his ex-girlfriend and he was a convicted felon.

[00:17:23] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** And. The police six months before he allegedly killed his ex-girlfriend and shot her. The police had an opportunity to take away. Gun that police you know, that, that his ex-girlfriend told police, he had, and they did nothing. The prosecutors decided not to prosecute him for being a felon in possession of a firearm, but now that his ex-girlfriend is dead and now prosecutors are finally prosecuting them for.

[00:17:52] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** Murder and also being a felon in possession with a firearm. I think what we found is that [00:18:00] oftentimes prosecutors don't go after these offenders or even when they catch them with firearms, they shouldn't have,

[00:18:08] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** yeah. It sounds like it's. Once they actually kill someone and, and are being prosecuted for that, they add on this additional charge.

[00:18:19] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** And so it would add on time to their sentence, but they, instead of doing that, you know, before they killed someone and just sentencing them for that. Do you have any idea? And I don't know this is by state or if it's federal, but like what sort of like, is there. Average sentence, like what is the average sentence?

[00:18:42] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** If someone actually were to get convicted for breaking that law? If that even happens, like if, if there's even, you know, there's anyone being convicted for doing this,

[00:18:53] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** that's a really good question, Katie. And not something that I've looked at in depth to look at average sentencing

[00:18:58] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** surprise me if it's like probation.[00:19:00]

[00:19:01] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** I think what we did find is that the sentences that people receive for this, for what should qualify them at the time to relinquish their firearm, if the laws are being enforced those sentences are actually sometimes so light in the respect that even if they serve jail time, There isn't any enforcement from the judge or the courts or the prosecutors or police at that moment to say, okay, here's the process to relinquish your gun.

[00:19:36] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** We're going to make sure you turn it in. Okay. Sign this affidavit. There was no process in place, so they say, okay, you're convicted. And sometimes they're instructed and we can see it in the court records. Okay. You're not allowed to have a gun under federal and or state law, but then there's no process in place.

[00:19:56] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Yeah. So we have been talking a lot [00:20:00] about, you know, the, the gaps in data or lack of data specifically related to domestic abusers and guns gun ownership. But you know, it's my understanding that there's really poor data on. Intimate partner violence or domestic partner violence in general. So can you tell us more about that?

[00:20:22] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Cause I think like there one problem leads to the other.

[00:20:29] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** Yes. So we encountered this in the reporting. There are two issues we ran into. One is the federal government doesn't have a precise real-time figure of domestic violence killings in the U S we only have estimates. We also don't know the number of people killed by people with criminal histories that prevented them from having guns.

[00:20:55] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** And when I went to the states to collect domestic violence, [00:21:00] homicide data, to analyze it and run criminal background checks on all the perpetrator. I ran into a lot of problems, problems with agencies that did not want to release the data because they were citing victim's privacy and other issues. And so, because of that, I know that our analysis, the final number, we came up with a 110 people killed by intimate partners who should not have had guns.

[00:21:29] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** That that is surely an undercount because of these recalcitrant agencies that refuse to release any data. So I think there are all kinds of problems with domestic violence, homicide data in the us, and it actually makes these victims. Some of them, it makes them invisible. Don't know about their cases.

[00:21:54] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** We can't raise awareness around this public health crisis.

[00:21:59] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** [00:22:00] Yeah. I mean, I think, I mean, it's not surprising that, so I don't know anything about how crime boarding works, but in my line of work, I do know about sort of like how complicated it can be to have data on causes of death, especially when it's not like cut and dry.

[00:22:22] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Like for example, with a domestic violence homicide, You know, if someone were to be charged in court, it would be, they would be charged with a homicide. It's not like there's like a special type of murder charge. And so. I'm sure like the documentation matters a lot in the interpretation of, you know, it's all human fallibility, like the interpretation of one police department of like, well, was this just like a murder or was it a domestic violence murder?

[00:22:51] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** And like how people's own personal beliefs and views and the information they have Influences what [00:23:00] gets reported. I know, like for example, in maternal mortality prevention one of the ways that it's been dealt with is like, and this is we'll get to

why it's much harder for domestic violence, but looking at, in order to track maternal deaths, what we do.

[00:23:18] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** And many states have maternal mortality review committees, and also many states have child mortality review committees. And the way that that works is like for maternal mortality review committees, they look at death certificate data. And if the data interoperability is there, they look at their, they cross-reference basically like, did this person die within a year of giving birth?

[00:23:44] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** And then from there in order to actually figure out like, Not like the cause of death being like. Pulmonary embolism, but like in order to figure out if it was related to their pregnancy you know, they would, then they then do like a really thorough, [00:24:00] customized one by one case review where they like talk, they talk to different providers, like medical providers and family members, and they gather all this data and it's a really slow, intentional process.

[00:24:15] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** And it's just drawing a lot of parallels for me in that. That's probably the only way you'd be able to get information about like, was this person murdered by. Partner. And is it considered intimate partner violence? You're not going to know just based on like a death certificate or based on even like police records.

[00:24:36] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Cause there's going to be context there that you don't have. And I don't know, just relating it to my world where I'm like, oh gosh, I can see the issues inherent in trying to track this data.

[00:24:49] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** Yes, you, this is really on point and there are a lot of parallels. One of the issues is that. Local police aren't required to note [00:25:00] the relationship between the perpetrator and victim for these homicides and send that to the federal government.

[00:25:09] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** So there can be steps missed there and data missed, and then a local police departments aren't required to send their data on this to the federal government to start with. So not everybody reports, so there are gaps in the data and it does make it more difficult to raise awareness. Hmm.

[00:25:30] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Yeah. Wow.

[00:25:32] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** So I also. You know, want to talk more about sort of what it looks like for you to be working on this project? Because I know investigative reporting is not just like, you know, writing in the school newspaper. Like there's so much that goes into it and it's, and I know like, you know, not everyone listening is necessarily familiar with reveal.

[00:25:55] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** But it's not like just one article that you research and write and it's over. Like there's a ton of [00:26:00] work and sometimes multimedia and things that go into it. So and of course we will definitely link to this link linked to your work in the show notes of the episode. But I'd love to hear more about, yeah, like what the process, or sort of like what different components go into this?

[00:26:15] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Cause I know it's a huge undertaking.

[00:26:20] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** It is, and it's a team effort. So we work across platforms and we PR we basically deliver for digital. Television and radio at the same time. And for this investigation, it was a result of eight or nine months of work. And then we put out those different pieces on the various platforms.

[00:26:43] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** All around the same time last fall, and the idea is to reach as wide an audience as possible. So we partnered with Al Jazeera's fault lines for a documentary that we produced together, and it was a half hour documentary called own [00:27:00] relinquished. When abusers keep their guns. And it looked at two cases specifically Jasmine Willick in Arizona and another woman in Florida, Ashley Rucker, who was killed by a.

[00:27:14] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** Yeah, definitely in Jasmine case killed by her partner and then in Ashley's case, allegedly killed by her ex-boyfriend and then for reveal our radio program, we focused on one case. And that was Ashley's case for an hour long radio episode that you were done 500 NPR stations. And then the digital piece, we co-published that with the guardian and.

[00:27:41] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** And the response was overwhelming. We ended up screening the film in Congress and several lawmakers spoke and yeah, and it was a fantastic response and reception and and the [00:28:00] national coalition against domestic violence and the Brady campaign and all sorts of organizations were, you know, saying the praises of the investigation and said it was just shattering really the findings.

[00:28:12] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** And we continue that momentum. We have some Outside organizations, non-governmental groups who are pushing for change. There's a Presbyterian church, USA and Pittsburgh. They have. They've drafted a resolution for consideration at the church's national gathering this summer to basically proactively require domestic abusers to relinquish their firearms.

[00:28:37] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** So it's been an incredible response and John Stewart included it on his reading list and things like that.

[00:28:44] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Interesting. So

[00:28:49] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** I'm not a religious person. Well, I'm not a church going person, so. Are they talking about doing that as like a, [00:29:00] like a, a policy priority? Or is it like an internal policy that they're working on?

[00:29:08] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** Yeah, it's, it's a policy that they would like other churches across the U S to adopt. It's essentially to encourage local judges and law enforcement.

[00:29:20] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** To proactively disarm abusers.

[00:29:25] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** So it doesn't have to do with like their church membership or like the judges that are in their churches. I just am not familiar with sort of like churches being involved in this sort of activism.

[00:29:39] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** Yes. It's really interesting. They've taken this on as a human rights issue and they're urging judges in their communities.

[00:29:47] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** And I'd like to encourage judges across the us to prioritize disarming abusers.

[00:29:56] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Cool. Good. Great.

[00:29:59] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** [00:30:00] It is great. It is great. And the reception has been incredible. And we've heard from folks at the white house and and other lawmakers basically that this should prompt us and spur us to strengthen laws around firearm laws to protect.

[00:30:17] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** Better women and others who are abused by people who shouldn't have guns. Cool.

[00:30:24] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** So you've been working on this for a year and I know like how a lot of stuff come out in the fall, which is when I heard about it. But what is next for this project?

[00:30:35] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** We have a series of stories coming up and they're in the works.

[00:30:39] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** So one is looking at Some of the issues around getting precise data around domestic violence, homicides. Some are, we'll be looking, taking some cases and looking at them more in depth that demonstrate some of the weaknesses that, and the circumstances that led up to the deaths of [00:31:00] People including children at the hands of offenders who shouldn't have had guns and we have a bunch of other stories in the works.

[00:31:08] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Cool. Does, I know you mentioned, like there's a provision sort of related to this in the violence against women act. What specifically is in that bill related to this.

[00:31:21] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** Yeah. There are actually a couple of provisions that are right on point and I can take you through some of those things, but it's one of the elements of this bill would instruct the attorney general to points.

[00:31:39] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** Prosecutors, state and local prosecutors, especially assistant us attorneys. And it would allow those prosecutors to investigate people who should not have firearms and prosecute violations of federal gun laws. And there's a couple of other points. Basically it would extend the reach of the ETF.

[00:31:59] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** And [00:32:00] establish points of contact in each ETF field office. And some us attorneys, district offices to handle requests for assistance from local authorities about domestic violence cases involving offenders who are prohibited from having firearms. So these are substantial steps that could actually go along the way too.

[00:32:22] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** And for something like special district attorneys would be. Amazing. And I, I mean, I don't know. I don't know if you know, there's, I doubt that's unprecedented. Like there are other issues

that I imagine they've probably appointed special us sisters to attorneys to before.

[00:32:40] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** Yeah. I think the idea is that we know that there are some areas that are under-resourced and low.

[00:32:49] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** Officials can't get to these cases or there, they don't feel empowered to get to these cases. So I think this is thinking about solutions to sort of [00:33:00] bridge that divide.

[00:33:02] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Another question that comes up for me is at a state level. Like, you know, of course they could pass laws, wealth as at a state level too.

[00:33:15] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** But I wonder too, if like state attorneys general could get involved with this enforcement. Just because I know that at least with their lately have been a streak of like democratic AGS being pretty. Action oriented on, on issues that traditionally they haven't been like the opioid crisis. So just thinking about that, like you know, if it can't happen at the federal level, definitely seems like there's a lot of opportunity at the state level.

[00:33:44] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** It's true. And I think that's easier in states where there is a specific law in the books that prohibits. Folks convicted of misdemeanor, domestic violence offenses from having firearms. And there are a couple of active [00:34:00] state attorneys, general that track domestic violence homicides. I actually went to them to request data that we needed the data.

[00:34:11] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** And some of them were really very advanced and sophisticated as far as how they tracked these deaths. But that's not consistent in every state. And yeah. And there, there is no sort of standard practice for that. So, yeah. I think you're right. You know, there could be probably more partnerships, but it probably depends on what state laws are already on the books as well.

[00:34:37] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Another question that is raises is do you. I find that this is an issue like, or like the solution to this issue have bipartisan support or do you are people who are very like anti-gun control also opposed to this.

[00:34:57] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** That's an interesting question.

[00:35:00] In this case, the Senate version of the Varroa that was introduced this week, it is a bipartisan proposal.

[00:35:06] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** And so that's hopeful. And I think that there is some research to show that many gun owners also think that if that this law on the books should be enforced, that abusers shouldn't have guns, that we should protect the community. But then there's the reality of, you know, what happens when there is a suggestion that we disarm someone of their firearms.

[00:35:37] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** It it's very, it's a polarizing issue.

[00:35:42] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Yeah. I mean, it sort of makes me think about too, like, even though there's very broad support for universal background checks and. You know, quote unquote common sense gun laws, like the people who are [00:36:00] well, the NRA, like people who are like very far to the extreme of being anti-gun control, like the NRA, they have a lot, they can pull a lot of weight and like, you know, we've known.

[00:36:11] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** We've been talking for since before Sandy hook would definitely since Sandy hook about like how there is really broad support for, you know, quote unquote common sense gun legislation. And yet, you know, the we're sort of pooled to the, by the anchor of the anti gun control movement. Like they're really driving what actually happens, which means that nothing happens.

[00:36:38] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** I actually think that universal background check example is a good one because the public opinion polls are there are, they are, people are overwhelmingly supportive of some gun control measures and gun safety measures such as universal background check. But then there's a disparity between that and what actually happens in [00:37:00] Congress and this feeling that among some lawmakers that they don't want to alienate their base.

[00:37:10] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** So I think that's, that's that's something that we definitely encountered with this project.

[00:37:19] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Okay. Yeah, that doesn't surprise me, I guess. Cause gun politics in this country are not great to say the least. Cool. Well Anything else we sort of want to leave listeners with or you know, really point out that they should look forward to this year, or, yeah.

[00:37:39] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** What are sort of any closing thoughts you might have? And I know that's a lot of pressure, but

[00:37:43] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** this is such a big sprawling area and we have so much more work to do. We are not going to stop until there's nothing left to say. So I. Completely open to your listeners if they have [00:38:00] ideas. So things that we should think about covering or investigating and yeah.

[00:38:05] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** We'll put that information on your way. Awesome.

[00:38:09] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Sounds good. Yeah. You'll, it'll be on the website in the show notes so you can figure it out and yeah. I want to talk about ideas. I have. So we talked about that when we stop recording.

[00:38:19] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** Yes. Great.

[00:38:21] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Awesome. Well, thank you so much for being here, Jennifer, and thank you for your work.

[00:38:25] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** It's so important and powerful and long overdue, and I'm really glad that someone is giving attention to this. So thank you so much.

[00:38:36] **Jennifer Gollan, Reveal News:** Thank you so much for having me, Katie. It's been a delight to be here.

[00:38:42] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Hey, it's Katie. Thank you for listening to another episode and you will hear from Femtastic soon again.

[00:38:49] **Katie Breen, Femtastic Podcast:** Don't forget to DM me and say hi and let me know you listen to this episode. Thanks, bye.