

FREEDOMISM

Randomly generated opinions

In the United States, gun rights are an unusually controversial subject. America's mixed relationship with the sale of weapons is rooted in its Bill of Rights, dating back to 1791, in which the second amendment to the Constitution states:

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.

Over the decades the correct interpretation of this amendment has been debated greatly. Advocates of gun rights claim the second amendment guarantees citizens the right to keep and bear arms with few limitations, while those concerned with such deregulation claim the second amendment reserves the right to bear arms to militias, not strictly to individuals. The historical debate, which in modern times has become increasingly fiery, has split the United States on party lines. The Democrats and other center-left third parties believe the government has the right to regulate the sale of guns, while the center-right Republicans and their more extreme inner faction, the Tea Party, strongly oppose most types of limitation on weapons sales. Both sides have valid points on the issue:

Democrats	Republicans
Relaxing laws on the sale of weapons will only enable criminals to obtain them more easily; guns must be regulated to protect the public.	Citizens of the United States have the right to defend themselves and their property; the sale of guns must be deregulated as much as possible.

I believe Republicans are completely correct in their defense of gun sales in the name of personal defense. Residents of the United States must be allowed to defend themselves in times of need, especially those who live in more crime-ridden cities and neighborhoods. One cannot and should not trust police forces to quickly handle every situation — there are too many incidents where people have been victimized and even killed because security forces could not get to them in time.

However, this does not mean the Democrats oppose purchasing guns for means of self defense. Time and time again "the left" has come out in defense of the right to possess guns. The main difference between the two parties is not simply "ban all guns" and "sell all guns", it is how much regulation should be placed on sales. Democrats are correct that unmonitored sales of weapons pose a threat to the public. There are two categories of weapon: those appropriate for lawful activities such as hunting and self-defense, and weapons that go too far. The only appropriate use for assault rifles, snipers and other "extreme" weapons is in the military. Normal law-abiding citizens who wish only to defend themselves in time of need have no valid reason to call for the sale of such dangerous weapons. A simple pistol or other small weapon will do enough damage in a self defense case, and a plain old rifle is enough to kill an animal. Calling for the unrestricted sale of assault weapons that one would normally only find used in the Army is going overboard.

Pro-gun organizations such as the National Rifle Association (NRA) have to understand that there is a fine line between protecting one's right to defend themselves and enabling dangerous criminals to go on killing sprees, as we have seen too many times in the past. An internal debate in the gun rights fiasco is concealed weapons: whether people should have the right to carry a gun concealed on their body to defend themselves outside of their homes. While some liberals argue that such laws would encourage criminals to hide guns on their person, it really depends on how the policy is put into effect. For example, after a concealed gun law was put into effect in Texas in 1995, violent crimes subsequently dropped¹. The law required those who wished to carry concealed weapons to obtain a permit first, which may have prevented sketchier people from hiding their guns. However, if a concealed gun law is put into effect without safeguards to prevent criminal misuse, it will most likely turn out deadly.

In conclusion, guns have a unique standing in American society and should be treated with a mix of both political views. Self-defense is an essential right, however there is a point where too much deregulation can put the safety of the populous at risk. Gun laws must be carefully tailored so they protect the individual without sacrificing the security of the community.

1. Williamsen, Kurt. "Concealed carry law and crime in Texas" The Free Library 03 April 2006. 21 July 2010 <[http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Concealed carry law and crime in Texas-a0144563309](http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Concealed+carry+law+and+crime+in+Texas-a0144563309)>.