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Annotated Bib

Rhet 105

Back against the Wall: Poverty and Legal Firearms

My topic is researching the effect that barriers between a citizen purchasing a gun or obtaining a concealed carry license have on those who cannot afford it, whether it be financially or a lack of available time. This interests me because I believe it is a natural right to be able to defend oneself, and those in impoverished neighbourhoods would be the ones who need the protection most yet also will likely not be able to qualify because of said poverty. I feel this is important because as I said I feel those in poverty would need these licenses most and our legal system should be able to accommodate their position, so it is important to make sure the legal system is doing its job and that it is making it possible for these people to obtain the proper licensing. My research question is “How does the barriers between obtaining a firearm or concealed carry license affect those who cannot afford it?” As of now, before research, I know most states have different laws regarding how a license is to be obtained, anywhere from only needing to hold a driver’s license to waiting thirty days for approval while also needing sixteen hours of training. The latter requirements are more common in places like New York, New Jersey, or Chicago which are the areas I most intend to study because of the concentrated areas of poverty that often are paired with a high crime rate. My goal is not to study this correlation but merely see how the firearm laws affect the people who are both poor and in the most dangerous positions.

My research will most likely begin with comparing statistics of gun death/uses of defense carry in states across the board, wealthy or poor. These will usually come from the FBI or CDC, as they provide specific details of such topics. After this I will likely want to find opposing viewpoints on the subject from scholarly sources, to see both points argued from an equally credible source. Mostly I will find these from the library's article database as it seems the most useful in trying to find related material. I will probably search terms like "Concealed Carry", "Defensive Gun Use", or "Firearm Training" and find relevant articles from there.

The biggest challenge to my research will likely be causation, as the debate is heated over gun control so statistics will be a good basis for an argument in logic; However it is important to not step over boundaries to vaguely present or misrepresent statistics and ensure I do not imply correlation equals causation. It will be difficult to cover all my bases and not over-represent one side over the other, making sure all is represented correctly and fair. Reading and re-interpreting statistics will be an important mechanism in my research, to see every possible way a statistic could be misrepresented and wean myself away from this.

Working Thesis: Increased barriers between concealed carry licenses or firearm ownership and those who cannot afford it means a negative impact such as the lack of protection on said populace and an unfair discrimination against them.

Cooke, Charles C.W. "The Deadly Consequences of Draconian Gun Laws." *National Review Online*. National Review, 5 June 2015. Web. 01 Oct. 2015.

The author describes Ms. Bowne's journey once she began to fear her ex-boyfriend, taking a restraining order, installed cameras, and an alarm. She also applied for a permit to purchase a gun. He says she never heard back, and never will, as she was stabbed to death in her driveway. The police chief contended that the application normally takes upwards of two months, so he could not have done much to speed it along for her. He goes on to name bills that were made that lengthen the process of obtaining a firearm, such as the Brady Bill or requiring permits to even enter stores.

This article is obviously biased towards dissolving barriers, and I find it balanced to have one article in favour of doing so and one that is not. It also details the issues with having said barriers and brings up topics I want to discuss. It is current, having been publishing last summer as a result of Ms. Bowne's death. It is not scholarly, however given other research on this woman's death the information on this case is reliable. It is not peer-reviewed.

Cook, Philip J., Susan T. Parker, and Harold A. Pollack. "Sources of Guns to Dangerous People: What We Learn by Asking Them." *Preventive Medicine* 79 (2015): 28-36. Ebsco. Web. 11 Oct. 2015.

The article opens by stating it will focus on a specific part of a state policy, that tries to limit firearm access to criminal, and it will look at how they obtain them. It gave a survey to those incarcerated in Cook County Jail, and asked how they received their firearms. They detail that a legal transfer between a store and a person means the store must be licensed to sell firearms and conduct a background checks against the buyer. However transfers between private citizens are looser as they only require that each citizen must have a FOID card and the

transfer must be kept on record for ten years. As of the article's day, there are no retail dealers within city limits so any buyers must leave the city to purchase from a store. Criminals are extremely unlikely to obtain their firearms in the formal market and more often buy them from social connections on the street.

This article displays another side of the issue I wanted to discuss, the ready availability of firearms in an illegal market. This is important because it shows how easy it is to obtain firearms illegally, and when legal methods are not possible for those in poverty then may turn to these illegal sites, making themselves criminals when all they seek is protection. This source is scholarly, reliable as it lists all its sources, and most importantly is peer-reviewed.

Funk, T. Markus. "Gun Control and Economic Discrimination: The Melting-Point

Case-in-Point." *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* (1973-) 85.3 (1995): 764. *Ebsco*. Web. 1 Oct. 2015.

It brings up many gun crime numbers, such as murders and rapes relating with firearms. It details the Melting Point laws in which certain guns made of materials that will melt down below 800 degrees fahrenheit are banned in the argument that these guns are not safe for sportsmen, easier to file serial numbers off of, and are cheap so are available to criminals. He retorts that these laws are arbitrary in tracking down guns and actually may result in a negative effect of police tracking guns through ballistics tests, and finally that these laws discriminate against the poor. He begins by saying that the claim it is to protect sportsmen is erroneous as many other uses exist for firearms like self-defense. He also he states tracking cheaper made guns are easier as irregularities in manufacturing are what help determine the gun in a ballistics

test and that cheaper guns will have more irregularities. He cites criminology data that suggested no correlation between gun ownership and increase in crime rate, saying purchasing a handgun does not turn one into a criminal and that banning these cheap guns will only make it more difficult for a poor citizen to defend themselves.

I choose this source because it hit on point exactly what I wanted to debate, the effect of gun control on those in poorer situations. It also is reliable as a scholarly source, though it is not too old having been published in 1995 its argument is dated by the introduction or removal of laws. Its use of statistic backed argument helps my paper present itself more factually and try to steer away from bias in only emotion based arguments. Having my research and argument based on facts is very important to me as it is the best way to prove a certain method is correct/incorrect.

"Illinois General Assembly - Illinois Compiled Statutes." *Illinois General Assembly - Illinois Compiled Statutes*. Legislative Information System, n.d. Web. 06 Dec. 2015.

This article is just a summary of the Illinois Statutes that detail the prohibited areas a concealed carry licensee may not bring his or her firearm into. These range from broad description of schools to more specifically how a person may show that firearms are not allowed on their property in a legally binding manner.

This government site is a primary source, so I consider it to be reliable and unbiased. I'm including this into my paper because I wish to relate these prohibited areas and how it affects the decision making process for getting a license to those in poverty.

Jones, Abigail. "Murder Town USA ; "We've Got This Huge Number of Homicides, and Only 15 Percent Have Been Solved."" n.d.: n. pag. *Newsweek*. 19 Dec. 2014. Web. 11 Oct. 2015.

Jones opens by stating how Janiver, the Public Information officer advises not to go to a certain block without a gun. She then details the extremely high homicide rate, as well as the high violent crime rate and that homicide is the leading cause of death for black males 18-34. Quoting the Councilman, who says the deteriorating infrastructure are to blame because without jobs or hope for college the people have no reason to not turn to crime. The mayor agrees as he tells the high dropout rate for school that can't manage to keep kids in. Abigail details a ride-along with Janiver, complete with run-down houses and tragic stories of shootings. One officer, Geiser, stated his worry of those ages 14-18 because they're all carrying guns and if they're called to a fistfight it's a shootout minutes later. Officer Jennings details the snitch-culture in which no one says a word to anyone outside the neighbourhood, especially officers, about any crime. The article ends with Wolfie, an ex-con who's trying to help the city, saying they need to sell hope to save the people.

I wanted an article that showed the dangerous condition those in poverty often are stuck living in, to show the despair that often exists within these neighbourhoods and the lack of opportunities that lead people to give up. The article is current, having been released last year, but it is a news article and as a result is not scholarly nor peer-reviewed. However I feel it is reliable given the author's journey into the neighbourhoods, and interview with officers and former cons who know the areas well.

Lott, J. R. "Do Shall-issue Laws save Lives?" *Am J Public Health American Journal of Public Health* 88.6 (1998): 980-83. Ebsco. Web. 1 Oct. 2015.

Lott responds to criticism about his previous report on shall issue laws in Virginia. He states that Webster (His critic) said Lott did not account for the cyclical nature of crimes that happens regularly regardless of law change, but Lott claims his study accounted for the trends on a state and county level so he had already taken into account the nature of crime and then projected the changes onto his graphs. Webster also said using arrest rates as a predictor of crime rates leads to bias, and Lott retorts that his paper excluded arrest rates from his results and as such could not include said bias. At then end Lott restates his thesis from the original paper, saying opening a Shall-issue process for concealed carry lowers violent crime rates and fewer deaths.

I chose this source as its argument lies in a basis of statistics that have been very well processed and accounts for many variables that could have possibly skewed and misrepresented his results. It is not very current, having been published in 1998, however I feel it does not impact it much as their has not been a terribly large shift in these communities. It is very detailed and was published in a scholarly journal. It is peer-reviewed.

Murphy, Tim. "Fastest Gun Permit in the West." *Mother Jones* Sept. 2013: 5-7. Ebsco. Web. 1 Oct. 2015.

Murphy goes over the process of obtaining a concealed carry permit in Utah, which he says does not require you to be a state resident. He states Utah has become the place to get a license as it is valid in 32 other states and has low requirements such as a 4 hour training class

and submitting an application to be processed over 60 days. He goes on to bring up the lax laws of Utah as it does not require a verbal warning for firing defensively. He also brings up how he is stumbling to load a gun in class but he can still receive a license. As well as he says the defensive gun use numbers are unreliable as marred by racial disparity and how criminals exercised concealed carry to commit crimes.

I feel this is a good source as it allows me to focus on the bad side of lower requirements for a license and not be completely one sided, as well as combat argument he has brought up. It is reliable, given its status in a magazine, and the author's actual participation in the licensing process. It is not scholarly or peer-reviewed, but it is current as it was published in 2013.

Pogrebin, Mark, Paul Stretesky, and N. Prabha Unnithan. *Guns, Violence, and Criminal Behavior: The Offender's Perspective*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2009. Print.

This book begins with what offenders often say as a motive for their guns use, most report general protection with hunting behind that and with crime as the lowest reasoning. The book reasons that crime is the lowest, because most of the inmates see the victim as deserving of the injury and such feel they did nothing wrong. Later, it says that the gangs become a means of identity and socializing, that guns become a part of defending that identity and group. Whilst incarcerated, they often identify the gun as a sign of power and control, to show everyone you're in control and you're who to listen to. Often giving a sense of being untouchable. When asking inmates about Shall-issue laws, most were against such legislation, and the authors did not find this surprising as they would not be allowed to carry anyway and hypothesized to be negatively affected by those allowed to.

This source is scholarly, and very reliable given its pages and pages of sources, as well as being peer-reviewed. I choose this for its unique outlook on firearms, from a criminal's perspective, and what they thought of guns/gun legislation. This is important because these criminals often come from poverty-ridden areas, where I intend to focus on

U.S Government "IL Concealed Carry License." *IL Concealed Carry License*. U.S Government, 9 July 2013. Web. 11 Oct. 2015.

The checklist details the requirements for obtaining a concealed carry permit in the state of IL, which are as follows: 16 hours of training by an Illinois State Police approved instructor (And proof of), recent photo of head and shoulders, valid driver's license, State Police site Username and password, proof of residency, and \$300 payable by check or credit card.

I chose this source because I wanted to specifically detail the requirements someone in a poor Chicago neighbourhood would have to attain in order to not illegally carry a firearm. It is recent, updated in 2013 when the law passed, reliable given it is the site for Illinois State Police. This page is a primary source

"Who Uses Public Transportation in Your City?" *Governing*. E.Republic, n.d. Web. 06 Dec. 2015.

This article begins by stating that those commuters using public transportation in more urban areas tend to be much more poor compared to those who drive to work. It then introduces the generator it has made that compiles commuter demographics from the city you select. It

explains how to read the data, explaining what it defines as public transportation and what cities are included.

I believe this source to be reliable, as this site in general seems to be a place to find the U.S. Census Bureau's findings all in one place and as such does not include any bias or real argument it's trying to make. I chose this source because I wanted to address firearm laws regarding public transportation and how this affects the poor.