

The USA is The Only Country Where There Are More Firearms Than People. Why Curbing Gun Violence Is Not Succeeding

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The USA in the only country in the world where there are more firearms than people.

46% of all households have a firearm. This is the average. In some places this can be over 60%.

About 48,000 people die in gun-violence in a year, the majority of this being suicide cases.

When seen in the context of comparable rich countries, the US gun homicide rate is about 25 times higher while gun suicide rate is about 10 times higher.

For every victim of shooting who dies, there are more than double the number who go to emergency rooms in hospitals for the treatment of their injuries.

Over the years, the number of those killed or seriously injured in gun violence continues to accumulate. In surveys, one out of five Americans have stated that a family member or someone very close has been fatally shot.

However the harm done by excessive number of firearms goes much beyond the actual shootings. Many people in certain communities say that due to the excessive number of people having or carrying firearms, they live in perpetual fear and their life has become much more stressful than it would otherwise be without so many guns. Even within families the life of several family members is very adversely affected, particularly of women in families with a history of domestic violence. Schools have also come under the shadow of the stress caused by the wide spread of gun violence and gun culture, including most

students as well as teachers.

While there is wide concern over the easy availability of guns and bullets, those people and social movements who have been campaigning against such easy and widespread availability of guns have not been successful so far in reducing the presence of guns and the supporters of easy and unhindered gun availability are known to be politically influential and powerful. They are known to often take very aggressive positions.

While there is obvious need to curb gun violence and the wide presence of guns and gun culture, supported by gun movies and other popular media, some other important questions also need to be raised. These relate to why such popular gun culture flourishes, who fuels it and why such a large number of people feel the need to have so many firearms. Unless such broader questions are also examined sincerely, it may not be possible to reduce the demand for guns and the supply of guns.

Of course the industry which feeds on the sales of such huge numbers of guns and bullets on a continuing basis is also likely to acquire a strong interest in such continuing sales and these powerful economic interests may also be fueling popular gun culture and keeping the demand and supply of civilian firearms at a very high level.

However there are also factors beyond this which also need to be considered. The aggression of the US establishment abroad has to be matched by a popular culture of aggression at home as these two trends feed off each other. It appears that maintaining and popularizing aggressive cultures, using Hollywood movies and other devices, is considered desirable by the establishment to create domestic perceptions and thinking that are supportive towards external aggression.

The military industrial establishment, which has emerged as a powerful force, is also fine with the continuation of external as well as internal aggression, both being supportive of each other.

Hence while gun control efforts and campaigns are obviously justified and deserve the support of people, these may not be able to progress much on their own, unless they become part of wider peace campaigns which seek to check internal as well as external aggressive trends of the USA. Such a broader peace movement can also be helpful in checking some other important social problems of the USA as well, while also contributing to world peace.

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