On Wednesday October 20 in Las Vegas Nevada, the third presidential debate of 2016 took place. The past two time Hillary and Donald, heated arguments dominated the conversations. This time was no different.

Moderator, Chris Wallace, started the candidates on some controversial topics, such as The Supreme Court and The Constitution.

Clinton had the stage first, saying she wants a supreme court that will stand up for women’s rights and the LBGT community, and stand against Citizen’s United.

Next, Trump took an opportunity to pivot away from matters, such as women’s rights, that make him look unpresidential, to talk about the 2nd Amendment.

“We need a Supreme Court that in my opinion is going to uphold the second amendment and all amendments, but the
second amendment which is under absolute siege.”

This began the conversation (which was surprisingly tame).

Clinton rebutted saying,

“I understand and respect the tradition of gun ownership that goes back to the founding of our country, but I also believe that there can be and must be reasonable regulation.”

Each candidate made their stance, but how did they do it?

Clinton talked about gun control through storytelling and appealed to the emotions of her audience. Similar to the My Mom political ad on gun violence. She began her statement by saying, “I lived in Arkansas for 18 wonderful years.” This is very typical of a fairytale which often begins with A long time ago in a land far far away.

She also appeals to emotions later after Wallace mentions the Heller Decision. She says, “Well, I was upset because unfortunately, dozens of toddlers injure themselves, even kill people with guns because unfortunately, not everyone who has loaded guns in their homes takes appropriate precautions.” Here Clinton identifies her anger that will resonate with others who felt upset about the court’s decision. She then allows for others to understand her emotion with the information on toddlers.

What do you think? How do you think that Trump’s argument stood up to Clinton’s?

Click here to see a full transcript of the debate.

Click here to watch the debate.
Clinton’s Attempt at Saving 33,000 Lives

In tonight’s final US presidential debate between candidates Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, it first began addressing America’s gun control policy. It started off in reference to the Supreme Court’s decision in District of Columbia vs. Heller where Clinton defended her previous support of the Second Amendment, but voiced her opinions and support of gun control. The first question was aimed towards Clinton, “Secretary Clinton, you said last year, let me quote, “The Supreme Court is wrong on the Second Amendment.” And now, in fact, in the 2008 Heller case, the court ruled that there is a constitutional right to bear arms, but a right that is reasonably limited. Those were the words of the Judge Antonin Scalia who wrote the decision. What’s wrong with that?” Clinton’s rhetoric and persuasive communication in response to this question led to a concise and self-explanatory answer.

Saving 33,000 lives?

Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, and Republican nominee, Donald Trump had different approaches in rhetoric when answering this question. Hillary Clinton expressed her stance on gun control through a key rhetorical strategy of
Identification—attempting to identify to the country as a whole. Her goal for her response was to not only identify with the Democratic Party with plans of expanding background checks of gun owners, but over and over again she explained that she in fact supports the Second Amendment. Clinton first begins in attempt to appeal to Second Amendment supporters by stating, “I understand and respect the tradition of gun ownership. It goes back to the founding of our country.” Her response was appropriate and effective. She continued as she then voiced her opinions on “reasonable regulation” and her attempt to prevent the 33,000 lives taken each year by guns. Donald Trump approached his question on the Second Amendment by solely stating his own opinions and attacking his opponent’s response. FOX News states, “The candidates also sparred over gun rights, with the Republican nominee charging that the Second Amendment is “under absolute siege” and would be eroded if his opponent wins.” Although Donald Trump’s response was direct, I’m not quite sure it was effective. Hillary Clinton spoke to the country as a whole in reference to this Second Amendment Supreme Court issue, in an effective and presidential manner.

An Emotive Rhetorical Battle on Gun Control

In order to stay rhetorically consistent in the midst of this heavy and controversial election round, Republican candidate Donald Trump is making bold statements about the Second Amendment. Following years of dispute regarding the correct action in response to violence of “unrestricted” gun laws, this topic creates a major point in the debate this election season. Accusing Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton of
trying to “abolish the Second Amendment”, Trump takes his argument far further.

This time around, he attempts elicit an emotional response in voters’ minds when he brings up the matters of recent mass shootings in Paris and San Bernardino, California. He argues that, if people were able to carry handguns with permits, these shootings would not be as deadly. This is powerful counter argument and rhetorical strategy uses Clinton’s (and many other Democrats’) basis for stricter laws. Instead of suggesting that people could have protected themselves, the opposition claims that these permits are exactly what facilitate these incredible and devastating acts in the first place.

This issue is even hotter in 2016 due to these even more polarizing and radical candidates for change. While President Obama had maintained a softer fight against gun rights in the two previous elections, Clinton shows no signs of softening her stance. She has geared her rhetorical strategy in effective and unique ways in order to pivot and respond to different audiences of voters. In attending black churches and presenting statistics to families of victims while also
steering clear of any address of these stricter regulations in blue collar regions in Ohio and Pennsylvania who hold closely Gun Rights, she intelligently adjusts her emotional tactics with response to a crowd.

Even more controversially, Trump suggests gun-free zones at military bases and schools, with schools being one of the most horrific settings for gun violence in the past years. Obama and Democrats have attempted to affect legislation that would expand background checks and ban assault weapons. Mr. Trump fired back with saying, “The government has no business dictating what types of firearms good, honest people are allowed to own”.

Through his typical bold and seemingly rash rhetorical tactics in this election season, Donald Trump undoubtedly elicits a unique response in voters’ minds. He attempts to remind Americans that the right to hold these handguns can provide an added level of protection that cannot possibly be guaranteed at all points and relying solely on law enforcement. He suggests that there are real genuine and trustworthy people that can, if we simply agree, protect our families and loved ones just as the early Constitution suggested in the Second
Amendment. At this point, the determinant factor is whether his emotive argument can “trump” hers.

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**Gary Johnson’s Stance on Guns**

In an interview about an Orlando shooting of a nightclub on June 14, 2016, Gary Johnson made his stance on guns clear: Gun Restrictions will not stop gun violence.

He stated, “I understand how so many people can believe that if you restrict this kind of weapon you can prevent this kind of incident...But there’s just no evidence whatsoever to suggest that it makes us any safer, and in fact restricting guns makes things less safe, that’s the camp that I’m in.”

He also stated, “...all of these atrocities, including what happened in Orlando, all of these shootings were in gun-free zones. The theater in Colorado, the nightclub in Orlando, the college campus shootings, Fort Hood of all places being gun-free, that’s where they are all happening.” Johnson uses many examples as a rational argument to show that even though many think it is important to create more gun-free zones, Johnson is showing that gun-free zones are areas that are being targeted.
The implications of his stance won’t seem to matter. With voting less than a month away, this race is mainly between Clinton and Trump. However, it is possible for some people who were in support of Trump’s gun policies could switch over and be willing to vote in favor of Johnson if voters aren’t in favor of Trump’s other policies. Likewise, Johnson holds a majority of votes from socially liberal populations, so it is possible that Johnson could also lose some support because he wants to decrease gun control and take away gun-free zones. If some supporters do decide to switch, the support will likely go to Clinton, which will put her further ahead and make her the likely candidate to win this election.

According to an article, “Strong pro-gun statements...will be welcome news for libertarians and conservatives.” Johnson’s stance on guns will mostly effect Moderate Conservative Voters who believe that Trump is too polar. “…libertarians and conservatives should be encouraged that Johnson is not moderating on guns...it appears that the former Republicans are holding their ground on the issue.”

NRA and Hilary Clinton

The National Rifles Association has long been a supporter of the candidate with the most lenient views on gun control. This election that has by far been Donald Trump, making Hilary Clinton their primary opposition. The NRA is a major organization with a large following, of predominantly conservative voters. The vast size of National Rifle Association presents a large audience in which they can spread their message of defending the second amendment. The prominent way they have chosen to do this is by presenting or framing Hillary Clinton as someone who is out of touch and doesn’t
care about the average Americans personal safety.

“Don’t let Hillary Leave you defenseless”

https://youtu.be/hPM8e_DauUw

This ad is one of the more expensive ads that the National Rifle Association has aired. The purpose of the ad is to frame Hilary Clinton as someone who is going to take away your ability to defend yourself in critical situations, such as the home invasion of the video. The NRA supported this ad by pushing the idea that Clinton wants to intentionally elect members to the Supreme Court who will remove the ability of citizens to protect themselves but still allow government officials to protect themselves.

The Elitist

**NRA spends $3 million on new anti-Clinton ad**

The National Rifle Association launched a new ad Tuesday in battleground states that portrays Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton as an elitist who “would leave you defenseless.”

Following up on the idea that Hilary Clinton wants to take away the citizen’s right to bear arms, the NRA really tries to push home the idea that this is a hypocritical action by Senator Clinton. They released a second video that pushed the idea that Clinton herself is an elitist. The NRA’s video shows Clintons boarding private jets and constantly being monitored by armed body guards before giving information regarding her
ideas toward gun reform. The use of both the elite nature and her liberal ideas towards gun control is meant to frame her as a self-idealized hypocrite. NRA chairman Chris Cox describes her actions as “believes in one set of rules for her, and a different set of rules for the rest of us.”

Political Campaign Advertisements: Framing of Hillary Clinton in regards to Gun Control

Although the 2016 presidential campaign differs from traditional campaigns, one thing remains constant, the effect political ads have on voter decisions.

Just like artists frame their pieces, campaigns aim to frame candidates. Rhetorical framing happens when an object, situation, or person has been described in a way that leads the audience to believe a certain way. In this campaign, Trump frames Clinton as untrustworthy, hypocritical, untransformative, and weak. While she tries to frame herself as nurturing, knowledgeable, relatable, and strong.

Nurturing, Protective Mother
Hillary Clinton informs her audience of her stance through the use of positive, storytelling ads. In one ad titled *My Mom*, the daughter of a victim of the Sandy Hook Shooting describes the loss of her mother, the principle of the school. It starts with wedding pictures and the daughter telling the story of planning her wedding with her mother. Scenes of ambulance lights and a news article covering the shooting appear on screen. Next the daughter says,

“No one is fighting harder to reform our gun laws than Hillary Clinton”

The narration continues with the daughter stating that Clinton “reminds me of my mother”.

In this ad, Clinton uses testimonial to reach her target audience of younger, college educated women. Hillary frames herself as a loving caring motherly figure. This ad extols Hillary virtues through the use of narrative and storytelling.

**Hypocrite Hillary**

While Clinton frames herself as protective and nurturing in her gun control political ads, Trump attacks her practices during his speeches.

*POLITICO on Twitter*

Donald Trump: “Hillary wants to essentially abolish the Second Amendment.” https://t.co/jEppTyaUbS
Because harsh backlash happened after Trump’s comment, “2nd Amendment people” should “take care” of Hillary, the NRA, The National Rifle Association, decided that they should intervene and distribute an attack ad instead of doing something more extreme (which could have been implied with Trump’s controversial quote).

In this particular ad, the NRA focuses on framing Hillary as a “hypocrite”. The ad starts with black SUVs escorted by police vehicles pulling up to a private jet. Hillary steps out of the SUV and armed guard walk her to the plane. The ad says that Hillary “tours on private jets protected by guards for thirty years, but she doesn’t believe in your right to keep a gun at home for self defense”. Because Trump did not attach his approval, this ad has the ability to attack Clinton as hard as it wants. PACs do not abide by the same rules as candidates. In fact, most attack ads which occur during a normal political campaign are paid for and distributed by PACs.

What does framing mean for the election?

With citizens already heading to the polls for early voting to elect the next president, it is important to understand how framing effects their decisions. For those who watch NRA’s ad, they could see Hillary as a hypocrite or untrustworthy. For those who watched the My Mom ad, they could see Hillary as someone who will nurture The United States of America back to health after the gun violence occurring across the country.

Toomey’s Favor on Gun Control
Brings Skepticism

In the Pennsylvania Senate race between Republican Pat Toomey and Democrat Katie McGinty, politics take an unexpected turn in the gun control debate. Persuasive communication comes into play resulting in intriguing results. Supporters of gun control could possibly help the GOP maintain their influence on the United States Senate. Gun control advocates may possibly be backing Toomey in this controversial race for Senate.

Toomey Can’t Please Everybody

Pat Toomey has done well in the Pennsylvania Senate race thus far. According to Erin Kelley from USA Today, “He won the endorsement of gun safety groups headed by former New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg and former Democratic congresswoman Gabby Giffords of Arizona because of his unsuccessful quest to convince fellow Republicans to expand background checks of gun buyers”. Pat Toomey utilized key rhetorical strategies such as Identification to appeal to the opposite party on the topic of gun control to ultimately appeal to a broad spectrum of potential voters. However, this odd but effective approach at persuasion could not end up being that effective after all.

Republican candidate Toomey is taking a gamble in deciding to not endorse Republican presidential candidate, Donald Trump.
This decision along with Toomey’s crossing on the gun rights divide has led to skepticism from the Republican Party. Marc Levy from PBS NEWSHOUR reports, “Toomey, who also has separated himself from most of his GOP Senate colleagues by refusing to endorse Donald Trump, is facing questions from skeptical Republicans over his votes to expand background checks and prevent gun purchases by suspected terrorists as he campaigns in a state where Hillary Clinton leads Trump in polls by 10 points in the presidential race”. With polls exposing that this race is “virtually tied”, this newfound skepticism in the Republican vote in support of Pat Toomey could be detrimental. In this scenario, Toomey took a risk in using Identification as a rhetorical strategy to appeal towards the democratic vote, when consequently he only raised eyebrows in the potential voters of his own party.

Newsflash: Trump Remarks Sparks Outrage, Gun Rights

When Hillary wants to “essentially abolish the Second Amendment”, you can bet that Trump and his loyal supporters have some things to say. At a rally in Wilmington, North Carolina on August 9th, Trump cited Hillary’s impending choice to fill the Supreme Court vacancy with a judge that undoubtedly would assist her intentions to create major legislation with regards to gun control rights in the country. Amidst a clearly controversial election that has flooded media every which way for months, the so-called “surprises” out of Trump and Clinton’s mouths aren’t even surprises anymore.

Trump’s outstanding record of mouthing jaw-dropping, “can-you-believe-he-said-that” remarks continues with this saga related
to gun control. He not-so-subtly noted that, “Although the Second Amendment people, maybe there is [something you could do]”. So, now people think that Presidential candidate Donald Trump is suggesting that citizens use *gun violence against candidate Hillary Clinton. Not really holding up the “positive vibes only” side of the deal.

Many take to Twitter to express outrage over the comment.

There likely isn’t much that Trump regrets about this remark. We know from an exemplary record that these comments are rarely followed without a disregard for apologetics and retraction. Rhetorically, we know this is right up his alley. Through the initial response to the citizen masses, it is reasonable to think that the intention can even be to target these strong right-wingers, particularly the heavy gun rights supporters. If we assume that nothing is voiced from a candidate that is not intentional to some degree of audience, there could be *some* understanding to the process behind the remarks. There also is some credit given to the simplicity and straightforwardness of such a statement. With the short mention, Trump successfully paints his stance on gun control, the focus on the Supreme Court nomination, as well as his super unknown opinion of Hillary Clinton.
On the other, far more significant side, this comment has the real potential to make citizens question his actual level of sanity. The harsh suggestion is blows far past painting an enemy picture of an opposing candidate and instead begins to approach a real question about Donald Trump’s fitness for an office of such respect, stature, and responsibility. I would doubt few listeners could believe he is telling gun activists to really attack Hillary Clinton, but you can bet that there are debates circulating around this man’s position to even run for this office, let alone win it. Former Democratic House Representative from Arizona, and victim of a 2011 shooting rampage, Gabrielle Giffords, summed up an accurate description of the comment’s implications when she says, “We must draw a bright red line between political speech and suggestions of violence...Responsible, stable individuals won’t take Trump’s rhetoric to its literal end, but his words may provide a magnet for those seeking infamy.”

Others, including the Former Head to National Security, Anti-Trump groups, a former GOP Senator, the President of the Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence, and many more have responded furiously calling out the inappropriate, offensive, and even illegal aspects of Trump’s statement. Ultimately, the disastrous and terrible negative effects from this statement outweigh any possible advantages it could have been intended to accomplish. Instead of a picture as a strong, authoritative, relatable conservative figure, Trump can really just find himself facing a new title: dangerous.

If there were any hope whatsoever that he could dispel some of
the instability association so widely painted by Democrats and perceived by voters, it is continually obliterated by these type of comments from the Republican candidate. It seems as though this possible attempt at a joke to rally support and elicit some strong emotions from those opposing Clinton’s plans to affect gun rights has merely steered in a terrible dark and unforgiving territory. And that, I can’t imagine is a rhetorical objective in a campaign.

Trump Suggesting ‘Second Amendment People’ to Deal with Hillary: The Reactions

Did Trump really say that?

In early August, Trump appeared at a rally in Wilmington, North Carolina claiming Clinton would take away the Second Amendment. He stated, “...if she gets to pick, if she gets to pick her judges, nothing you can do, folks. Although the Second Amendment people, maybe there is, I don’t know...”
Although his wording is very ambiguous, many people thought Trump was promoting Second Amendment people to use violence to stop Hillary Clinton. Trump’s campaign responded saying, “Second Amendment people have amazing spirit and are tremendously unified, which gives them great political power. And this year, they will be voting in record numbers, and it won’t be for Hillary Clinton, it will be for Donald Trump.” So what were the reactions to Trump’s off-the-cuff comment?

Immediately, the Rep. Eric Swalwell called for the Secret Service to investigate Trump’s statement.

*Rep. Eric Swalwell on Twitter*

> Donald Trump suggested someone kill Sec. Clinton. We must take people at their word. @SecretService must investigate #TrumpThreat.

According to an article posted by the Wall Street Journal, “the Clinton campaign declared his remarks ‘dangerous,’ charging that they amounted to a car for an attack against his opponent.” Hillary Clinton even posted on Twitter the same day,

[https://twitter.com/HillaryClinton/status/763103518773436416?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw](https://twitter.com/HillaryClinton/status/763103518773436416?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

The US Secret Service communications director, Cathy Milhoan, told CNN, “You’re not just responsible for what you say. You are responsible for what people hear.” Robby Mook, Hillary Clinton’s campaign manager, stated, “A person seeking to be president of the United States should not suggest violence in any way.” Even some supporters like Ryan Williams, a former aide to Mitt Romney, and House Speaker Paul Ryan, stated, “He makes it harder every day to continue to support him…It’s almost like he wants people to denounce him.” Ryan also stated, “It sounds like just a joke gone bad…I hope he clears
it up very quickly, you should never joke about something like that.”

Though a lot of people are attacking Trump for his comments, some people continue to support him.

Sen. Jeff Sessions of Alabama, said it was an “awkwardly worded call” to call for gun owners to be a political force. The National Rifle Association also backed Trump a posted on twitter making the focus on on Trump’s comment but that, if elected, Clinton will appoint anti-gun Supreme Court Justices.

**NRA on Twitter**

@RealDonaldTrump is right. If @HillaryClinton gets to pick her anti-#2A #SCOTUS judges, there’s nothing we can do. #NeverHillary

Overall, Democrats believe it was a call for violence, while Republicans believe it was a call for political unification. One thing that we all can agree on, Trump caught Republicans and Democrats off guard with his statement.
“Shots Fired” on Twitter

On Tuesday October 4\textsuperscript{th}, both Vice Presidential candidates gathered at Longwood University in Virginia. Both Senator Kaine, Hilary Clinton’s running partner, and Governor Mike Pence, Donald Trump’s running partner, gathered to participate in the event. Elaine Quijano was the moderator of the event, and would a vast variety of questions to both men. When Quijano asked Kaine whether “we ask too much of police in our country?” that would spark gun control issues to life.

The response

It was Senator Kaine’s response that sparked a confrontation. Kaine said “I’m a gun owner, I’m a strong Second Amendment supporter, but I’ve got a lot of scar tissue because when I was governor of Virginia there was a horrible shooting at Virginia Tech. And we learned that, through that painful situation that gaps in the background record system should have been closed and that could have prevented that crime. So we’re going work to do things like close background record checks and if we do, we won’t have the tragedies that we did.” It was the first part of this statement that didn’t sit well with one of the largest Second Amendment right supporters in our nation. The Nation Riffle Association did not take well to
this and would take the platform of Twitter to respond.

Here is a link to article containing NRA tweets
http://bearingarms.com/beth-b/2016/10/04/nra-sets-record-straight-on-senator-kaines-gun-control-push/

Why Twitter?

The NRA wanted to separate themselves as far away from Senator Kaine and as quickly as possible. The quickest way in society today to send out a message is via social media. Social media gives an immediate platform to present your view point and also acquire immediate feedback from others. It is also massive, with nearly 313 million users on twitter alone. The NRA tweet rating Senator Kaine as an “f” would immediately be seen and redistributed across the web. The giant nature of the NRA and its close association with defending the second amendment, combined with the immediate distribution of their message was an attempt to separate Senator Kaine and the idea that he is a supporter of the 2nd amendment.