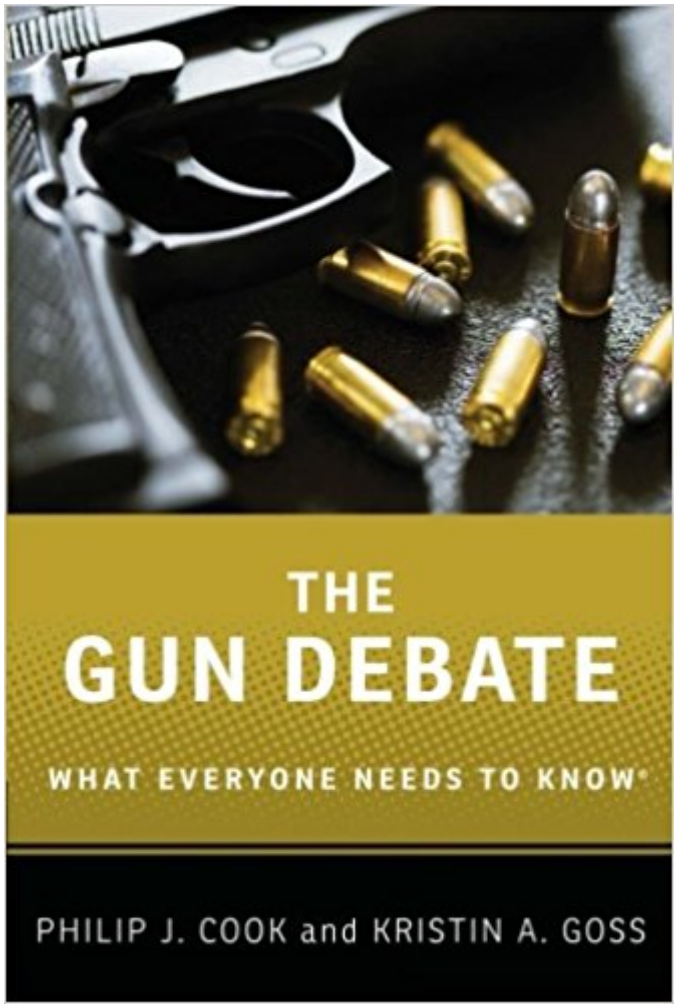
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The Gun Debate: What Everyone Needs To KnowÃ‚Â®



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Synopsis

No topic is more polarizing than guns and gun control. From a gun culture that took root early in American history to the mass shootings that repeatedly bring the public discussion of gun control to a fever pitch, the topic has preoccupied citizens, public officials, and special interest groups for decades. The Gun Debate: What Everyone Needs to KnowÃ Â® delves into the issues that Americans debate when they talk about guns. With a balanced and broad-ranging approach, noted economist Philip J. Cook and political scientist Kristin A. Goss thoroughly cover the latest research, data, and developments on gun ownership, gun violence, the firearms industry, and the regulation of firearms. The authors also tackle sensitive issues such as the effectiveness of gun control, the connection between mental illness and violent crime, the question of whether more guns make us safer, and ways that video games and the media might contribute to gun violence. No discussion of guns in the U.S. would be complete without consideration of the history, culture, and politics that drive the passion behind the debate. Cook and Goss deftly explore the origins of the American gun culture and the makeup of both the gun rights and gun control movements.Written in question-and-answer format, the book will help readers make sense of the ideologically driven statistics and slogans that characterize our national conversation on firearms. This book is a must-read for anyone interested in getting a clear view of the issues surrounding guns and gun policy in America.What Everyone Needs to KnowÃ Â® is a registered trademark of Oxford University Press.

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Customer Reviews

"...the authors are without doubt two of the best-informed and serious gun scholars publishing today ... they have written a very balanced and well-documented essay that objectively summarizes the state of the gun argument on both sides of the debate." -Mike the Gun Guy"The Gun Debate is written in an admirably neutral tone. Summarizing results from hundreds of studies, the book makes a hugely positive contribution toward sensitive and sensible evidence-based evaluation of what has worked, and what hasn't, in gun control - and why. The language is straightforward English, not econ-speak or reams of tables and statistics. There is something for everyone to take away from this book." --Stone Garden Economics "Too many debates about public policy in the US suffer from the absence of accurate information, careful reasoning, and objective research. This superb book not only supplies all that for firearm regulation at the national, state, and local levels but also serves as a sterling model for other policy topics." -CHOICE"WOW! + rated. Just the facts from all points of view." -The Lone Star Book Review"Cook and Goss, public policy professors at Duke University, provide a fantastic overview of the major issues. Although they tend to favor stricter regulation, their book is balanced--and frank about what both sides get wrong." -The Washington Post

Philip J. Cook is ITT/Terry Sanford Professor of Public Policy and Professor of Economics and Sociology at Duke University. He is the co-author (with Jens Ludwig) of Gun Violence: The Real Costs. Kristin A. Goss is Associate Professor of Public Policy and Political Science at Duke University. She is the author of Disarmed: The Missing Movement for Gun Control in America.

Guns are one of several topics that are very polarized along political lines. This book somehow managed to present each side without pandering or disrespecting either one. Yet, it wasn't an emotionless presentation of information either. Everything is covered from gun culture in America to strategies of both sides of the gun issue. There was also a lot of technical information about guns themselves. I highly recommend reading this book and drawing your own conclusions.

I assigned this book last semester in my Sociology of Guns seminar at Wake Forest University.Cook and Goss are both public policy professors at Duke University who have published extensively on guns. Cook is a sort of "Dean" of social scientific gun studies. He writes generally from a negative outcomes and gun regulation perspective. Goss wrote the definitive study of why the gun control movement has failed so far.The "What Everyone Needs to Know" subtitle means The Gun Debate is part of a book series published by Oxford University Press that covers a range of topics from ADHD

to Venezuela. The substance of the books are presented in a question-and-answer format.The authors' biases can be seen at various points, as when they answer the question "What is an assault weapon?" without any critical commentary about the term itself (pp. 13-14) and when they equate stand-your-ground laws with a "shoot first" and explain later approach to deadly force (p. 131). But The Gun Debate has the considerable advantage of covering many essential issues in a single, easily accessible volume. For example, "What is a gun?" "What role do shooting sports play in American life?" "Who is at risk of being shot?" And so on.Cook and Goss's answers are far from uniformly anti-gun. To the question, "Is a gun an effective means of self-protection against an assailant?" the authors write, "The answer is a qualified yes" (p. 17). Based on my understanding of the data, this is an accurate response. Observing the norm that those who own guns often "have several (usually of different types) and in some cases dozens," Cook and Goss remark, "There is nothing unusual about guns in this respect -- the same thing could be said about cameras or computers" (pp. 6-7).And there are little gems of insight throughout the book, like how lack of trust in government manifests itself in public opinion polling on guns. Cook and Goss note an experiment by Gallup in which they asked people whether they would vote for a law expanding background checks. 83% said yes. But when the question was changed to whether the U.S. Senate should pass such a law, the affirmative responses drop by 20% (p. 179).Similarly, on the question of whether Americans believe that guns make us safer, Cook and Goss highlight an interesting finding from a telephone survey experiment in the mid-1990s. When asked whether "ordinary Americans" after "proper training" should be able to carry a gun, 65% of respondents said NO. When the question was changed to whether "average Americans, such as yourself" should be allowed to get a concealed-carry license "for self-protection," 60% of respondents said YES (p. 29).Even basic facts like the size of the gun industry in America are usually presented. "The combined $7.0 billion in shipments of guns and ammo [in 2012] makes this a relatively small industry, comparable in value to shipments of potato chips or ice cream" (p. 73).How do criminals obtain their guns? "It is relatively unusual for an individual to buy a firearm directly from a dealer and use it in a crime" (p. 87).Does the NRA represent the firearms industry? "The question is a matter of interpretation, but as a practical matter the answer may not matter much. . . . [I]t's not clear that the views of the industry are really more extreme than the views of the NRA's base (in fact, the opposite is probably true)" (pp. 200-1).My biggest problem with the book was actually the way it referenced the scholarly literature. It was not always easy to trace particular empirical observations to specific publications. Some points are referenced using footnotes, but the notes themselves referred to a separate reference list, organized by chapter, which contained additional sources. Finding the original

sources of the claims was an important part of what I was trying to teach in my course, but perhaps not essential for the average reader.Although not perfect and not to be taken entirely at face value -- what work is? -- The Gun Debate was very useful for my class, taught me alot, and will definitely reward the careful and critical reader interested in the role of guns in society.

A well written, well informed book.I own three weapons myself, but do not consider myself to be extreme when it comes to gun ownership. Meaning I'm fine with sensible gun control regulations based on evidence and common sense. The problem, as always, is rooting out such things from statistical noise (a point this book makes clear many times).My thought on this book is this: if you, like me, are rather middle-of-the-road, non-extreme on either side of the debate, you'll enjoy it. If, on the other hand, you are an extremist either way, you'll hate it, mostly because it doesn't draw the conclusions you want to hear.I liked the book.

The Gun Debate: What Everyone Needs to Know? by Phillip J. Cook and Kristin A. GossÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“The Gun DebateÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• takes a look at this hot-button issue in an engaging question-and-answer format. Economist Phillip J. Cook and political scientist Kristin A.Goss team up to provide readers with a fair and even-handed analysis of the gun debate from a number of angles and perspectives. This immersive 294-page book includes the following twelve chapters: 1. America and Its Guns, 2. The Value of Guns for Self-Protection and Combating Tyranny, 3. The Costs of Gun Violence, 4. Causes of Gun Violence, 5. Manufacture and Marketing of Guns, 6. How America Regulates Firearms, 7. Effectiveness of Firearms Policy, 8. Guns and Gun Control in History, 9. Public Opinion and Political Party Positions on Guns, 10. The Gun Rights Movement, 11. The Gun Control Movement, and 12. What Sorts of Gun Policies Might Be Politically Acceptable Going Forward?.Positives:1. Well written and researched topic.2. The fascinating hot-button topic of gun debate.3. Even and fair-handed treatment backed by solid research.4. Effective use of the question-and-answer format to cover the gun debate from many angles. Each chapter covers a topic and with a series of questions and answers the authors summarize their conclusions. ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“In sum, the threat of gun violence degrades the quality of life in affected communities. Reducing gun violence would have tangible societal value.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•5. Limited but effective use of charts and tables.6. The authorsÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ cautious approach should be applauded; it recognizes the limitations of the research and makes reasonable conclusions. ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“The bottom line is that no one knows how many firearms are in private hands in the United States. Based on the calculations presented above, a range of 200 to 300

million seems reasonable.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•7. Some eye-opening facts. ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“No state requires that a rifle or shotgun buyer have any training or pass a test on gun safety.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“The group of states with high gun ownership had more than four times as times as many gun suicides as the states with low gun ownership.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•8. Provocative questions with surprising answers. ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Do Burglars Avoid Neighborhoods Where Residents Keep Guns in the Home? In fact, they found that greater gun prevalence caused an increase in the residential burglary rate.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•9. Fascinating facts presented a table of notable mass shootings outside the United States.10. An excellent chapter on the causes of gun violence. ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“The strong finding that emerges from this research is that gun use intensifies violence, making it more likely that the victim of an assault or robbery will die. The positive effect is on the murder rate, not on the overall violent-crime rate. In other words: More guns, more deaths.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•11. So how do criminals obtain their guns? Find out.12. A look at the Second Amendment, what gun controls are unconstitutional and what laws are lawful.13. A timeline of federal gun policy.14. Gun legislation around the world including the requirements for gun ownership.15. A look at stand-your-ground laws. ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Two recent studies by economists at Texas A&M and at Georgia State University conclude that stand-your-ground laws do not result in a reduction in rates of assault, robbery, or rapeÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â •and have the costly effect of increasing homicide rates.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•16. The effectiveness of gun laws. ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“The old bumper sticker says, ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœWhen guns are outlawed, only outlaws will have guns.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ Perhaps a more accurate statement is ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœWhen guns are scarce, outlaws will use less lethal weapons.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•17. An interesting look at the gun culture in America. The two-tiered system, ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Historically, legislatures and courts observed what amounted to a two-tiered system: Guns kept for public purposes, namely collective defense through militia service, enjoyed the highest level of constitutional protections (they could not be sold to pay taxes owed, for example), while those intended for private purposes, such as hunting or self-defense, were subject to state powers to promote public safety and health.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•18. The gun divide by politics. The gun rights movement vs the gun control movements. ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“In short, the gun lobby succeeds in part because its structure mirrors that of government.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Gun rights supporters are passionate, relentless, single-issue voters who will stop at nothing to prevent passage of stronger gun laws.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•19. A look at tenable gun policies.20. Notes and references included.Negatives:1. I would have added a section on the most popular weapons used in America and why.2. I also would have added a section on politicians voting records as it relates to gun

debate issues.3. Light on supplementary materials. WhatÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s included is good but this topic warrants more.4. Those on the political right will claim there is bias against their position but I found the material to be fair.5. The book is ambitious and covers many topics but it does so at a price, the lack of depth.In summary, the book succeeds in covering many topics of interest in the gun debate. The question-and-answer format worked well and provides readers with a handy reference. A few missed opportunities aside keeps the book from attaining a five-star score but overall itÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s a useful book. I recommend it!Further recommendations that cover both sides of the debate: ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Guns (Kindle Single)ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• by Stephen King, ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“More Guns, Less CrimeÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• by John R. Lott, ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“GunfightÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• by Adam Winkler, ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Updated Evidence and Policy Developments in Reducing Gun Violence in AmericaÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• by Daniel Webster, ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“The Second AmendmentÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• by Michael Waldman, ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Reducing Gun Violence in AmericaÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• by Michael Bloomberg, ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Living with GunsÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• by Craig Whitney, and ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“GunfightÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• by Adam Winkler.

Objective facts on a sometimes controversial topic. We're always able to deal with issues significantly better if we can get through the static and are equipped with non-partisan facts.

The facts and information presented in this book are really good, but it's clear when reading this book what side of the debate the authors are on. It's written as a factual presentation, but the quips made here and there are telling about the view of the authors so it makes you question if information is skewed. There are several spelling and grammar mistakes in here as well. If I am going to take a book seriously, they need to proofread.

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