

Gun Ownership and Gun Control Argumentative Essay

Posted on September 17, 2018

Introduction:

Firearms also referred to as guns, are the second most major cause of death in the US, with two-thirds of all homicides being a result of firearms (Baker). Such statistics have initiated a very serious debate on the issue of gun control in many countries, including the United States. The debate on the issue of gun control is one that is everlasting due to the contradicting reasons, which are the need for weapons for protection and their harmful consequences. However, before making any argument about guns, it is essential to ask oneself, what do we really know about guns? How many times have we used a gun or seen it being used in real life? The truth is that for most of us, whatever knowledge we have of guns comes from the movies that we have watched or from the news stories that we have read. So, our knowledge of guns is based on how they are represented in the media, which tends to sensationalize and exaggerate the news to sell it to the people. In a recent incident largely covered by the media, a Dallas man was reported to be involved in a shooting using a licensed gun, only to be later revealed that this man was badly beaten and threatened for his life before he forcefully fired from his gun. Another incident that shows how media manipulates the news and does not tell us the full story is that of Louisiana, where a Japanese student was shot at a Halloween party, showing how keeping guns for defense can be dangerous, although it is reported that even the police “accidentally” ends approximately 330 lives each year.

It is because of this association of guns with violence that the media portrays that it becomes easier for us to view guns as bad. Through the portrayal in the media, we see people killing each other because of the guns, we see guns taking innocent lives, and we see families suffering because of it, and that results in us viewing guns as bad, but are guns really bad?

Main Body:

Guns are for self-defense:

Although news stories do sometimes document the defensive use of guns as well, they do not document it as much as the violence that results from the use of guns. Moreover, since the defensive usage of guns does not cause any harm, it often goes unreported, and hence, people do not get to see the benefit of guns as a defense tool against life-threatening dangers.

(Lott) notes that according to research in countries with tough gun control laws, such as Britain and Canada, the rate of hot burglary crimes is very high as compared to the US, where there are fewer restrictions on gun control. The surveys by Convicted American criminals have revealed that they are more fearful of coming across victims with self-defense guns than coming across the police.

Having a deterring tool does not only benefit the person keeping it for self-defence but it also benefits others. For example as in the hot burglary example given earlier, even if one person in a building or one person in the neighbourhood owns a gun, it can be used to guard everyone else residing nearby as well.

People kill people:

Like it is said, “guns don’t kill people, people do.” It is very easy to blame guns for murders and deaths, just like it is easy to blame sugar for diabetes. However, it is upon us whether we take high amounts of sugar and become diabetic or control our sugar intake to stay healthy; similarly, it is upon us what use we make of the guns. When a person dies because of the gunshot, it is not because of the gun, but it is because of the person who picks up the gun to shoot. Therefore, if, at any point in time, a government of any state finds it necessary to limit the use of guns, the more reasonable option than to simply ban the guns would be to educate people about their right usage.

Official uses of the gun:

Guns are not only used by criminals or civilians, but they are also used by security officials, the police, and the defense forces. Thus, banning guns once and for all is quite impossible. Even if guns are made unavailable to the general public, the trade of guns in a country altogether cannot be banned. Since they cannot be banned, people still may find illegal ways to trade guns with the citizens, and since that way, the government may not even be able to keep basic records of the buyer, it might get difficult to trace the person in case they turn out to be involved in some threatening criminal activities.

Guns are not the only weapons:

Even if, as a result of all the gun control laws, it becomes possible to remove all the guns, will it then be possible to end all the criminal activities? Will it put homicide and suicide to an end? Those who believe so need to realize that guns were only recently invented, but such crimes have existed since the beginning of the development of human societies. Guns can easily be replaced by other lethal weapons, such as knives. The research has shown that while attacking, people may use any object that they find to be the closest, but since any other object may not prove to be lethal and may only result in a few injuries, the statistics do not show other weapons to be as dangerous (Baker).

Removing guns will not limit criminal activities but will indeed save the lives of the people who could otherwise defend themselves using guns. Same goes for suicide, instead of using guns to end their lives people could use substitute methods like jumping from a building, poisoning themselves, laying on the railway tracks etc.

Conclusion:

Gun control is not really a solution to stop the crime once and for all, nor will it help to prevent it. Guns do not fire themselves; it is the people who aim at others, and it is the people who pull the trigger and fire. If not guns, there will be another substitute. People may also smuggle guns across nations through illegal means if they are banned in their country, which again encourages criminal behavior. Those who favor gun control are only emotionally driven to do so (Mauser). Nevertheless, many social scientists have now thankfully started to see this ownership of guns “as a social phenomenon rather than a social problem” and have begun to look into both its costs and its benefits, and I believe that this approach should be considered by everyone before making such strict policies. A government may increase its security for the public to fight criminal activities or may exert stricter regulations for those who buy licensed arms. A government may also ask for a detailed background check before handing over the guns to the public to ensure the safety of its people, but banning the guns altogether may not be the most feasible option.

Works Cited

Baker, Susan P. “Without guns, do people kill people?” (1985): 587-588.

Lott, John R. More guns, less crime: Understanding crime and gun control laws. 2013.

Mauser, Gary A. “Gun control in the United States.” Criminal Law Forum. Vol. 3. No. 1. Kluwer Academic Publishers (1991).