

Case study on gun control in the us

[Countries](#), [United States](#)



A gunman killed six people Tucson, Arizona and in a similar incident, 12 people died after a shooting in Colorado. This is in addition to multiple school shootings, which captured the headlines in the country, and point to even bigger underlying problems related to gun ownership laws, punishment laws, gang culture and partisan politics. The gun-related murders reach as high as 16, 000 annually, with more than five million crimes involving guns (Rogers 1). The self-defence and constitutionally enshrined rights to own guns have for centuries been pitted against the need to create a gun-less society, which is thought to be multiply safer. The political divide has ensured that gun control laws change both in implementation and in formulation of the laws. This paper assesses the gun control issues, gun-related crime and the difficulties of implementation.

The Republicans support every American's individual right to own guns, which they contend is enshrined under the Second Amendment of the Constitution. The Party seeks to protect the great tradition of Americans, including hunting and has sought to push for more public lands to be opened to sport hunting (Baker 78). In addition, law-abiding citizens across the country reserve the right to own and bear arms for self-defence and sporting purposes. The Republican Party was keen on pushing for policies to prevent frivolous lawsuits pressed against gun manufacturers, while at once opposing federal licensing and the national gun registration, which is in violation of the Second Amendment, *District of Columbia v. Heller* and *McDonald v. Chicago*. Effectively, the Republican Party seeks to protect the rights of all citizens to own and bear arms, in part through preventing gun registration policies and laws, which is equally in violation of the individual

citizen's rights (Bergman and Berman 183). According to the Republican Party, the government should seek to expand the people's freedoms and protect the American way of life, which is rooted in gun ownership and sports, and thus besides infringing on the Second Amendment Rights, it is against the American way of life.

In order to promote the Republican Position, the party's media consultants must, and have always sought to build the party's position on the basis of the " American Way of Life", which is heavily rooted in gun ownership (Baker 62). The Party has build its position on the fact that no system of screening can effectively filter out people who should own guns, especially because this changes during an individual's lifetime, and thus such systems would only end up costing the government resources, while not yielding any substantial reductions in gun-related crimes. The cultural and utilitarian value of gun ownership to Americans is far more plausible, and further, the countries that strictly prohibit civilian gun-ownership have had relatively comparable rates of gun-related crime rates, with a few exceptions (Baker 63).

The Democrats are not entirely against protecting the Cow Boy America's gun ownership rights. The Party is committed to protecting the Second Amendment Rights of law-abiding citizens to own and bear arms. However, the party is more pre-occupied with ensuring that the guns do not land into the arms of terrorists and criminals by combating gun-related crimes. The government has pursued policies that reauthorize assaults on weapons' ban as well as curbing the gun show loopholes. In addition, the Party through its

backing and subsequent passing of the Assault Weapons Ban and the Brady Law, it increased the state, local and federal gun crime prosecution by upwards of 22% relative to the 1992 figures. The level crimes prosecution in the United States remain considerably, the rates of gun-crimes' prosecution has increased by as much as 23% since 1992 (Rogers 51). Effectively, the Democratic Party has always sought to enact more policies and legislations to reduce gun-crimes and "illegal" ownership of guns. The Party is just as keen on protecting the American way of life, while at once bolstering increased responsibility in the ownership and bearing of arms.

The GOP spin-doctors have always sought to promote the "guns with responsibility" image, in which gun ownership regulations on ownership, number of bullets, bearing of arms, registration and screening of gun owners in order to prevent illegitimate individuals from owning them. It is important that the media consultants to avoid seeming to be against gun ownership, because the greatest majority of the US electorate own guns and are unlikely to give them up. They however, do realize too, that gun-related crimes are considerable and measures to control them must succeed in order to create a safer country (Cole and Smith 185). In addition, it is crucial to keep the gun control issues as invisible as possible. This issue does not promise any considerable votes to any party, especially given the fact that both parties are pulling in the same direction, and Republicans have a far more stronger and popular position than the Democrats. Effectively, Democrats should keep the gun control issues as low profile as is necessary.

It is estimated that upwards of 300 million guns are owned by civilians in the United States in 2009, according to estimates from manufactures, with upwards of 100 million being handguns. Between 40- 45% of households and 30-34% adults own guns respectively, representing an armed population of between 47 and 80 million (Bergman and Berman 48). Men had a greater prevalence with 47% being armed, as compared to just fewer than 13% of the female population. In addition, 41% of Republicans own guns as compared to 27% and 23% Independents and Democrats, with upwards of 67%, 66% and 41% of the reasons for owning guns being self-protection, target shooting and hunting respectively. However, more than 12, 997 murders committed within the US in 2010 were committed with guns, with handguns contributing to as many as 6, 010 killings (67. 6%) of all murders (Rogers 1).

Further information indicates that 41% of Republicans own guns, as compared 27% of Independents and just 21% of Democrats. The reasons for gun ownership vary widely, with 67% of the responses pointing to self-defence, while 66% and 41% of the responses indicate target shooting and hunting (Browne 26). The level of crimes in the United States has not however been backed up by the levels of gun-related crimes. In 2010, upwards of 16, 232 gun-related crimes were committed in the US alone, with nearly as many being committed in the subsequent year (16, 843). This represents a considerable increase in the number of such murders. In 1994, there were 4, 978 gun-related murders. In addition, more than 6. 7 million violent crimes were committed in the country in 2011, including sexual

assaults, robberies, aggravated assaults and rapes, representing an 8% increase over the previous year's figures (Rogers 1).

The state of California posted the highest number of gun-related murders, with upwards of 1, 253, representing more than 3. 7 people per 100, 000 populations, despite 6. 7% reduction over the previous year's figures (Kates and Mauser 164). The chances of being shot in the United States are four, six and 13 times more than the UK, Germany and Japan respectively. The gun ownership laws, gun ownership and tradition are deeply rooted in the country's culture, which has in turn translated to Washington's policy-making and the effective implementation.

Stringent legislation is crucial, especially when coupled with stern enforcement is important in reducing gun-related crimes, while at once reducing gun ownership by criminals, terrorists and other potential risky population groups. These legislations should include national registration of guns, introduction of rifle permits on purchase or transfer to reduce the probability of the weapons falling in the wrong hands. Multiple elements of such laws already exist, which implies that they will be received in a hostile manner by the electorate, and should effectively be enforced more strictly (Baker 104). Case in point, while it illegal in many states across the United States to bear concealed arms without proper licensing, the laws hardly impose any significant penalties on offenders. The failure of the deterrent role of laws is a major contributing factor to the ineffectiveness of laws. Most Americans realize the importance of reining in gun-related crimes and the rampant ownership of crimes, without infringing the Second Amendment

rights and the American way of life. The Democratic Party has a far more reasonable basis for reducing gun ownership in a practical and efficient manner. The evidence from the introduction of the Three Strikes Laws across different states in the United States has seen an increase in the number of serious crimes, coupled with an increased number of criminal convictions (Bergman and Berman 53). This evidence that legislation works, and will be effective in reducing gun-related crimes.

However, upwards of 41% of Republicans own guns, and are unlikely to give them up for the very reason that gun ownership is entrenched in the American culture. In addition, the criminals and terrorists already have access the guns, and controlling gun ownership among the law-abiding citizens will simply tip the balance in favour of criminals. The statistics in states with gun control laws are not any different from those without such laws (Browne 4). In addition, given the lucrative weapons smuggling and money laundering businesses along the country's porous border with Mexico, any difficulty that will reduce access to guns in the United States would simply increase the smuggling businesses. On the other hand, it is difficult for legislation to force behavioural and social change, especially given the target shooting sports etc is difficult and not only likely to fail, but unlikely to be a favoured approach during an election campaign.

The statistics on gun ownership in the United States are staggering, and only matched by the high and increasing number of gun-related crimes in the country. The realization of the Second Amendment rights to bear arms is restricted by the need not to infringe on other people's rights (BATFE 38). Further, for practical reasons, there are far too many guns in the hands of

civilians, coupled with the fact that the criminals are unlikely to give up their guns or lose access to guns, either by legal means or otherwise. Effectively, the proper gun control policy and approach is the Democratic approach, but a bi-partisan approach is crucially for effectiveness.

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