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How to Reduce Gun Violence in America?

Introduction

“We lose eight children and teenagers to gun violence every day. If a mysterious virus suddenly started killing eight of our children every day, America would mobilize teams of doctors and public health officials. We would move heaven and earth until we found a way to protect our children. But not with gun violence.”(Elizabeth Warren, A fighting chance). Gun violence is violence committed through the use of guns. Gun-related violence may or may not be considered criminal. For instance, homicide is a type of gun violence that is considered criminal but many people use guns as self-defense since the 2nd amendment respects their right to use the gun for safety. Gun violence in America has been a never-ending series of tragedy after tragedy. Many innocent lives are constantly destroyed due to mass-shootings, school shootings, and so on. The problem that America has is that gun control is evidently weak which means that people can buy or sell guns with easy access. It is believed that the occurrence of constant gun violence is due to the fact that the gun control system is tremendously poor. How can America increase its gun control and decrease gun violence? These two terms gun control and gun violence literally correlate with each other in reality. How can America learn and accept this concept? Firstly, people in America should neglect the teachings of the 2nd amendment; secondly, America should learn from other developed nations in terms of how they have reduced gun violence; lastly, America should dissolve gun rights advocacy groups such as the NRA.

Source entries

Citation

West, Sonja. “The Second Amendment Is Not Absolute.” Slate Magazine, Slate, 7 Dec. 2015,
slate.com/news-and-politics/2015/12/second-amendment-allows-for-gun-control.html.

Summary

This article talks about the controversy regarding the constitutional rights not being absolute. The author does a good job in comparing between constitutional rights. Specifically, the author compares the 1st and 2nd amendment and how they both are not absolute. Firstly the author gives an example of 1st amendment and states that it is one of the most clearly stated and protected rights in the constitution but in the same page the author also states that speech is not protected if it is intended to harm someone's reputation, contains threat of violence or incites violence and leaks other's information. There were series of debates and supreme court cases regarding the 1st amendment and the new form of speech which is by fact the freedom of expression was established. It is the same case in terms of the 2nd amendment. The author illustrates that the 2nd amendment doesn't support the right of citizens to carry arms for any sort of confrontation, just as we do not read the First Amendment to protect the right of citizens to speak for any purpose.

Reflection

I agree with the ideas stated by the author because the 2nd amendment or any other amendments in the constitution were made when America was starting as an independent nation through the hardship of being colonized by the British. The constitution was created in 1789 and ratified in 1791, so the people living in that era should have had completely different values towards the 2nd amendment than the people of today. The fact that the 2nd amendment was created and listed in the bill of rights is to give people the rights to defend themselves from the oppressive government or maybe a war that might have taken place. However today, we have sectors created by the government to grant security to its citizens and the country such as the police, the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Space Force and Coast Guard. Time changes so as the values towards certain beliefs. As the author states, "Protecting the right to keep and bear arms is not the same as forbidding all regulations on that right. We can protect that right and still require background checks, permits, and training. We can still regulate when, where, and what kinds of guns are allowed. In some cases, we can regulate who can obtain guns, imposing restrictions on, for instance, felons, the mentally ill, and known terrorists. We can ban firearms such as military-style assault weapons that (like child pornography) plainly cause far more harm than they add in value. We can require those who are negligent with their weapons (as we do those who are negligent with their words in defamation cases) to be held liable for the harm they inflict on others. We can do all of these things; we just don't."

The author's writing style shows that Americans can protect their rights to protect arms but they should also be aware of the problem that guns are leading to the demise of

many innocent lives in mass-shootings and school shootings. The American people are the author's intended audience and especially the ones who want to protect their rights to bear arms. The purpose of this article is to bring changes in terms of the value that the Americans have towards the 2nd Amendment, the author intends to show the gun advocator about the controversy that the 2nd amendment is not absolute. The genre is effective since the readers are able to feel the author's tone and informs to bring changes towards the constitutional rights. I know the author is credible due to the fact that the author uses various forms of context to support his reasoning (2nd Amendment is not absolute). For instance, he used the supreme court cases regarding how and when the gun should be used and who can use the guns.

Quotation

"Constitutional rights are not absolute. They never have been and, practically, never can be. In our constitutional democracy, we have always recognized that we can, and must, have our constitutional cake and regulate it too."(Sonja, 2nd Stanza)

"Protecting the right to keep and bear arms is not the same as forbidding all regulations on that right. We can protect that right and still require background checks, permits, and training. We can still regulate when, where, and what kinds of guns are allowed. In some cases, we can regulate who can obtain guns, imposing restrictions on, for instance, felons, the mentally ill, and known terrorists. We can ban firearms such as military-style assault weapons that (like child pornography) plainly cause far more harm than they add in value. We can require those who are negligent with their weapons (as we do those who are negligent with their words in defamation cases) to be held liable for the harm they inflict on others. We can do all of these things; we just don't."(Sonja, 8th Stanza)

Citation

Low, Harry. "How Japan Has Almost Eradicated Gun Crime." BBC News, BBC, 6 Jan. 2017, www.bbc.com/news/magazine-38365729.

Summary

This article talks about how Japan has the lowest rates of gun crimes in the world. In Japan, the process of buying an arm is truly complex. The gun buyer has to attend an all-day class, take a written examination and pass a shooting-range with a score of 95% accuracy. There are also series of mental health and drug tests, they

check the buyer's criminal records and even their relatives. Japan has low gun death rates since the data shows that gun ownership is robustly low. For instance, 0.6 guns per 100 people in Japan compared to 88.8 guns per 100 people in America. Even the police don't use guns in Japan, they learn martial arts and they are mostly black belt in judo, they spend more time in kendo (which is fighting with bamboo swords) than learning how to use guns.

Reflection

I agree with the fact that low gun ownership results in low gun violence because if we look at the data of mass shootings and school shootings in the US, Japan is nowhere close to the US. According to the article, "Only six shots were fired by Japanese police nationwide [in 2015]" (Low 1) which shows us that Japan has strict gun control laws that prohibits the use of guns. I also agree that the hardship that people go through to obtain or buy guns is also the result of less gun violence and gun death rates. What if America has the same process of buying guns? Where people have to attend a series of classes, pass a written test and a shooting test with high accuracy? Japanese people mostly use guns as sports such as shooting, hunting etc. They don't buy guns for self defense. The article also states that, "Japanese police officers rarely use guns and put much greater emphasis on martial arts - all are expected to become a black belt in judo. They spend more time practising kendo (fighting with bamboo swords) than learning how to use firearms."(Low 1) This illustrates that guns are not the only option for self defense, people can learn how to fight without it. This document tells me that the reason behind mass-shooting and school shooting in America is due to the high gun ownership and low-level background checks where they don't even require the buyers to attend classes, take test not pass shooting ranges; the seller just need the buyer's info such as their name, DOB, SSN.

The author's writing style is pretty sophisticated since it contains datas and credible primary quotes. I believe the audience for the author is to the nation that is well developed but are still struggling with gun controls and gun violence. This article in general has been also a voice for the anti-gun advocates that are hoping to see more stricter gun control laws in the United States. This author is credible since he is a journalist for BBC new.

Quotation

"Only six shots were fired by Japanese police nationwide [in 2015]" (Low)

“Japanese police officers rarely use guns and put much greater emphasis on martial arts - all are expected to become a black belt in judo. They spend more time practising kendo (fighting with bamboo swords) than learning how to use firearms.” (Low)

If you want to buy a gun in Japan you need patience and determination. You have to attend an all-day class, take a written exam and pass a shooting-range test with a mark of at least 95%. There are also mental health and drugs tests. Your criminal record is checked and police look for links to extremist groups. Then they check your relatives too - and even your work colleagues.” (Low)

Citation

Press, Associated. “New York Attorney General Seeks to Shut down NRA.” MarketWatch, MarketWatch, 6 Aug. 2020, www.marketwatch.com/story/new-york-attorney-general-seeks-to-shut-down-nra-2020-08-06.

Summary

This article shows that NRA is an organization that actually cares more about money than guns. NYC’s attorney general Lititia James sued the NRA due to illegal conduct that violated the state's law. The attorney stated that the NRA diverted millions of dollars away from its charitable mission for personal use by senior leadership and that her lawsuit charges the NRA as a whole and four senior leaders, including Wayne LaPierre, with failing to manage the NRA’s funds and failing to follow numerous state and federal laws. The lawsuit said LaPierre spent millions of the NRA’s dollars on travel consultants, including luxury black car services, and hundreds of thousands of dollars on private jet flights for himself and his family, including more than \$500,000 on eight trips to the Bahamas over a three-year span.

Reflection

I agree that the NRA is basically a business that involves guns as an object with value. Moreover, America is the nation where its people value the 2nd amendment or right to bear arms. Many American people take the 2nd amendment strictly since their ancestors have been using them to protect themselves for centuries. So people don't want to lose their right to bear arms and they donate money to the NRA. However, Where does half or the 70% of money go? It goes right in the pocket of the leader of the NRA. According to attorney James, “The NRA diverted millions of dollars away from its charitable mission for personal use by senior leadership”, “The NRA’s influence has

been so powerful that the organization went unchecked for decades while top executives funneled millions into their own pockets” and “The NRA is fraught with fraud and abuse, which is why, today, we seek to dissolve the NRA, because no organization is above the law.”(Associated Press) It can be stated that the leaders of the NRA are hypocritical when it comes to the 2nd amendment because they don't care about the gun violence that occurs day by day, they just want to elevate their business and make profit for their own good.

I think that attorney Litita's evidence regarding the NRA's financial crime shows the truth behind the scene of the business that the NRA is conducting. The author's intended audience are the people that are part of the NRA and those who are donating money and supporting the NRA. The genre is effective since the people were able to learn the truth about the NRA in terms of how they spend the donated money. The author accomplishes to show it's reader the reason behind dissolving the NRA. The author is credible since they are using attorney's words to explain the issue about the NRA.

Quotation

The NRA diverted millions of dollars away from its charitable mission for personal use by senior leadership” (

“The NRA's influence has been so powerful that the organization went unchecked for decades while top executives funneled millions into their own pockets”

“The NRA is fraught with fraud and abuse, which is why, today, we seek to dissolve the NRA, because no organization is above the law.”

Conclusion

America is the nation where gun violence is leading to the demise of many innocent lives. In order to reduce this crisis, people in America should neglect the teachings of the 2nd amendment; secondly, America should learn from other developed nations like Japan in terms of how they have reduced gun violence; lastly, America should dissolve gun rights advocacy groups such as the NRA. My understanding of gun violence is that where there is more gun ownership; there is more gun violence. This research made me understand about many factors that led to gun violence such as the weak background checks, the misuse of the 2nd Amendment's value and gun advocates being hypocritical for business and profit. This information is important because I'm also a resident of the US and people are constantly dying in my surroundings as well. The gun advocate needs to know and understand my research because guns were not made for self-defense, it was made to kill. Nevertheless, people

should respect time and live accordingly; the 2nd amendment was perhaps absolute in the past but not today.