

Right to Bear Arms: Freedom or Fear?

Guns: The only defense

Every day people are subjected to violence, but fight back with a gun to survive. Then the bigger question arises: should we give up our right to bear arms? Sacrifice the constitutional guarantee to protect ourselves?

Make a statement, be heard...

Salena De La Cruz
Opinion Editor



an end to the attack. The assault was so horrific that police and paramedics who responded to her call cheered when they learned Horne was dead. Foust survived. However, her nose was broken, four teeth had been knocked out (which she swallowed during the assault), the bones in her gums were crushed, her cheekbones had been fractured, her larynx was cut open, and her left eye required surgery.

Without the gun, Foust probably would've been killed, but she chose to fight back rather than submit to her attacker.

I don't know about you, but after reading this story it makes me glad to know I have the right to protect myself, especially in this day and age. Many times victims were targeted because of their appearance of vulnerability. I don't want to be the next target. I will choose to fight back. Hopefully, any attacker will think twice before messing with me or anyone who shares my view.

It is estimated some 225 million firearms are owned by Americans. Of that number, 99.5% of the firearms will never be used in a crime. However, around 108,000 firearms are said to be used in self-defense according to the National Institute of Justice.

Yes, there may be an exceedingly high number of crimes, but firearms involved in around .05%. Thank the Bill of Rights for our right to bear arms, which gives us the right to protect ourselves. This is a freedom I intend to keep.

Questions, comments or concerns, call ext. 2309 or email me at salenadelacruz@netscape.net.

Statistical information obtained on www.conservativenews.org.

I agree some laws may need to be strengthened against the increase in crime. However, I do not agree an individual's right to bear arms should be taken away.

I understand, with the rash of school violence and crimes involving firearms, why people are concerned, but firearms are not the only danger in society. There is just as much chance of dying in a car accident, with power tools or in the bathtub as being killed by a firearm.

Everyone should have the right to choose whether they wish to "bear arms." After all, firearms can save lives as easily as they can destroy them.

This is a true story obtained from a book by Robert A. Waters called The Best Defense: True Stories of Intended Victims Who Defended Themselves with a Firearm.

On the morning of May 6, 1996, Sammie Foust was cleaning her bedroom when James Wayne Horne burst through the door. A crack addict, he wore a stocking mask and carried a boxcutter. Horne attacked Foust, slicing her throat and shattering her face with brutal blows. He forced her to give him \$400 in cash and all her jewelry. But he wasn't finished.

Convinced that there was a stash of money in the house, he tortured her for more than an hour. Foust was able to reach a .25 caliber semi-automatic handgun and put

Guns were intended to kill

The Constitution of the United States guarantees every citizen the right to bear arms. Many people believe that owning a gun is a basic freedom in America. Guns were invented to kill.

saved their own life by gunning down their attacker. While these are incredible stories of heroism, these account for a miniscule amount of the shootings in America. In fact, a study by the New England Journal of Medicine said guns kept in the home for self-protection are 43 times more likely to



Angie Daschel
A & E Editor

The way it really is!

Their sole purpose is to inflict pain or cause death of a living thing. That's it. The right to own these guns was deemed necessary during the birth of our nation because the founders had just escaped an oppressive government. The people wanted some security against a government that was yet untested, and owning guns allowed these people to start militias to protect themselves against the ones in power if necessary.

Times have changed. Contrary to popular conspiracy theory opinion, we do not need to protect ourselves from government by means of a firearm. Why, at this time in history, do we need a gun? To shoot a person that cuts us off on the freeway? To burst into a school and kill people we don't like?

Some would say that they only have guns to hunt. I guess the thrill of blasting an innocent deer or pheasant and watching its life spill out really makes some people's day, but why? Where do these tendencies come from?

The real question we must ask ourselves is whether a constitutional right outweighs the fact that people are dying in droves in America from gun violence. According to a 1996 report from the National Center for Health and Statistics, 16 children died every day from shootings in this country. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention stated in 1996 that 50 people die violently from guns each year in American schools.

People love to hear stories of the "victims fighting back:" those rare instances when a woman or child has

kill a person you know than to kill in self-defense.

A right guaranteed by the constitution is not enough to account for the bloody deaths of so many in our nation. The right to bear arms allowed 13 children to die needlessly in Columbine last year. The amendment allowed President Kennedy to be assassinated in 1963. John Lennon, Kurt Cobain and Tupac Shakur were all victims of the right to bear arms, as well as the man for whom we had a day off from school on Monday.

When people realize that children are dying and stop hiding behind the constitution and it's archaic right to bear arms, this country can begin to move past the bloody tragedies that plague not only the inner cities, but our own homes as well. For example, comedic genius Phil Hartman, of Saturday Night Live fame, was killed by his own wife, in his own home, with his own gun.

I am not advocating tighter gun control laws, which offer at most longer waiting periods and background checks. I want guns and the right to own them to be abolished, which I know is about the last thing that will happen in this paranoid, "get 'em before they get me" society.

For those who argue that the right to bear arms is a freedom that we have in this country, think again. I wouldn't call living in a world with drive-by murders and not-so-random school shootings living freely. I would call it living in fear.

A Student's Voice...

Is the administration incompetent or corrupt?

Vacation is over, school is in session, and the learning begins with a bang. Can you say "re-cremination"? I don't think many of you can, which is why I will not be gentle. The Administration at this college is either incompetent, corrupt or both. Why would I say such a thing? The administration knows why and you would too if you read page (120) of the Clackamas "Community" College Comprehensive Annual Report (which is public record). It states that "[e]xpenditures exceeded appropriations in the General Fund College Support Services Function by \$98,455; the Capital Construction Fund by \$152,953; and services in the Associated student Government Fund by

\$49,369" Isn't that ASG? Isn't that the holier than thou Student Body Government who, by undemocratic and unconstitutional means and help from the administration, removed Jennifer Rankin from office? Yes! The same people who went on trips and planned parties while their tuition was being paid for with tax payers' money. And they want us to pass bond 2000! Never! First account for the \$49,369 and then we can talk about how much you owe the taxpayers.

I, along with many others, warned students of the administration's tactics to remove Jennifer and advised them to follow the money trail. We identified that the reason Jennifer was being singled out was because she

wanted, among other things, to audit ASG and make it accountable to the students, not the administration. Because some ASG officers had their own administration approved agendas, they failed to act on behalf of students, taxpayers, and the community. They should all be held responsible, if not for violating state budget laws, then for the action taken against Jennifer.

As for the administration, well, from my experience they have no shame. This is business as usual. Adjunct faculty, trumped up fees, and poor service in everything from registration to food service has turned this college into the very rat race it has been charged with preparing the students of Clackamas County to navigate. Is

this a business or a Community College? If it is a business who should be fired for the unchecked spending? If it is a Community College why does the administration think that is not answerable to the community? When caught time and again, by myself, with their incompetence hanging out they either patronize me or pass the buck to their minions in the ASG.

As for the students opposed to change in the ASG, I recall many articles and cartoons by students and the staff of *The Print*. The word "conspiracy" was used to imply the insanity of those who would take a stand with Jennifer. And I remember one "intelligent" article which included the argument: "your just mad because I'm

right." Does the attempt to cover up a crime constitute a conspiracy? Do you believe that the same negligent people who "misappropriated" \$313,877 lost any sleep over removing a student who was standing in the way of expedience? Who is right and who should be mad as hell?

The lesson? I dont know if there is one. Lessons are to be learned and we the people are constantly repeating this one.

P.S. If you started school before the ASG and the administration raised the price of tuition, you are entitled to a refund. See the student hand book for more info.

Glenn McCarthy
Student