

Time to talk about gun control (again)

University of Texas, (1966). San Ysidro, (1984). Edmond, (1986). Killeen (1991). Virginia Tech (2007). Sandy Hook (2012). San Bernadino (2015). Orlando. (2016). Las Vegas (2017). Sutherland Springs (2017).

These are the sites of the deadliest mass shootings in modern United States history. These tragedies have become so frequent that there is no surprise or shock anymore, just anger and sadness. Every time a mass shooting occurs, a debate over gun control ensues.

Unfortunately, the conversation about gun control only arises after an incident where several people are killed at one time. But what about the 90 people who the Center for Disease Control states are killed on average each day in the U.S. (excluding suicides)? Even if we take mass shootings out of the equation, Everytown Research found more than 10,000 people still die each year from gun deaths in this country.

In the immediate aftermath of such events, talk about banning assault rifles is also sensationalized, but most gun deaths in the U.S. actually occur by handguns.

Guns should not be a partisan issue. Far too many people are dying for us to be so divided on this topic. The politics are hard, that's well known, but there has to be something that we can do about it. Why should gun ownership be the price of our liberty?

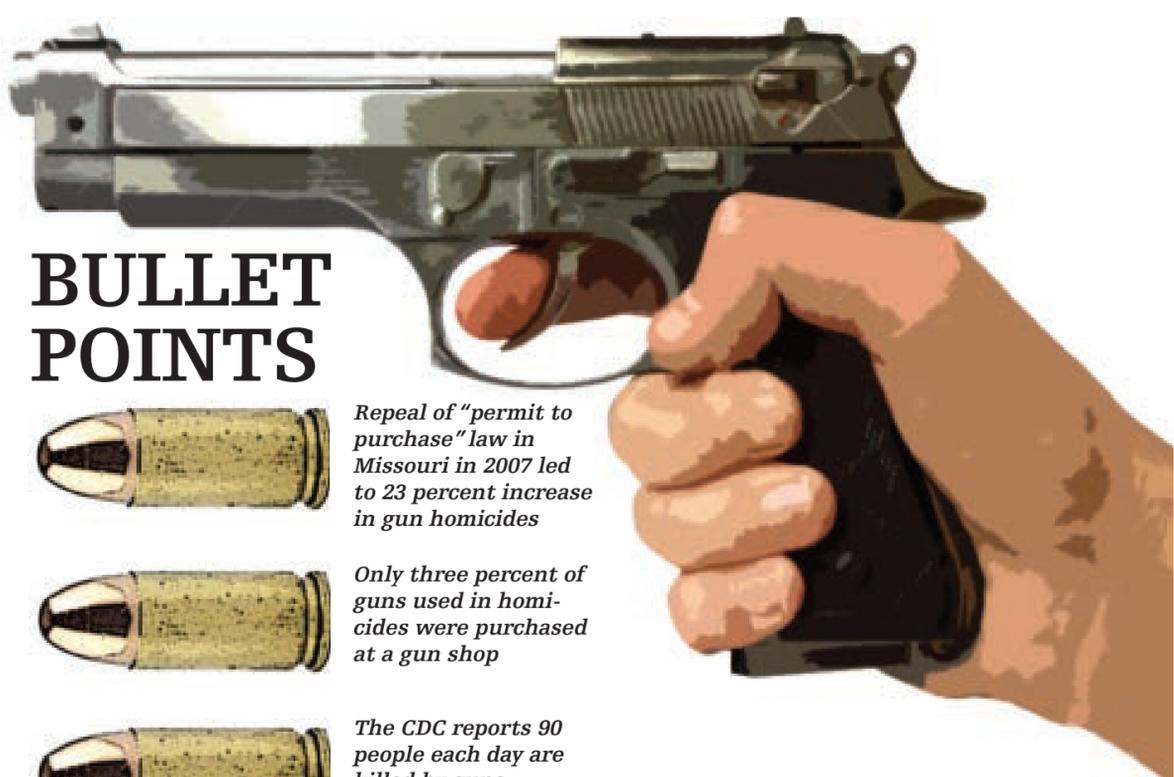
There has to be a compromise between free reign of gun ownership and complete banishment of all firearms. The solution is out there.

There is the option of extreme back-

Commentary



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UP infographic by Shelby Strickland

ground checks. Research has proven that background checks reduce the rate of overall gun deaths, including suicides. In 2007, Missouri repealed its permit-to-purchase law, which required a background check in order to obtain the license to purchase any firearm in the state. The Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Policy and Research found that this repeal led to a 23 percent increase in gun homicides and a 16 percent increase in suicides.

However, a universal gun policy is not going to work for every state. It's going to take an analysis of all the factors contributing to gun deaths in each state by their respective governments in order to devise a plan that will work for them. Yes, it's going to take funding and time, but isn't saving the lives of Americans worth it?

The major obstacle standing in the way of effective gun control is the polit-

ical climate. To gun advocates, any mention of "control" is equal to the government seizing all weapons. Proper vetting or harsher penalties is not synonymous with abolishing the Second Amendment.

Responsible gun owners who abide by the law shouldn't be afraid of reasonable regulations.

What's shocking is that only about three percent of guns used in homicides are obtained at gun stores, while the other 97 percent are obtained through other means, according to the Preventive Medicine manual.

We must combat the extensive illegal gun trade.

The anecdote of, "If people want guns, people will get guns" is true — guns are obtained illegally on the Dark Web, through undocumented gun sales, and through theft. But gun sales don't require a transfer of title of ownership. Anyone can sell guns to anyone else

without governmental oversight, and before we know it, guns get into the hands of the wrong people.

A national gun registry is a great place to start. If original record holders of guns were held accountable for the crimes committed with that gun, people would be more vigilant in keeping track of their guns.

The gun problem in America is not going to change overnight. It will take years, and the cooperation of all state and municipal governments, as well as the federal government, to solve it. There are ways to change to our current policies without infringing on the Second Amendment.

It's time to make a change. No more thoughts and prayers. No more vigils. We can't stop every act of gun violence, but we must do better.

UPeditorial

Season of gratitude

Thanksgiving is just around the corner and with all that is happening in the world around us it is the important for us to remind ourselves of the good that still exists and to show gratitude for that good.

While our schedules are jam packed with work, class assignments, due dates, extracurricular activities and holiday plans it is easy to become distracted from the overbearing number of things that we have to do.

We often take for granted our health of not only ourselves, but our families and friends as well. We have a roof over our heads. We have food and water. We have a generous society that reaches out in time of need for the wellbeing of our community.

We may be forgetful of the fact that not everyone has the opportunity to attend a university or earn an education, and not all young adults are exposed to the opportunities that come with being enrolled at a university (i.e. extracurricular activities that allow us to follow our passions).

All of these are interwoven in our daily lives and keep us going. Without them we wouldn't be where we are, or heading in the direction that we are. Things do get tough and life can be overwhelming, but without showing gratitude, we can eventually end up lacking one of the greatest motivations of all — joy.

Even if we lack in any of these areas, we woke up today and that in itself, is something to be grateful for.

Eating the frog

Prioritizing key to preventing stress

Papers, exams, assignments — by this point in the semester, many students feel like there aren't enough hours in the day to do everything. In the struggle to juggle a dozen different plates, it can seem like we're in imminent danger of dropping and breaking them all. When that happens, it's easy for one's anxiety level to go through the roof, and for school to become overwhelming, not to mention exhausting.

I know this experience firsthand, because it's one that I've been going through this semester. Between my honors thesis, several other assignments and graduate school applications, not to mention work, marching band and being the president of a stu-

dent organization, I thought there was no way I was going to have time to do it all. To compound matters, I'm graduating in December — meaning that I have t-minus six weeks to have everything done.

In the interest of preserving my sanity, I decided to talk to one of my professors about my situation. His advice?

"Eat the frog."
What?! What does that even mean?!

What that means, he explained to me, is that you prioritize your tasks — starting with the biggest, worst one that you don't want to do.

That dreadful assignment, whatever it may be, is the metaphorical frog. He's slimy, he's nasty, he's disgusting — but you have to tough it out and swallow him, however

unpleasant that may be.

Starting with that task whenever you sit down to do schoolwork has some real advantages. It forces you to work on the thing that you have the least desire to and, in doing so, allows you to make progress on it, ensuring that it actually gets done.

This doesn't mean that you exclude everything else you're doing. The frog doesn't have to be completely gone before you

move on to another job, but you'll feel better for having actually tackled it and lessened that burden.

I know I have.

Priorities are critical for balancing everything that is going on in our lives. Without them, that stack of assignments in front of us seems like a completely daunting mess.

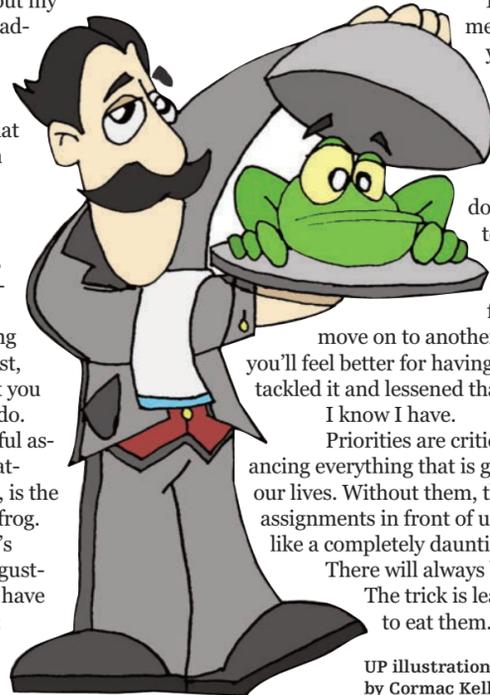
There will always be frogs.

The trick is learning how to eat them.

Commentary



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UP illustration by Cormac Kelly

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