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## Can Gun-Laws Legislate Human Nature?

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# Can Gun-Laws Legislate Human Nature?

## **Abstract**

In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"Children and staff are slaughtered in an elementary school by a crazed individual armed with an assault weapon on the heels of several other incidents of mass murder; the reactive response from governmental authorities is to seek a ban of the type of guns whose only appropriate place is in the military arsenals. The response from the public? Hurry to buy them up before the ban is made law. Cry out that such a ban is unconstitutional as the second amendment provides American citizens a right to bear arms. Have the NRA speak out that it is not the weapons but the mentally ill, the culture of violence, the breakdown of the family that are the real culprits, and underscore a further need for one to "protect oneself". We have gone mad and now we cannot figure a sane way back to civilized living. At the time of the drafting of the Second Amendment these rapid-fire automatic weapons capable of multiple murders in a flash were not yet invented; so it is hard to cover their ownership under a document written before their invention. The real underlying issue is the age-old question of good vs. evil. It has woven its way through the fabric of humanity from the earliest conflicts, through the rise and fall of empires built on the destruction of others, to the carnage going on all over the world today. The difference in the modern-day times is that it is now in our homes, music, movie theaters, and TV shows gradually infiltrating the souls of young children and desensitizing them to the reality of what violence really is. The blur between the virtual world and the real world has caused the insanity of not knowing the difference. Decades of saturating all forms of media with gruesome gore and unbridled violence whose perpetrators are glorified has finally climaxed into what we witnessed in Denver, Newtown, Webster and so many other incidents of horrific brutality with guns and assault weapons in the hands of those whose minds have been twisted, numbed and addicted to the violence they saw while growing up in a society that normalized it by its very acceptance in all forms of "entertainment". Think about that for a minute, Entertainment! To enjoy seeing extreme acts of cruelty, annihilation, barbaric slaughter of the most graphic kind! Create games that allow the player to virtually participate in these acts of violence whose sole purpose is to evoke a thrill at accomplishing a heinous act of hunting down, killing, dismembering, exploding other human beings. And you wonder why those raised on a diet of this soul-destructive material turn out to be "mentally ill"? Why isn't it normal to love to kill? That is what the media tell us, seek out and kill anyone who offends you in any way. The end justifies the means."



*From Our Guest Writer*

## **Can Gun-Laws Legislate Human Nature?**

Children and staff are slaughtered in an elementary school by a crazed individual armed with an assault weapon on the heels of several other incidents of mass murder; the reactive response from governmental authorities is to seek a ban of the type of guns whose only appropriate place is in the military arsenals. The response from the public? Hurry to buy them up before the ban is made law. Cry out that such a ban is unconstitutional as the second amendment provides American citizens a right to bear arms. Have the NRA speak out that it is not the weapons but the mentally ill, the culture of violence, the breakdown of the family that are the real culprits, and underscore a further need for one to “protect oneself”. We have gone mad and now we cannot figure a sane way back to civilized living. At the time of the drafting of the Second Amendment these rapid-fire automatic weapons capable of multiple murders in a flash were not yet invented; so it is hard to cover their ownership under a document written before their invention. The real underlying issue is the age-old question of good vs. evil. It has woven its way through the fabric of humanity from the earliest conflicts, through the rise and fall of empires built on the destruction of others, to the carnage going on all over the world today. The difference in the modern-day times is that it is now in our homes, music, movie theaters, and TV shows gradually infiltrating the souls of young children and desensitizing them to the reality of what violence really is. The blur between the virtual world and the real world has caused the insanity of not knowing the difference. Decades of saturating all forms of media with gruesome gore and unbridled violence whose perpetrators are glorified has finally climaxed into what we witnessed in Denver, Newtown, Webster and so many other incidents

of horrific brutality with guns and assault weapons in the hands of those whose minds have been twisted, numbed and addicted to the violence they saw while growing up in a society that normalized it by its very acceptance in all forms of “entertainment”. Think about that for a minute, Entertainment! To enjoy seeing extreme acts of cruelty, annihilation, barbaric slaughter of the most graphic kind! Create games that allow the player to virtually participate in these acts of violence whose sole purpose is to evoke a thrill at accomplishing a heinous act of hunting down, killing, dismembering, exploding other human beings. And you wonder why those raised on a diet of this soul-destructive material turn out to be “mentally ill”? Why isn’t it normal to love to kill? That is what the media tell us, seek out and kill anyone who offends you in any way. The end justifies the means.

The issues behind our society gone mad are so complex and intertwined that it is hard to differentiate how one is separate from another. The breakdown of the family is certainly a good place to start because ask any kid why he or she is sad and most often it is related to heartache in the family. If it is not divorce, it might be domestic violence, or an alcoholic or drug addicted family member, or parents absent because of career commitments, or too much time in day care only to come home to parents too stressed out to cook a meal, read a story, or hold a hand. Consumerism has had its part in changing the focus of living to achieving happiness and well-being to believing that amassing material objects will accomplish that goal. So the family experience is one of members rushing past each other with no time to look into each other’s eyes, to see if all the rushing is really worth it

Added to the drift from the spiritual to the material is the decline in affiliation/participation in a religious faith that calls for regular attendance at a church, temple or mosque. Many have fallen away from the religious practices of their childhood for a variety of reasons: disenchantment with dogma viewed as antiquated or no longer rationally acceptable, perceived discrepancies between articles of faith and modern scientific truths, abandonment of the rigor of religious practice in favor of the fun offered by the entertainment world whose content is often at odds with religious doctrines; no time for God in a busy schedule, a culture that normalizes much of what church frowns upon, an educational system that has numbed-down the mind and soul in favor of the easy answer. Secular progressives have convinced many

that organized religion is outdated, harmful to the psyche and unnecessary to be happy in the modern world. A world that supports aborting babies, sexual permissiveness and craves crude and violent entertainment. Just look at the movie listings to see what you are in for in most cases. Art mirrors culture. So many kids are at a loss to discuss anything meaningful and ask themselves very few philosophical questions. Too busy texting nonsense all day long. Of course, we now have a generation of young teachers who have grown up in this culture and behave in the same immature ways. And so do many young parents who text while driving with their babies in car seats in the rear. So many degrees, so little intelligence.

The internet has really put the test of good versus evil in everyone's face as we are free to bring whatever interests into our presence privately and for the most part anonymously. In other words, you can find whatever you are looking for. Unfortunately, the mentally ill, socially depraved, criminally oriented folks now have whatever they need at their fingertips to feed and deepen their pathology in secret. Violent, crude, pornographic material, networks of sexual predators, terrorist affiliations, accessibility to underground and black market illegal purchases, have made the world a much a more dangerous place. And children who are not supervised have access to all of it, robbing them of their innocence at a very early age and arousing them to seek more hard-core material as they surf along. A lot of depravity is born here and shows up in criminal acts sooner or later.

So will stiffer gun laws solve the problem of mass murders? It is a laughable argument in light of the fact that over three hundred million of these weapons are already in circulation in America. The horses are out of the corral and will never be reined back into confinement. Who turns in guns on those voluntary surrender days? Certainly not someone with a plan for their use! I guess we have been so numbed-down that we cannot even see how ridiculous it is to believe that gun laws will stop gun crimes. More tax money will be spent on trying to carry out a law that is doomed to fail. We have stringent drug laws, so why is there such a rampant drug problem in this country? Because people can get whatever they want on the black market, even easier today because of the internet. Perhaps the only deterrent might be stiffer penalties for perpetrators – longer sentences and no parole; harsh consequences that protect the

public from further risk; sentences with teeth. This, however, will not faze the mentally ill who do not value any life, not even their own. So the answer goes back to culture. We need to change our culture from one that delights in vicariously participating in dark entertainment to one that seeks the richness of that which raises the spirit, creates joy, fosters positive relationships, elevates the intellect to entertain important questions, finds worth in achievement, laughs often but not at others' expense, and works for the common good. We need a renaissance of what it really means to be human, to use the miracle of mind and soul to seek improvement, growth, answers, love, knowledge, justice and refinement of thought to leave a better world behind than the one we found. Only then will America's fascination with guns and violence be tamed and its children have a chance to pursue happiness in a safe and nurturing world. The question really is: "Can we go back to family, faith and rigorous education?" Or has is cancer of complacency and depravity terminal?



*Mary Ann Sementelli-Tomei*

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