

Name argumentative essay

[Sociology](#), [Violence](#)



‘ Instructor’s Name’

Pro Gun laws 2nd amendment

There are no two arguments that America loves its guns. The history of this great country is full of episodes of guns being used to defend not just lives, but also defend the values of this land – liberty and equality. The second amendment too acknowledges the need for gun possession for ensuring safety of its citizens. But in no where, in the law books of this country, it is written that, guns should be distributed without any checks.

Easier gun accessibility would increase the chance of gun distribution among criminals and the mentally instable. And it is the duty of the state to ensure that the guns don’t fall into wrong hands. This is the essence of the argument of pro gun control factions, and this essay is aimed at discussing at length why gun control laws are important and are not in violation of the second amendment.

We all have heard and grieved about the Sandy Hook massacre in 2012, where an armed psychopath took the lives of 28 innocent people, including his mother’s and then his own. Within 6 months it was Washington’s turn to suffer gun violence, where 13 people were killed in the Washington Navy Yard on September, 2013. But this is just the tip of the iceberg, and the extent of gun violence in this country is too high to be ignored.

The National Crime Victimization Survey states that close to 4, 00, 000 people were victims of fire arm crimes in the year 2011 alone. Fire arms, especially hand guns, are the causes of most of the murders that take place in America. Number of homicides committed using guns are 11, 547 in the year 2006 and 10, 869 in the year 2008. According to the FBI, 21% of

aggravated assaults, 41% of theft cases and 68% of homicides in the USA are done using a gun. (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2013)

The above data clearly implies that, while the nation mourns the Sandy hook killings and Navy Yard massacre, there are almost similar death tolls mounting on an everyday basis across the country, which does not attract this much attention. To put things in perspective, if we go by the above statistics 25 people (almost equivalent to the number of Sandy Hook victims) are dying every day in this country. No other country on earth has as many guns among civilians as America, and as Henry Potter, argues in his article to the guardian, America today has people, who are better armed and are minimally less nervous than the Syrian rebel fighters. (Potter, 2013)

Yet, despite all these statistics which sends a shiver down the spine of every law abiding citizen of this country, the right wing gun right activists, frown upon any measures to tighten gun laws. Before refuting their claims as baseless, let us first have a look at the reasons gun rights proponents such as the NRA (National Rifle Association), put forward for opposing strict gun laws.

John Lott, in his book “ More guns, less Crime”, advocates that stricter gun laws would only result in delaying the procedure of citizens procuring guns, and this would not reduce crime but empower it. His argument is that the criminals will procure a gun somehow even if the law does not allow them, or else just use some other weapon for the crime. According to him it would just be the law abiding citizens who would be left defenseless, if more restrictions are placed on gun purchase. (Lott, 1998)

Similar arguments are made by other gun rights proponents and their arguments can be summarized into four broad categories:

- Gun possession is a constitution guaranteed right and any restrictions placed would impede the second amendment
- Even automobiles and gas stoves are dangerous, why not ban them
- The media are magnifying the problem out of proportion

The above mentioned points are the essence of the gun rights camp's argument. The staggering statistics discussed earlier in this essay proves both the last two points baseless. There is no artificial situation created by media here, as gun violence is real and happening at some place in the country, as we are speaking about it. And guns are lethal and criminal weapons and cannot be confused with utility machines that inflict injuries only through accidents.

The first two points though warrants a deeper discussion. First let us examine the argument of more guns could stop a crime. Jared Machaud, in his piece, ' Gun Control: The Great Cop-Out', advocates that guns offer safety. He points out to an incident in San Antonio, Texas, where an off duty sheriff, ended a gunman's attempt of launching into a shooting spree, by shooting the assailant. He compares this with Sandy hook, where none of the teachers or authorities had a gun to protect the children, and opines that, may be a presence of a gun there could have spared many a lives.

(Machaud, 2012) But there are two sides to this story. Whilst a gun in the hands of the teachers could have prevented many life losses in Sandy hook, if the gun had not fallen in the hands of the killer in the first place, no life would have been lost. This is the very basic aim of gun control laws.

Coming to the discussion about the second amendment, to understand the rights guaranteed by it, one should take into consideration both the content and context of this right. The amendment says

" A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed."

(Amendment II, United States Constitution)

During the period when the second amendment was proposed in the eighteenth century, the United States did not have a trained army, and the only armed law enforcement personnel were a few small force of officers. So the safety of the entire civilian population was vested with self defense groups carrying guns and patrolling the neighborhood.

Luckily today we live in a modern well connected world, with a trained military and police personnel who are just one call away when an emergency arises. Until 2008 (the case of DC v. Heller), the united States Supreme Court has never stopped the enactment of any gun control law on the basis of the second amendment, which further assures that gun control is not anti constitutional.

Statistics indicate that America has the highest private gun ownership and highest rate of gun related crimes, in the world. A research conducted by the American Journal of Medicine indicates, that prevalent of mental illness in a particular region does not correlate with the gun crimes in that area, but higher gun presence in an area, mostly contributes to more crimes. (Ghose, 2013) So taking guns out of the streets might have a profound impact on gun violence. Also the gun rights advocates should understand the fact that, gun laws are aimed at controlling and not prohibiting gun possession.

The Universal background check, which is the law under debate, calls for background checks for all guns sold on American soil. At present there are no checks for guns sold in trade shows, gun purchased from friends/neighbors and online sales etc. This law just aims at bringing all these sales under scrutiny. This will go a long way in ensuring that guns do not reach the hands of the criminals and insane. So it is not a law which violates individual rights rather a law that ensures the safety of its citizens. Unless a person has a violent criminal background or mental illness, he has no reason to worry about these checks, because the most it can do is a slight procedural delay, which one should endure for the sake of the nation's security.

A poll conducted by the National Journal reflects that, many citizens opionate that, the American public policies should prevent persons with violence crime records and history of mental stability obtaining fire arms. (Bland, 2013) If we take the cases of Sandy hook and Navy yard killings, the perpetrators of both the incidents had problems with their mental health, and such laws might have prevented them holding a gun and taking a shot at those innocent lives.

A free society is not an anarchist society which do not follows any rule. It is a society where everyone lives freely, by willfully obeying the laws of the land, which would safeguard the individual liberties, and at the same time keep its citizens safe and secure. “ Life, Liberty and Pursuit of happiness”, which is the essence of the American Dream is possible only in a society which is free of threats, both internal and external. And laws such as the universal

background check ensure that safety, which will enable its citizens to pursue their dream without any threat to their life or property. .

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