

The Second Amendment Problem

The second amendment to the Constitution, as currently interpreted, is a piece of crap. The NRA, largely responsible for that bizarre hijacking of what began as a protection for Southern state slavery, is a subversive organization.

Does anyone find my words too harsh? Harsher than the sound of a bullet tearing through the flesh of a child? I didn't think so.
Let's get specific.

The NRA is an organization that enables and contributes to domestic terrorism, mass murder with firearms, and many thousands of individual firearm homicides every year. Once a relatively benign promoter of gun safety, the NRA suffered a hostile takeover in 1977 by right-wing extremists.

[The hostile takeover of the NRA](#) [SCOT LEHIGH: The NRA's sharp turn to the right](#)

For 40 years these extremists have been propagandizing Americans and bribing our legislators. The right to bear arms, an amendment that has been twisted loose from its original purpose, resulting in a heavily armed population in a society where that is not only useless but dangerous as well, serves to give gun owners a sense of personal power that is only an illusion. It turns them from a part of a society to a collection of individuals, distrusting other individuals, unable and unwilling to cooperate and organize with others to defend their common interests. This, of course, was and is the intention.

The increased level of fear, the growing divisiveness, and the rampant corruption of legislators, both state and federal is eroding the function of, and trust in, democracy. It is important to recognize that the far right really doesn't like democracy. They will use and abuse and manipulate its forms, and take advantage of the freedom it provides, in order to further their agenda. They don't want the will of the people in a healthy responsive democratic system to get in the way of their oligarchy.

The NRA has done more to subvert our democracy and our principles than the Communist Party ever did. It should be declared criminally subversive by law. Consider it a violation of Congressional ethics to accept any donation from the NRA. All legislation known to have been endorsed by the NRA should be reviewed for immediate repeal. The financial relationship between the NRA and all US gun manufacturers and importers should be investigated. For any employment requiring a security background check, the applicant would need to reveal present or past membership.

The Second Amendment was never intended to apply to individual private citizens. It clearly states that its purpose was to enable armed state militias. A Supreme Court with an intelligent majority should have long ago clearly stated that. It is not so much a matter of "conservative" or not, but a willingness and ability to disregard the propaganda and interpret the words as written. Scalia couldn't do that. What would the current court do? Let's find out.

The amendment could have been more clearly written. The others, despite their terse style, left little room for doubt as to their intent or reason for existing, which were mostly self-evident.

The first half of the sentence describes the purpose clearly enough, but does not state why such a guarantee be might thought necessary. That was intentional. The Southerners who insisted on it understood. Those in the north who were not at all pleased about the acceptance of slavery already included in the Constitution's compromises, probably knew as well, but preferred not to have it spelled out.

No other major nation has the firearm violence problem we have created for ourselves over gun obsession.

Let's begin to end it.

Facts:

[1] Individuals who were in possession of a gun were about 4.5 times more likely to be shot in an assault than those not in possession.

[2] For every one justifiable homicide in the United States involving a gun, guns were used in 44 criminal homicides.

[3] The presence of guns in the home increased an individual's risk of death by homicide by 90%.³

[4] Gun ownership is at the lowest level in the United States since at least the early 1970s. In 1973, 47 percent of American households reported having at least one gun. That figure peaked in 1977 at 50.4 percent, according to the most recent report by the University of Chicago. But since then it has trended downward. In 2014, 31 percent of households in the US said they had a gun.

Though there are about as many guns as people, only a minority of Americans own them.

[5] In an analysis of 235 mass killings, many of which were carried out with firearms 22 percent of the perpetrators could be considered mentally ill.

[6] A 2015 study found that less than 5 percent of gun-related killings in the United States between 2001 and 2010 were committed by people diagnosed with mental illness.

So, while it's true that disturbed people shouldn't be allowed guns, they aren't the main problem. It's the guns, and the people who propagandize for proliferation, and those stupid enough to believe them.

For sensible and effective changes to be made, a great deal of public education will be needed. About 20% since 1977 have already realized they don't need to own guns. But even among the 70% who are gun-free, too many fail to question the "right" that some of the 30% claim. Not all gunowners are ideological about it. Many of them may have legitimate practical needs for them, but would not say that everyone should have one.

All of us, especially politicians, need to stop pandering to the phony 2nd Amendment argument. The gun nuts are a misinformed minority, and should be treated like climate change deniers, Holocaust deniers, flat-Earthers, etc. We need strict gun registration, gun-owner licensing, requiring a verified legitimate purpose as well as a background check. Non-official carrying in public places should be banned. That would be a start.

-cosmicrat 2/19/2018