

Gun violence a function of relaxed gun laws essay sample

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



On December 14th, 2012, an agitated young man pulled into a parking lot of the Sandy Hook Elementary school in Newton, Connecticut. Using his high-powered semi-automatic rifle, he shot down 20 kindergarten children and six adults. This incidence was a shame to nation's internal security and suddenly agitated the debate on gun violence. Suddenly, America was asking the question: what is the cause of gun violence in the United States? The answer to this question is not white or black. Still, my argument is that gun violence in the United States is as function of relaxed gun laws in the United States. With stringer and stricter gun policies in the country, gun violence would be a thing of the past.

The number one cause of gun violence in the United States is the ease of acquiring guns in the United States. In the United States, there are 31, 000 gun deaths every year. Included in this figure are 19, 000 suicides. In the city of New York, gun deaths are pervasive, closing in on the national average. Statistics claim that that 51 percent of all suicides in the United States arise from the weaker gun control laws. However, anti- gun control groups such as the National Rifle Association say that if an individual wants to kill him or herself, he or she will do it with a gun or without a gun. Statistics prove this argument a fallacy. The truth is that more than half of all suicides in the United States occur courtesy of guns. Because of this reason, the presence of stiffer gun laws would reduce suicide rates and gun violence in the United States (Webster & Vernick, 2013: p. XV).

The idea of gun ownership in America might be said to originate to the second amendment of the United States constitution. The second amendment reads that “ a well regulated militia is necessary to the security

of a free state, and the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed". The argument here is that while the people have a right to bear arms, the state also has a right for regulation. Unlawful uses of guns, psychos that go on shooting sprees with licensed guns, and hunters that use the gun for the sake of it, are clearly breaching what the constitution clearly outlines in the second amendment. Without regulation, gun ownership secedes into the argument of masculinity as sociologist would put it. The premise of this belief is on the idea of supremacy. An ideal man has to be in charge of other men and other women, As such a man has to exercise control over other men by manipulating them, beating them up and humiliating them. The supremacy of men over other men and women is best demonstrated in the classic American Western movies. The hero is the man who beat up the bad guy with his gun or physical prowess. This man is also a darling of many women. Without regulations, gun ownership could easily come down to this understanding.

Hepburn et al (2004) argued on the article US Gun-Stock: Results from 2004 National Firearms Survey that based on analysis of about 2750 households adults in the United States, 38 percent of which 45 percent were males and 11 percent were females, reported a owning atleast one firearm. Amongst the gun owners, 48 percent own more than four guns, 64 percent of the gun owners have at least one hand gun. Because of this report, it was understood that gun ownership in the United States is pervasive and is increasing every year. As such, allowing the masses to make decisions based on the information from the media is for the most part, a step in the wrong direction. However, does the increase in gun ownership necessarily reflect

increased security?

Research conducted by Hemenway, Solnick & Deborah (1995) Firearms and Community Feeling of Safety, argued that data from national random digit surveys that were conducted courtesy of HICRC argued Americans would feel less safe if members of the community increasingly acquire guns. Most women would feel less safe if they have a history of violence, particularly if a gun was used. Americans in the range of 3 to 1 feel less safe, according to this study with increasing gun ownership. Using epidemiological theory, the gun survey shows an increasing trend where there is a “false positive” that heightens the use of guns for self defense. Particularly prevalent, is the perception that events of gun usage for robbery, homicide, or events of that nature are commonplace and that the use of guns for self-defense thus becomes mandatory. However, research shows that such explanation is null and void as the argument on self defense is both illogical and exploits the premise of bandwagon effect. Data conducted by the national random digital-dial surveys conducted by the Harvard Injury Control Research Center indicated that judges from criminal cases who read self reported self defense cases rated majority of the cases as illegal because they assumed that the respondent had a permit to own a gun and the action was the event was reported honestly from the perspective of the user.

In conclusion, I make a case that the major cause of gun violence in the United States is the absence of stiffer gun control laws. With increasing gun ownership in the United States, the more insecurity becomes pervasive. Increasing gun violence will reduce the guns that falls in the hand of bad people and thus cut on gun violence.

Work Cited

Hepburn, Lisa; Miller, Matthew; Azrael, Deborah; Hemenway, David. The US gun stock: Results from the 2004 national firearms survey. *Injury Prevention*. 2007 13: 15-19.

Hemenway, David; Solnick, Sara J; Azrael, Deborah R. Firearms and community feelings of safety. *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*. 1995; 86: 121-132.

Trend David. *The Myth of Media Violence: A Critical Introduction*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007. Print.

Webster, Daniel, and Jon Vernick. *Reducing Gun Violence in America: Informing Policy with Evidence and Analysis*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins UP, 2013. Print.