

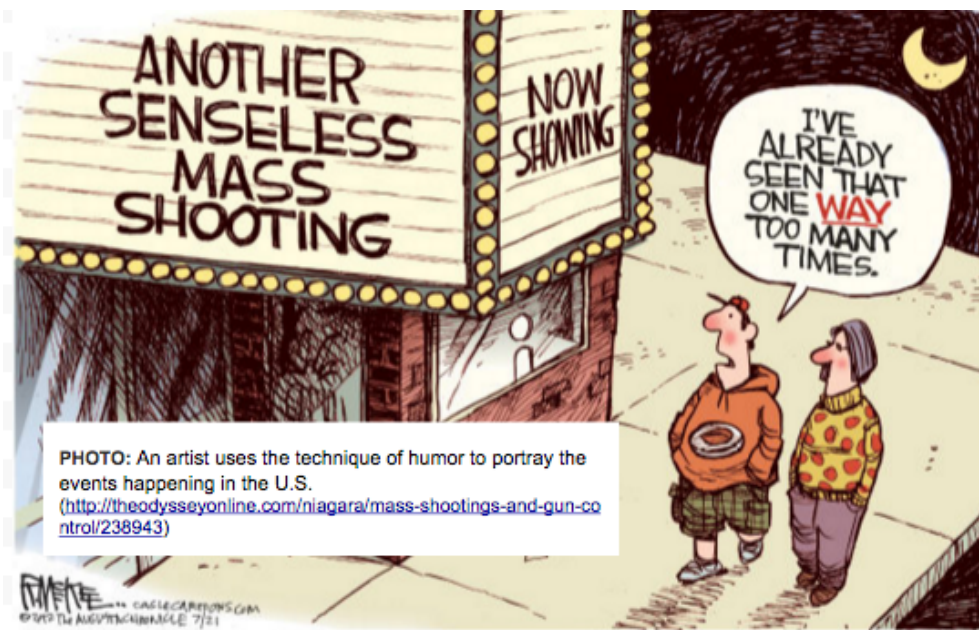
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Title: Domestic Firearm Violence Hits Too Close to Home

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Imagine: the waiter returns to the table with a notepad, ready to take your order. When suddenly, the deafening screams of an explosion drill into your mind. Panic flooding your veins, fear escalating into terror. Bullets pound the bodies of human beings, just like



you and me. On December 2, 2015, fourteen people were killed and twenty one injured in a terror attack consisting of a mass shooting and bombing at the Inland Regional Center in San Bernardino, California, United States. *Imagine: the fumes of burning*

flesh flooding the air. This scenario is all too well known, and needs to be eradicated from modern society. Now. **Despite the Second Amendment, the United States government is obligated to act immediately and enforce uncompromising gun laws in order to stop domestic firearm violence.** **Weak gun laws and easy access to firearms in the U.S leads to an abundance of mass murders that is scarce in other advanced regions. Furthermore, America would be a safer, healthier society without guns.** *Imagine: the banshee wails of the people who survived, and then cut-off by screams of people who did not...*

Meanwhile, 2 months ago, a study was conducted by *HLN News*, lead by John Sarlin, a senior correspondent of the company. The study linked mass shootings and homicide rates to overall gun possession in 7 different countries. Starting in 1997, Japan has had 0.6 guns per 100

people, and the United States? 88.9 firearms. Meanwhile, massacres: Japan has come in contact with 0 massacres since the year 1997, but America had 3, in 1997 alone. Since 1997 there has been 51 mass shooting in the United States of America. Along with that, homicide rates. It has been noted that there is only about 1 firearm homicide per 10 million people in Japan. Meanwhile, the USA has about 401 homicides per 10 million people. In 18 years there has been approximately 540,000 homicides in America. That's more lives lost than World War 1 and World War 2, combined. It's obvious that guns are only subsidizing the issue of deaths in America. The fact that guns are legal, is one of the main factors, if not the only contributor, to the problem of homicides and mass murders in the United States, which is nearly impossible in other developed countries. This shows that the United States should follow in Obama's lead and embrace stronger firearm restriction laws. After the Charleston shooting which took the lives of 9 innocent bystanders,

Barack Obama said: "At some point we as a country will have to reckon with the fact that this type of mass violence does not happen in other advanced countries." It is one hundred percent possible that we can take that final leap and ban guns from the United States. If this ultimate stride is taken, it will completely deny the



PHOTO: A memorial for the fatalities in the Virginia Tech shooting, in Blacksburg, Virginia. (<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-12-03/major-shootings-in-the-united-states/6996966>)

possibility of gun massacres, murders, and random deaths. Not only is this a huge step for safety across the USA, and a huge step for citizens and politicians alike, but a huge step for all of mankind as one, as we make the United States of America, a greater nation, and a safer, and more secure country.

In all honesty, even in Singapore, the safest country in the world, the remorseless waves, ruthless tremors, and merciless blows of mass shootings are still felt. 9,500 miles away, the damage is still real. When interviewed, our friend and classmate Sophia Stuckman told of a time when her mother was in a shooting. In her words, the experience was "Terrifying. My mother told me about it afterwards, and I was petrified. The shooting was no more than a block away from our house in Pennsylvania, America. My mom was so close she could see the person with a gun. All

she heard was a gunshot, and then she had to dive under a vehicle to be safe. The sole shooter even walked past the vehicle she was crouched under, but (s)he didn't fire at her. Since then, I've always been on edge in America, always unsure." Her dialogue only proves that the consequences of guns are so large scaled and so hard to ignore, that 140-160 decibels (the average noise a gun being fired makes), can be heard worldwide, because it affects everyone, everywhere. And Sophia is not the only one.

Furthermore, according to the article "Stronger Gun Control Laws Will Save Lives" from



PHOTO: Those who have been personally affected by gun violence petition and spread their wanting of stronger gun laws through car magnets and sticks. (<http://store.everytown.org/products/change-gun-laws>)

LCAC.org by Christine Watkins, author and editor, guns kill 30,000 and injury 70,000 annually. Additionally, guns are used in 400,000 crimes each year. The U.S. alone owns 270 million firearms, which is approximately 90 guns for every 100 people, as said by Watkins. She also stated that studies have repeatedly shown that a gun in the home increases the risk of firearm-related death or injury to a household member. Moreover, the study reports that instead of using firearms as self defense, guns in homes are more likely to be used in accidental shootings, criminal assault or suicide attempts. Besides, common sense tells us that putting more guns into the hands of civilians will only escalate daily arguments into life-threatening situations. Firearms are unethical, unprincipled, and nefarious, and they do nothing but harm to our society. The US government should enforce stronger laws without loopholes, have more frequent background checks on rifle purchasers, tighten restrictions. If the United States enforced stronger gun laws, there wouldn't be the massive amount of bloodshed there is currently. Can you imagine if the laws for guns were as strict as they are for cars? In order to have a car, you must have a permit, and in order to use a car, you have to have a driver's permit, and to get legal rights, you have to take a oral test, a written test, and you must learn how to use it first. If guns were as regulated as cars are, mass shootings wouldn't be a problem. For example: according to the video titled "Guns in America vs. The rest of the world" by CNN Money published on Oct 2, 2015, Australia has fifteen guns per one hundred people. Yet due to its draconian gun laws, Australia has had zero mass shootings since 1997, as reported by the video.

An amendment - a minor change or addition designed to improve a text, or piece of legislation. There have been 27 amendments, over the years where times have changed, and



therefore the laws “have been mended.” On another school of thought, the Second Amendment, ratified in December of 1791, provides U.S. citizens the right to bear arms, stating: “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.”

According to Wikipedia, “The Second Amendment was based partially on the right to keep and bear arms in English common-law and was influenced by the English Bill of Rights of 1689. Sir William Blackstone described this right as an auxiliary right, supporting the natural rights of self-defense, resistance to oppression, and the civic duty to act in concert in defense of the state.” Everyone knows that in the 1800’s countries would try to dominate other countries, and so the Americans would be justified in wanting to have an amendment protecting their right to guns. When the British invaded they persecuted all the Americans, and in order for American citizens to be able to protect themselves, they needed firearms. Guns played a key role in protecting citizens, and the Second Amendment are one of the few strongholds in our history that still stands. If we enforce stricter gun laws, Americans will be barred from the freedom which is entitled to them. Yes, the Second Amendment may have been fully functional for a 1791 America, because the conditions, circumstances, and setting were different two hundred years ago. Nonetheless, it is not 1791 anymore, and America doesn’t need to defend itself against the invading Europeans. It is common knowledge, that countries do not go around trying to colonize other countries anymore, and that is just one reason why the Second Amendment is no longer relevant to our everyday lives. It is obvious that this position is incredibly short sighted as they the writers did not envision what happens in modern day society - the perverted use of firearms, including murder, massacres,



and war. Furthermore, a new study by *University of Chicago’s National Opinion Research Center*, stated: “The amount of households who

own guns decreased from 1973 to 2013. Three decades ago, 50 percent of households owned guns, in 2013, just 32 percent do.” In addition, an article in the Huffington Post, called ‘Forget the Second Amendment’ written by Edward Corcoran, a Strategic Analyst, from U.S. Army War College, states that “There have been major advances in gun technology. Guns are no longer single-shot, muzzle-loading weapons firing low-velocity lead balls”. This means that the power of guns has been radicalized, this proves that the Second Amendment was written *in* a different era, *for* a different time period. As John F. Kennedy stated in 1962 : “Those who make peaceful revolution impossible, make violent revolution inevitable.” completely discouraging the Second Amendment. How is it discouraging it? Well, it points towards the fact, that it would also be tougher to have this violence, without firearms. Peace is the only way to go about life, as shown by Martin Luther King, Mahatma Gandhi, and Mother Teresa. But the presence of guns simply makes this peaceful revolution impossible to achieve, with multiple sided views clashing, and fighting, with guns, when they could be using beneficial words.

Firearms are the Pandora’s Box of America. In order to stop all the futile slaughter, the United States needs to implement stronger gun laws. Despite the Second Amendment, the only way for America to lock its Pandora’s Box is to invoke more secure gun laws. *Imagine: the same restaurant as before, but this time, no gunshots are heard, no bombs are blowing, in fact, not a weapon in sight.* Guns are used in 400,000 crimes each year, according to an article from LCAC.org by Christine Watkins, do you want to be one of those? *Imagine: the waiter takes your order, returning to put down your plate of fries and a cheeseburger.* More lives have been lost from homicides in the last 18 years in America alone than the first and second world wars, combined. *Imagine: A day when you don’t have to listen to the radio drone on about another mass shooting, or watch the horror unfold, the sorrow and dejection written on the faces of those who have lost loved ones, imagining a day when you might be one of them...* The United States of America has a 12 times higher death rate by guns than Japan, another advanced country. *Imagine: a day where the 28th amendment was written, an amendment about enforcing much stronger gun laws, or even better, banning firearms altogether, utterly countering the second.* The United States needs a 28th amendment to repeal the Second Amendment - they are in desperate need to heal the wound that the outdated 2nd amendment has left behind.

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Rubric rating submitted on: 12/17/2015, 10:36:58 AM by rbuxton@sas.edu.sg

	1	2	3	4
Structure Your score: 4	The writer pointed to the issue in the lead, but does not develop a specific claim, an engaging hook, and/or a larger context.	The writer wrote a lead that led to a claim or thesis, but the reader is left with some questions of context or why she should care.	The writer began with an interesting lead that explains the backstory behind the argument and gets the reader to see her point; the nuanced claim is clear what her piece would argue and what possible parts of the argument are.	After hooking the reader, the writer provided specific context for her own as well as another's position(s), introduced her position with a nuanced claim, and oriented readers to the overall line of argument she would develop.
Structure Your score: 4	The writer used only ordinary transitions (i.e., first, second, third) or none at all.	The writer used transitions to lead the reader from one part to the next, although some transitions are basic.	The writer used transitions to link the parts (i.e., claim, counterclaim, giving a reason, offering or analyzing evidence)	The writer used transitions to lead readers across parts of the text and to help them know how parts of the text

			of her argument and help the reader follow from part to part.	relate back to earlier parts.
Structure Your score: 4	In her conclusion, the writer repeated the main ideas briefly and/or ineffectively	In her conclusion, the writer reinforced the main points but needed to develop the significance or greater implications a bit more.	In her conclusion, the writer reiterated how the support for her claim outweighed the counterclaim(s), restated the main points, responded to them, or highlighted the significance.	In her conclusion, the writer described the significance of her argument for stakeholders or offered additional insights, implications, questions, or challenges.
Structure Your score: 3	The writer used basic or confusing structures within and across the piece without considering the order or effect on the reader.	The writer grouped information and related ideas in paragraphs and put them in order that makes sense in general.	The writer purposely arranged an organizational structure(parts of her piece within the whole) to suit her purpose and to lead readers from one claim, counterclaim, reason, or piece of evidence to another; she used topic sentences transitions and formatting to clarify the structure of the piece and to highlight her main points.	The writer organized claims, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence into sections and clarified how sections are connected; the writer created an organizational structure where sections build on each other in a logical and compelling fashion.
Meaning Your score: 4	The writer included limited information. Claim missing or unclear.	The writer included varied kinds of evidence, but some of the information may not fit or support the topic.	The writer included varied kinds of evidence(ethos, logos)such as facts, quotations, examples, and definitions. She analyzed or explained the reasons and evidence, showing how they fit with her claim(s) and build her argument.	The writer brought out the aspects of the argument that were most significant to her audience and to her overall purpose(s).
Meaning Your score: 4	There is no counterclaim	There is a hint of a counterclaim idea,	The writer wrote aboutanother	The writer wove in a counterclaim and

	mentioned.	but it needs to be developed.	possible position or positions--counterclaim(s)--and explained why the evidence for her position outweighed it.	explained its faults in a way that convinces the reader.
Meaning Your score: 4	The writer made no mention of sources of information.	The writer incorporated some sources that make sense while some may not or may go unmentioned.	The writer consistently incorporated and cited credible trustworthy sources.	The writer incorporated trustworthy and significant sources and explained if and when a source seemed problematic.
Meaning Your score: 4	The writer did not communicate why the topic is important to readers	The writer worked to make her topic understandable, but it may be unclear why the audience should care about it.	The writer worked to make her argument compelling as well as understandable. She brought out why it matters and why the audience should care about it. (pathos)	The writer analyzes the relevance of the reasons and evidence for her claims as well as for the counterclaim(s) and helped readers understand each position. The writer made sure all of her analysis led readers to follow her line of argument.
Craft Your score: 4	The writer used common language to explain her ideas.	The writer used a few words or phrases purposefully to affect meaning and tone, but a bit more could be developed.	The writer used words (pathos) purposefully to affect meaning and tone, including domain-specific, technical vocabulary and their definitions when appropriate.	The writer chose particular language to make the reader learn, think, realize, or feel a particular way.
Craft Your score: 4	The writer worked to make her topic understandable, but it may be unclear why the audience should care about it.	The writer included a comparison, an example and/or an anecdote, but a bit more could be developed.	The writer chose precise details and used metaphors, anecdotes, images, or comparisons to explain what she meant.	The writer consistently used comparisons, analogies, vivid examples, and/or anecdotes to help readers grasp the meaning of concepts and the significance of information.
Craft Your score: 4	The writer's voice and tone is ordinary.	The writer's voice and tone glimmers in a part or two.	The writer used a formal tone but varied it appropriately to engage the reader.	The writer's voice shined; she may have varied her tone to match the different purposes of different sections of her

				piece.
Language Your score: 4	The writer left many misspellings which affect the reading of this piece. The writer used similar and/or limited sentence structures. The writer misused or left out basic internal and end punctuation.	The writer spelled correctly for the most part. The writer varied her sentence structure, sometimes using simple and complex sentences. The writer used internal and end punctuation appropriately for the most part.	The writer spelled accurately throughout. The writer varied her sentence structure, sometimes using simple and sometimes using complex sentence structure. The writer used internal and end punctuation appropriately (i.e., within sentences and when citing sources, including commas, dashes, parentheses, colons and semicolons).	The writer spelled flawlessly throughout. The writer used different sentence structures to achieve different purposes throughout her piece. The writer used internal and end punctuation effectively throughout.
Language Your score: 4	Advanced subjects and predicates are missing. Opening and delayed adjectives are missing. Membean words are missing.	Most subjects and predicates are basic with just one or two examples of advanced constructions. Only one or two opening or adjectives appear in the piece. Some Membean words appear but are not always correctly used	Some subjects and predicates and parallel structure used in the piece. Some opening and delayed adjectives used but infrequently. Membean words appear correctly used.	Advanced subjects and predicates and parallel structure sprinkled throughout the piece. Multiple examples of opening and delay adjectives can be found perfectly integrated into the piece. Membean words are integrated perfectly. Correlative conjunctions are present.
Research Your score: 4	Work cited is missing. Only 1 or two sources are used.	Work cited is not complete. 2-3 sources are used.	Work Cited is complete. More than 3 sources are used.	Work cited is complete and in alphabetical order. Five + sources are used.

Comments: