

Gun Control: A Rational Approach Summary

Commentaries abound about gun control using emotional and legal approaches. One approach to the topic I have not read is a rational approach. This is an attempt at such an approach.

Of course, any approach has to account for the existence of the second amendment of the U.S. constitution: "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." To change an amendment is an arduous task, so I assume that the second amendment will remain in force as interpreted by the U.S. Supreme Court, and gun-control laws must abide by it. The current Supreme Court has interpreted that the final phrase of the amendment is independent of the first phrase; a future Supreme Court may change that if carnage due to guns in the U.S. continues to grow.

A rational approach to gun control in designing gun laws might reduce the high death rate due to guns in the U.S. I am creating a web page containing my attempt at a rational approach to gun control:

<http://www.roperId.com/personal/politics/GunControl.htm>. Here I include some of the items in that document.

Data fluctuate with time, but the death rate due to guns in the U.S. is at least three times higher than for any other developed nation; it is about 17 times more than for the United Kingdom and over 7 times more than for Australia, a nation that developed with a "wild west" history similar to ours. It is about 177 times more than for Japan!

There is a very high correlation between percent gun ownership and gun deaths by U.S. states: about +0.76 and high anti-correlation between states' gun deaths and a rating of states' gun laws

(<http://www.bradycampaign.org/sites/default/files/SCGLM-Final10-spreads-points.pdf>) is about -0.53.

Dangerous Scenario: You carry a gun so you can stop a person who is shooting at others. You are walking along and you hear gun shots coming from around the corner of a building. You run around the corner and see two people shooting at each other. At which one should you shoot? Would it depend on the color of the skin or the mode of dress or the sex of the shooters?

Logical Statements:

- A machine gun is not needed to protect a family.
- The more guns people have the more people will be killed by guns.
- The major way to reduce the availability of guns to mentally-ill or criminal people is to have federal universal background checks for ALL gun purchases and transfers.
- It is more dangerous to carry a gun in most social situations than it is to depend on police.
- In most neighborhoods it is more dangerous to have a gun unsecured in your house than it is to depend on police.

Suggested Federal Gun Laws:

1. All future gun purchases can only occur after an extensive background check for the buyer. The purchased gun will be registered in the name of the purchaser with the gun's serial number recorded.
2. There is a federally mandated waiting period after a background check has been made before a purchase can be completed, unless a court order specifies otherwise.
3. A gun can legally be transferred to another person only after the transferee has undergone the same background check of a gun purchaser.

4. Certain rifles will be designated as hunting guns when registered and special conditions are placed on the use of hunting guns.
5. No gun will be sold that can handle clips of more than five (5) bullets.
6. Expanding bullets can be sold only to buyers with special federal permits.
7. Since the Second Amendment states that gun ownership is for the purpose of a well-regulated Militia and the well-regulated Militia of the U.S. is the National Guard, all gun owners are subject to be called upon by the National Guard for service during national emergencies.
8. Permits to carry a gun on a person or in a vehicle will be granted only if federally stated rational reasons for doing so are met.
9. All guns in houses with children in them are required to be locked in cabinets or have automatic locks (smart guns).