

To Whom it may concern,

The recent tragedies that have struck our beautiful town of Newtown, CT and Sandy Hook Elementary School are something we all hope and pray never happen. However, lately these tragedies seem to happen all too often. So this raises the question, what is causing these terrible tragedies to occur? Most seem to be quick to blame guns. Some, including the NRA, seem to be quick to blame video games and movies. Others blame the lack of security. Are these theories the real causes behind these crimes?

The first theory asks, is it the gun? If it is the gun, then how is it possible that as a gun owner my guns have never committed a crime? Are mine defective? I don't think so. We can't be so quick to blame the weapon because the last time I checked, guns don't operate by themselves. There are plenty of crimes committed on a daily basis with many different objects and weapons other than guns. One can easily commit a vicious crime with a knife, baseball bat, or a rope. However, we don't jump to pass legislation banning these objects? All too often it seems political agenda outweighs common sense. We shouldn't use this horrible crime to either side's advantage. Whether you're pro gun or anti gun, your own beliefs shouldn't come before logic. All sides should be open to a fair discussion. We shouldn't try to pass legislation that penalizes the law abiding. A 50% tax increase on Ammo is personal agenda, and it's not fair to the many gun owners who don't abuse their second amendment right. Trying to publish the names of gun owners who have never committed a crime is ridiculous. Since when has owning a legal gun become as much of a sin as being a pedophile? Trying to take so called "assault weapons" is not far, because an AR-15 is no different than a pistol. Both are semi automatic. You just like to look at an AR as a bad gun because it's bigger. Shame on you for not getting the facts first. Shame on you for trying to restrict the bullets I can have to protect my life, shame on you for pushing your ideas against what our founding fathers fought for.

The media always ends up making the criminal a widely known celebrity when events such as Sandy Hook take place. Is that the reason more and more of these crimes take place? Are violent video games and Hollywood movies to blame? Well let me ask you this, I grew up watching Westerns, John Wayne and Clint Eastwood were among the many that I saw as a child. In these movies guns were fired from atop a horse or a hillside. Now, today, Movies take place in a city, where guns are fired from a street side. Are these movies really any different? The film locations seem to be the only real difference. So let's ask ourselves again are movies and video games to blame? Well the NRA sure seems to think they are.

More armed security, that's what most seems to be calling for, but is that the answer? I know every time I walk into a bank there is an armed guard, why don't we have one in every school? Is our money more sacred than our children? I hope the answer to that is no. But I don't know that an armed guard in every school is the answer either. Short term, I think we should absolutely position the appropriate guards in all of our school. This helps us now. But that still doesn't secure our malls, movie theaters, churches or even our libraries. All these places have one thing in common; they are all Gun Free Zones. Isn't it ironic that our nations biggest shooting happen in place where the law abiding can't carry a gun, because if he or she does they are committing a crime. The last time I checked Gun Free Zones didn't stop the bad guys from bringing in their guns. Had their been one good guy with a gun at any of these places do you think anyone could have stopped the bad guy? One will never know because the good guy had to leave their gun at home or in their car.

So what is the real reason behind these mass shootings, they don't seem to happen in any other country. Well, I don't think it's the gun, although they might make it easier, evil is evil weather it be with a gun, knife, car, bat or any other object. I don't think its Hollywood, because John Wayne and Clint Eastwood are inspirations and hero's too many, and our elder generation never struck such violence in our nation. So it must be the lack of security then right? For well over 200 years we never seemed to have these problems, so that cant be it either. So what is it? Most of us grew up in an era of family, morals, and ethics. Today, Not so much. Up until about 15 years ago I would say 9 out of 10 American families ate dinner together, they had an active participation in each other's lives. Today, in 2012, the number would probably be more like 1 out of every 10 Americans eats dinner together. There is a lack of family bonding in a fast paced society that has seemed to have over taken our lives. We now live in an area of smart phones, Internet, social networking, and reality TV. We don't have the same face-to-face contact as we once did. Most of us seem to hide behind a computer or phone while talking to people. There is no longer an emotional or physical connection. When most of us grew up and we wanted to meet someone, we would do just that, meet someone. Now we can meet people over the internet, Some fall in love, Some go on dates, Some even get married, However, most end up meeting a person that is just a little different than the one they were talking to online. Today, as apposed to when our elder generation grew up, we have a much higher divorce rate, and a much higher teen pregnancy rate. We also now reward children in this country for finishing 5th in our Pop Warner Football league. Shouldn't we only reward the winner, as they did better than everyone else? We no longer teach our children how to fall and get back up again; we will congratulate them for everything they do. Doesn't seem fair to the team that won now does it? How does one grow and become stronger and more independent if they have no reason to? Not everyone is the best, we need to work hard and get better. So maybe we need to look at the family values and lack of interaction between parents and children and stop blaming guns, and movies. Because both have been around forever, yet our family interaction is what has declined recently and rewarding failures has inclined.

-Matthew A. Sears