Now shake hands and be friends

It seems for once that our major parties agree on one issue. What would that issue be? Gun control.

While many of the details of the 2nd Amendment rhetoric differ, even our polar opposite political parties agree that guns in the wrong hands can be detrimental. On Tuesday October 4th, Vice Presidential candidates Mike Pence and Tim Kaine took the stage for their first debate in the 2016 election.

Initializing the controversial question concerning the issues The United States is facing with law enforcement and race relations. Elaine Quijano brings up the Dallas Police Shooting. She said, “Do we ask too much of police officers in this country, and how specifically do you address the chief’s [David Brown] concerns [with mental health funding and putting off blame on cops]?”

Kaine addressed the chief’s concerns by discussing the issue of background checks.

“I’m a gun owner. I’m a strong 2nd amendment supporter, but I 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 check system should’ve been closed and it could have prevented that crime. So we’re going to work to do things like close background record checks and if we do, we won’t have the tragedies like we did. One of those killed at Virginia Tech was named Liviu Librescu. He was a 70 plus
year old Romanian holocaust survivor. He had survived the holocaust, then he survived the Soviet Union take over of his country, but then he was a visiting professor at Virginia Tech and he couldn’t survive the scourge of gun violence. We can support the 2nd amendment and do things like background record checks and make it safer and that will make police safer too.”

The attention was focused on the issue of allowing individual’s with mental health concerns the ability to bare arms. He does this through the use of enthymemes. Not once in his narrative did Kaine mention that the shooter, Seung Hui Cho, had a history of mental illness. Instead he allowed the audience to make the connections.

After a lavish story of growing up with a father who served as a police officer, Mike Pence made a statement that showed his agreement with Kaine. He said, “at the risk of agreeing with you.” If one goes to Donald Drumpf’s campaign website, s/he will find a list of Drumpf’s 2nd amendment and gun control policies. Listed among them is this:

According to a Pew Research survey in July 2015, 85% of the public – including large majorities of both Republicans (79%) and Democrats (88%) – favored making private gun sales and sales at gun shows subject to background checks. There was also bipartisan support for laws to prevent people with mental illness from purchasing guns. [Pew Research, Jan. 5, 2016]

So it seems that for once, Both Democrats and Republicans see eye to eye on the issue of mental health and gun control. It will be interesting to see if this issue will be brought up in
Biting the Bullet at the Debate

Last night at the Vice Presidential Debate, Virginia Senator Tim Kaine and Indiana Governor Mike Pence, went head-to-head in what seemed to be one big giant interruption. The moderator, Elaine Quijano, asked a certain question that seemed to spark some intensified tension. “Do we ask too much of police officers in this country? And how would you specifically address the chief’s concerns? Senator Kaine?” Turning into a question of 2nd Amendment Rights, the candidates’ responses were notably compelling in rhetoric.

Senator Kaine—The gun owner
Although many deemed Mike Pence winner of the 2016 Vice Presidential debate, Kaine utilized key rhetorical strategies such as Identification and leaned on the Narrative Standard to intensify and elicit specific emotions. Chris Megerian from the *Los Angeles Times* claims that Kaine’s position on gun control “have become more stringent over time” and “his support for tougher gun control meshes with Clinton’s platform”. This is obvious, however Tim Kaine’s opening statement of “I’m a gun owner. I’m a strong 2nd Amendment supporter, but I got a lot of scar tissue” was a statement not so expected.

**Persuasive Communication is key**

The four principles of persuasive communication according to Westin’s *The Political Brain* are essential, however, Tim Kaine accentuated on one precisely. The first principle of Westin’s states, “Always try to elicit specific emotions”. Kaine verbally allotted himself a connection to gun owners and 2nd Amendment supporters and viewers. Using specific words associated with the way a viewer and/or potential voter perceives the issue was the strategy Kaine used to tackle this gun control discussion. However he handled the discussion with a Narrative Standard. He spoke about his time in office as governor of Virginia when the massacre at Virginia Tech occurred. I found this an interesting way to put his views of gun control into perspective for those who do favor the 2nd Amendment. A connection first with the opposition, and then a narrative standard to aid in persuasion of Clinton’s gun control platform. Persuasion is powerful.
Like None Before Him: Trump on Gun Control in 2016

As haunting news flashes continue to stain the media over the last few years concerning another mass shooting report, one begs to wonder how these terrorizing incidences can be avoided. Amidst the events at Sandy Hook Elementary school, the movie theater in Denver, Colorado, and various more in malls, schools, and places of worship, the question of gun rights remains a hot debate. The perfect time for it to reach boiling point? The 2016 Presidential race.

Following the Sandy Hook shooting in Newton, Connecticut, President Barack Obama pledged efforts towards modifying gun control reforms. Since then, he has been, at times, loosely drifting from a strict adherence to modification of these regulations. When approached with the question about his Second Amendment pursuit, he merely stated that he aimed “to arrive at a consensus around violence reduction—not just of gun violence, but violence at every level, on every step, looking at everything we can do to reduce violence”. Now, after years in development and following a multitude of traumatic gun-yielding murders, this issue about the regulations for those owning and possessing these weapons will be on everyone’s election radar.
In the Clinton vs. Trump face up, there lies some obvious benefits towards the left. A major focal point of the Clinton campaign has been highlighting stricter background checks and hard regulations surrounding the right to bear arms. According to polling from the Americans for Responsible Solutions, sixty percent of women voters want stronger gun laws. This statistic alone represents an integral piece of the upcoming Presidential race, as this group of voters has already represented a key demographic when it comes to campaigning. Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton alike have undeniably faced the fact that the independent women voters can have the power to decide much of the results in November.

As a woman and mother herself, Clinton definitely wins the ability to appeal to the familial aspect that haunts every woman in America’s mind when it comes to protecting their children and families through stricter rules. Trump’s only true response strategy to this is through an attempt to appeal to the female population’s ability to defend themselves. In his inverse appeal of his own, he attempts to flip the cards bysaying, “In trying to overturn the Second Amendment, Hillary
Clinton is telling everyone, and every woman living in a dangerous community, that she doesn’t have the right to defend herself”.

A Post from the NRA Twitter page, endorsing Trump following an address to the group. https://twitter.com/NRA

And, in usual Trump fashion, he takes the matter far further than this claim in highlighting Obama’s release of criminals from prison, Hillary’s support of the same, and tying them to the illegal immigrants that have represented an ongoing issue
in the country for years—which, if you had even stepped out of your home in the last year, you would know to also represent a whole separate campaign hot topic. Ultimately, Trump claims that the solution is more guns: ones for protection, security, and natural-born American rights. He represents a campaign style in the issue in which no candidate has previously ventured. He is offensively and unsubtly pushing against any of the regulations proposed in recent politics—even when it’s incredibly unpopular to the citizens of the country.

Like virtually every issue in this November’s election (and seemingly the last year of news coverage), the debate over gun-control and Second Amendment Rights remains incredibly salient and polarizing. It is hard to tell whether Trump’s aggressive statements and strategies relating to the issue will prove to support his candidacy. Though his ideas and arguments are admittedly harsh and seemingly insensitive due to recent events, he undoubtedly knows how to respond with an emotional appeal to these women voters and everyone in between. So, BREAKING NEWS: Trump and Hillary are extremely opposite on an issue.

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**Trump Doesn’t Know What He Believes.**

![Image of Trump with a concealed carry gun]

Trump Gets It.
Wrong. He doesn’t get it. Throughout the political campaign, Donald Trump has taken a firm stance on gun control; however, after the recent debate on Sept. 27, it seems Trump has changed his mind on certain aspects of gun control like no fly-lists and watch lists. This has created some confusion among the public and begs the question, what exactly is Trump’s position on these issues?

**Trump and the NRA**

**No Fly-lists and Watch Lists**

Towards the end of May 2016, NRA executive director Chris Cox officially [endorsed Trump for President](https://www.nytimes.com/). Grover Norquist in an article by the *New York Times* stated, “Trump in his public statements, in his speech at the convention, is the most pro-Second Amendment presidential candidate of either party in living memory, and we haven’t had a presidential candidate declare war on the Second Amendment community as aggressively as Hillary.” However, in the debate, Trump actually agreed with Clinton’s stance on watch lists in terms of gun control by stating, “...I think we have to look very strongly at no fly-lists and watch lists.” Trump actually agreed with Clinton’s position on no fly-lists and watch list over the stance of his endorsers, the NRA. It seems that the NRA thought Trump was fully committed to eliminating gun control; however, Trump has now taken a stance for gun control. Trump then plans to meet with the NRA to clarify his position on gun control and watch list and no fly lists.

**Donald J. Trump on Twitter**

*I will be meeting with the NRA, who has endorsed me, about not allowing people on the terrorist watch list, or the no fly list, to buy guns.*

**Gun-Free Zones**
In terms of Gun-Free Zones, that issue has also become opaque. During a speech for the **NRA Leadership Forum**, Trump stated, “We’re getting rid of gun-free zones…” He stood firm on his stance for gun-free zones; however, Trump again had to clarify his position. He clarified in a **CNN article**, “I don’t want to have guns in classrooms, although in some cases teachers should have guns in classrooms, frankly…” It seems pretty evident that Trump does not know what he truly stands for, and gun-free zones is another example proving his confusion.

So, What does Trump stand for in terms of gun control? Who knows. Larry Pratt, the executive director of Gun Owners of America stated in an article by the **Daily Dot** that, “Trump is not at all satisfactory He’s not consistent. Sometimes he’s conservative, and sometimes he’s not.”

So what do you believe, Mr. Trump?
Trump’s “gun advocates”

To say that Donald Trump is an outspoken man would be an understatement. This is a reputation that has followed him since the airing of his NBC television show the apprentice, as he often humiliated many of the contestants. Now as political figure he continues to make obscene comments. A major topic so far this election has been gun control due to the recent mass shootings across the nation. Trump’s comments on gun control in reference to Clinton have gathered media attention as many have perceived them as threats to her safety. This threatening style of rhetoric is Trump’s attempt to intimidate Clinton.

Miami Rally

On September 16th, at one of his own rallies, Trump centered a large part of his attention on gun control. His intent was to
plant the idea that Hilary Clinton was attempting to demolish the second amendment. In his efforts to do this, Trump would make a series of statements that many have taken to be threat towards Clinton. Trump in short said that we should disarm Clinton’s body guards and see just how dangerous it would be for her. [http://www.cnn.com/videos/politics/2016/09/16/donald-trump-hillary-clinton-guns-security-sot-acosta-erin.cnn](http://www.cnn.com/videos/politics/2016/09/16/donald-trump-hillary-clinton-guns-security-sot-acosta-erin.cnn) This gathers immediate backlash that Trump is intentionally using his aggressive style of rhetoric to insight violence towards his opponent. This gathered the attention of Clinton’s campaign manager Robby Mook as he claimed the comments “should be out of bounds for a presidential candidate” before furthering this by stating “He is unfit to be President”.

North Carolina

On August 9th Trump would use his aggressive style of rhetoric towards Clinton. When speaking on the possibility that Clinton would attempt to demolish the second amendment if elected, Trump would make a comment that many perceived as a direct threat to Clinton. Trump claimed there was nothing we could do to save gun rights if Clinton was to elect “her judges”, except for the 2nd amendment supporters may be able to find a way to stop it. [http://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/10/us/politics/donald-trump-hillary-clinton.html?_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/10/us/politics/donald-trump-hillary-clinton.html?_r=0) The immediate interpretation of his statements is that he is encouraging his supports to act violently towards Clinton. Former CIA director Micheal Hayden believed Trumps comments to be worthy of investigation, stating that “If someone else had said that said outside the hall, he’d be in the back of a police wagon now.” In attempt to shed a positive light onto this aggressive statement, Trump’s campaign manager would call the statement a call to unify supporters of the second amendment to vote.
Trump’s aggressive style of rhetoric is largely why many people support him. They see him as relatable as he speaks his mind. On the matter of gun control it has played a different role. His aggressive style towards Hilary Clinton has been perceived as threatening and many believe it furthers the argument that he is unfit to be the President of the United States.