

Gun control issues

[Law](#), [Criminology](#)



Gun Control Issues The issue of gun control seems to be an ongoing issue that has now become a major topic in news media once again due to the tragic incident that occurred at Sandy Hook Elementary School just a few months ago. With dust now being blown off the topic, debates continue to ensue both politically and socially in regards to what exactly is the best for our country. Are the stricter laws now being overlooked really the best for our country, or are armed civilians going to be what helps these occurrences cease and prove to be less fatal? Although President Obama only hopes to benefit the American people by implementing these laws, it seems after looking over statistics it may not be the most beneficial approach.

Victimization occurs every day to everyone. As people, we are taken advantage of constantly in every manner. Crime Victims written by Andrew Karmen describes victimization as being " an asymmetrical interpersonal relationship that is abusive, painful, destructive, parasitical, and unfair". Although this is true, not all forms of this, such as being overcharged for an item at a store, are illegal. When you begin to focus on the illegal aspects of victimization, you find yourself glancing at victimology. Karmen describes this as being " the scientific study of the physical, emotional, and financial harm people suffer due to their illegal activities". Investigating victimology further, the victims' plight is overlooked, which is narrowing down the impact of the injuries or loss that the victim underwent while the offender committed the crime (Karmen, 2012). With this considered, it is difficult to overlook the sense of defenselessness that comes from crime and the people it affects. Guns seem to solve this issue of helplessness that occurs during crimes. If you know that you have the ability to prevent a causality hooked

onto your belt, chances are you will only benefit from it. More than half of all gun owners stated their possession of a gun is purely due to protection and prevention. The issues arise when the wrong people get a hold of such a dangerous instrument. Gun enthusiasts argue that guns are mere equalizers that have the ability to save lives. On the contrary, individuals that support disarmament seek to restrict gun use due to the fact they are viewed as facilitators rather than equalizers. These facilitators are believed to turn minor conflicts into deadly confrontations. Arguments can be made in favor for both the gun enthusiast as well as the disarmament supporter when looking closely at a recent tragedy, the Sandy Hook Elementary shooting. A single armed individual entered the school with the intent to kill and did just that. It took twenty minutes for police and first responders to arrive after the first call was made. In comparison to an absolutely excellent response being around three to five minutes, it becomes obvious this time is not always available when needed the most. Twenty students of the ages 6 and 7 as well as 6 educators were killed during this time (CNN, 2012). With such a dramatic event occurring, we see ourselves focusing on the "what if" factor. If just one single individual in that elementary school possessed a concealed gun, lives would have been saved. In such a situation it becomes obvious that seconds count when cops are just minutes away. The longer time a shooter is given, the more innocent lives could potentially be taken. Since this tragic incident on December 14, 2012, there have been approximately 3,400 deaths due to gun violence in the United States (Kirk & Kois, 2012). Clearly, there is a problem here. However, the extremist view of eliminating guns is not the answer. The average people shot in mass shootings when a

concealed weapon is not present are fourteen. The average people shot in mass shootings when a concealed weapon is present are approximately two and a half. The places that these massive crimes occur most often: schools. On the surface, the existence of gun free laws pertaining to schools is clearly beneficial; if no guns come in, no one gets hurt. However, considering these are such a crucial area for mass shootings, a different angle needs to be looked at: gun free zones are virtually hunting grounds for the innocent (Correia, 2012). Larry Correia describes this in detail explaining a few examples. He addresses a few of the incidence that have occurred most recently and the benefits of these gun free zones. He describes an event in Texas where the shooter was immediately killed by an off duty officer, which resulted in just a few casualties. On the contrary, he compares this to a recent incident in China, which is a gun free country, where a man with solely a knife stabbed twenty-two children (Correia, 2012). It is obvious that prevention comes down to a concealed weapons presence in the hands of a trusted adult who can prevent the issue from ensuing. The best way to deal with shooters in situations such as this is an immediate violent response that can only occur instantaneously by an individual in the shooters presence with a gun of their own. Based on a 2000 study in the journal of quantitative criminology, close to a million civilians defend themselves in the United States each year against danger. In preparation for this, roughly 45% of American households have a gun and around 35% of adults own a gun. But how affective is this? In a 1982 survey of male felons, 34% of felons have been shot off or threatened while attempting to commit a crime. Likewise, 40% of these individuals did not even undergo the crime they were initially

going to commit due to the knowledge of a gun being present (Agresti & Smith, 2013). Clearly, some difference is made here. Gun control needs to occur, however it needs to do so wisely without going against our rights. Background checks should be administered to filter out those with past violent history. In some states, gun registration is not necessary. I feel as though this needs to be implemented so the government has full knowledge on who has a hold of a gun at all times. With schools being such an important issue, where most mass shootings seem to take place, changes need to be implemented for prevention. Professors should be armed and trained with basic gun safety to cease any growing problem that may occur, because it can be done quicker than emergency response from police (Correia, 2012). It is clear that guns can't be made illegal fully due to the fact it would inevitably raise black market crime and illegal activity to obtain them. It is juvenile to believe that criminals are going to follow gun laws, strictly because they are criminals. Laws that are currently being addressed such as housing the bullets in a separate location will just leave the victim at a disadvantage when being attacked. The problem that needs to be addressed here is the ease in obtaining this weaponry. This can be solved by simply implementing these background tests described above. Of course, someone with criminal intent may still be able to find access to a gun, so if the individual can be stopped by armed civilians that is positive prevention. It is obvious that gun control is an ongoing problem here in the United States, especially when incorporating the recent tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary. Although stricter gun laws are now attempting to be implemented, it seems as though it may not be the only solution.

Background checks to filter out violent criminals is a step in the right direction rather than supporting such an extreme view of eliminating guns all together. In regards to further violent incidents, schools seem to be a target zone regardless of their existence of being a gun free zone. Prevention needs to be the key when dealing with gun issues, and considering all occurrences before, armed professors who are educated on the topic and handling their weaponry would be the key to avoiding further issues. Guns are not going anywhere, legal or illegal, so we need to address the problem realistically rather than avoidance. References Agresti, J., & Smith, R. (2013, February 11). Just facts. a resource for independent thinkers. Retrieved from <http://www.justfacts.com/guncontrol.asp> CNN. (2012, December). Sandy hook shooting: What happened?. . Retrieved from <http://www.cnn.com/interactive/2012/12/us/sandy-hook-timeline/index.html> Correia, L. (2012, December 20). An opinion on gun control [Web log message]. Retrieved from <http://larrycorreia.wordpress.com/2012/12/20/an-opinion-on-gun-control/> Karmen, A. (2012). Crime victims: An introduction to victimology. (8 ed.). Cengage Learning. Kirk, C., & Kois, D. (2012, January 23). How many people have been killed by guns since newtown?. . Retrieved from http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/crime/2012/12/gun_death_tally_every_american_gun_death_since_newtown_sandy_hook_shooting.html