

# Applied social psychology and causes: the case of control arms campaign

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During the course of discussions on topics on Social Psychology, I had a realization on the importance of Social Psychology as a school of thought. It dawned on me that the social-psychological school of thought has its relevance on how individuals perceive, create and recreate relationships within and among groups.

One of the most practical applications of the range of topics within this course is in asking what makes the individual tick in a particular group. Personally, social psychology's relevance lies in asking: what drives the individual to act in such a way within a group?

In class, we have been bombarded by a mélange of ideas and concepts that range from complex interpretations of social actions, to trivial and too obvious actions of the individual within the context of his social interactions.

With that said, this paper focuses on the relevance of applying social psychology in social activism especially in the areas of advocacy and campaigns. Specifically, I would like to focus on the individual's support for a particular cause which in this case is an international treaty.

The assumption that I am making in this paper is that the different theories discussed in class are not fragmented concepts to deal with but are all helpful in making social psychology relevant in reality. With that said, the discussion here attempts to integrate the concepts to make a coherent framework with which to approach campaigning for an international treaty.

**Advocacy and Campaigns: The Arms Trade Treaty**

Control Arms (2007) stated that, " There are at least 639 million small arms and light weapons in the world." The leading group campaigning for global <https://assignbuster.com/applied-social-psychology-and-causes-the-case-of-control-arms-campaign/>

measure on arms explains that around two-thirds of these firearms are in the hands of civilians. This implies that if we want peace, addressing the issue of arms proliferation is a very huge leap towards lessening gun-related deaths and in achieving world peace. However, the campaign is not without its setbacks.

Until now, no global agreement on international arms transfers exist, although the relationship is clear vis-à-vis the high number of guns available for civilians and deaths. (Control Arms, 2003). Small arms and light weapons are considered as the new “ weapons of mass destruction,” because guns kill people—innocent civilians, women and children. Guns fuel greaterviolenceand it creates fear and trauma on communities.

Americans are better off than our African and Asian counterparts because we are at peace. Ironically, we are one of the biggest producers of weapons for warfare and the biggest of which is guns.

#### Applying Social Psychology Concepts on Advocacy and Campaigns

One of the initial weaknesses of this campaign is in the lack of public support for it. In the United States, the reactions on an international treaty that regulates arms transfers from one country to another differ greatly. It is bipolar: the pro-guns versus the anti-guns. It is also a crisis of public perception: between what is popular and what people typically approve.

##### A. On Norms

Cialdini (2003) presents what I call a ‘ social form of schizophrenia’ when there is a discrepancy between what people do and what they typically approve of—which are two entirely different characteristics. Furthermore, <https://assignbuster.com/applied-social-psychology-and-causes-the-case-of-control-arms-campaign/>

Cialdini proposed that norms determine actions, and thus, the prevailing norms on gun culture determine people's behavior towards it.