The Debate On Gun-Control: Is It Reconcilable?

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A) Introduction

A Brief History of the Gun Debate in America

- 1791 The Second Amendment passed.
- 1837 Georgia banned handguns.
- 1938 Federal Firearms act.
- 1963 John F. Kennedy assassination.
- 1968 Gun Control act.

1,624 shootings in 1,870 days

1,091 Americans killed since 1966

Guns are the leading cause of homicide and suicide in America

Guns are a leading cause of death in US

What are

Deep Disagreements?

Deep disagreements occur when people do not share the same underlying assumptions.

Fogelin (1985) believes that deep disagreements are not rationally reconcilable.

B) Pro-Gun
Argument #1:
Safety

What is meant by 'safety'?

i) Guns **Protect** People

Guns **protect people**, **protect against violence** and **save lives**.

- ◆ More guns lead to more deaths.
- ◆ Guns do not protect civilians.

“We identified and analyzed 62 of them [mass shootings], and one striking pattern in the data is this: In not a single case was the killing stopped by a civilian using a gun” (Follman, 2012)

Guns make people *feel* safe

79% of male gun-owners and **80%** of female gun-owners report owning a gun makes them feel safer (Pew Research, 2013).

- ◆ Gun-owners feel safe only because other people with guns pose a danger.
- ◆ 58% of non gun-owners feel unsafe with a gun.
- ◆ Should governments base policies off of peculiarities of psychology?

ii) Gun-control is **Sexist**

Pro-Gun

“As a woman, I refuse to be a victim & the second amendment ensures I don’t have to be”

(Kaitlin Marie, 22, Kent State University)

Anti-Gun

“A woman’s risk of being murdered increases by **500%** if a gun is present during a domestic dispute.”

(Gerney and Parsons, 2014)

Five women a day are killed by guns in America.

(Gerney and Parsons, 2014)

iii) Gun-control is **Racist**

Pro-Gun

'Black Guns Matter.'

“All gun control is racist.
To attempt to not allow
someone to protect
himself and his family is
[...] is racism.”

(Maj Toure)

Anti-Gun

Police will mistake
harmless objects as
guns more often for
African Americans and
will shoot faster.

(Greenwald, Oakes, & Hoffman,
2002)

*Holding a gun will not help with self-protection in
front of the police.*

iv) The **Tyrannical Government** Argument

“They put the Second Amendment in the Constitution... in order for us individuals to protect ourselves against a power-hungry government.”

(Welna, 2013)

a) High risk

Low reward

Likelihood of encountering a tyrannical government is low while the likelihood of harming someone is high.

b) Futile to Fight

Cannot possibly win against a fully armed government.

c) Vote instead

Take effective action and change the people in power through voting.

v) Guns make **me** feel safe

Why should one person's individual safety be prioritized above everyone else's?

C) Pro-Gun Argument #2: **Rights**

People have the legal, consumer and natural right to own guns.

i) The **National Pride** Argument

Pro-Gun

The American Revolution and gun-ownership is part of America's sense of National Pride.

Anti-Gun

Why take only one part of America's history to be national pride? What about parts such as slavery?

The Second Amendment

Citizens have a legal right to own guns because is
says so in the Second Amendment.

“

*A well-regulated Militia, being
necessary of a free State, the right of
the people to bear arms, shall not be
infringed*

(U.S. Const. Am. 2)

ii) Legal Rights

What is meant by a 'Militia'?

- Civilians?
- Government army

Just because
something is
written...

The Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 and 1850, Art. IV, Sect. 2, U.S. Const., it required that all escaped slaves be returned to their masters upon capture.

This act was repealed in 1864 ("Fugitive Slave Acts," n.d.).

... does not mean it cannot be changed.

iii) Consumer Rights

Citizens should have the right to purchase guns.

- What if those purchases harm others?
 - Ex. Golliwog doll
- Rap music

iv) Natural Right

People have a natural right to own guns.

Natural Right trumped by

- Right to *Life*
- Right to *Liberty*
- Right to *Security*

D) **Anti-Gun Remarks**

Lower rates of homicide and suicide.

1/2 of 650 million civilian-owned guns worldwide are
owned by Americans

25.2%

*Higher gun homicide rates in the
U.S. than other high-income
countries*

Results

Pro-Gun Argument #1:
Safety

Pro-Gun Argument #2:
Rights

Support **Anti-Gun**

E) Conclusions

1. *Guns do not make...*

People

Women

African Americans

Civilians

Individuals

... safer.

2. These arguments are flawed:

- **National Pride**
- **Legal Rights**
- **Consumer Rights**
- **Natural Rights**

3. The pro-gun arguments of safety and rights actually endorse

The Anti-Gun Perspective.

The debate on gun-control is rationally reconcilable.

Thanks!

Any questions?

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Other Concerns