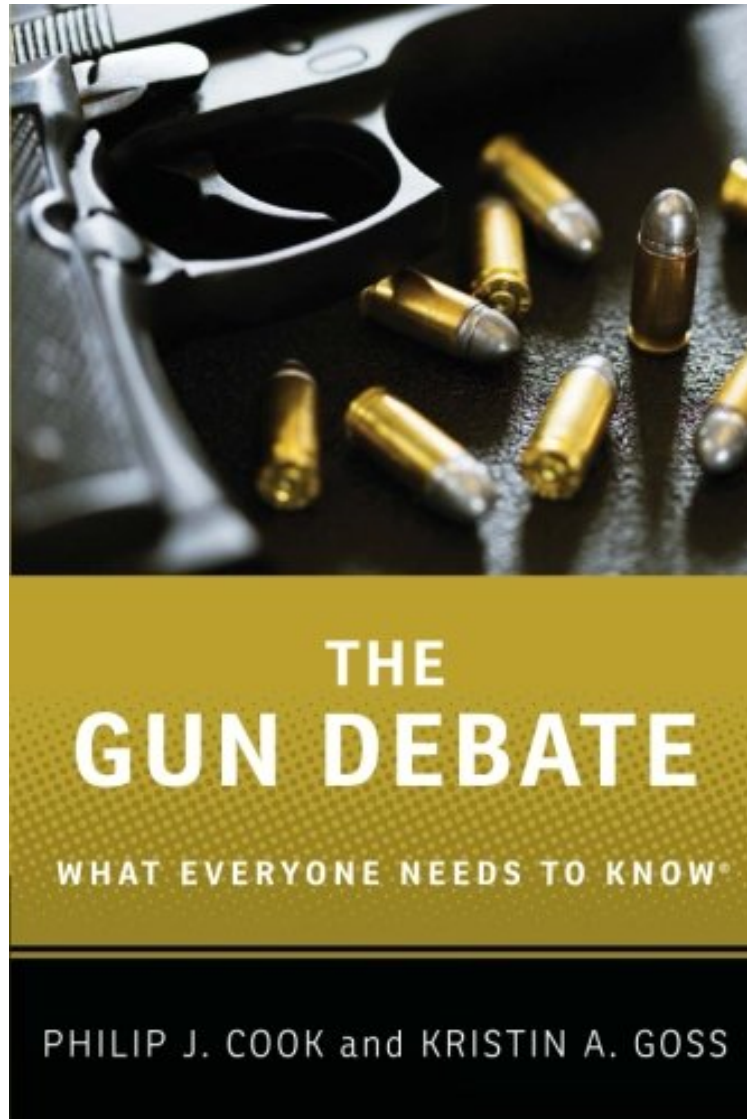


[Free pdf] The Gun Debate: What Everyone Needs to Know

The Gun Debate: What Everyone Needs to Know

Philip J. Cook, Kristin A. Goss

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Philip J. Cook, Kristin A. Goss : The Gun Debate: What Everyone Needs to Know before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Gun Debate: What Everyone Needs to Know:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Impeccably researched and fair-minded By Robert Hayes
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.⁵ of 6 people found the following review helpful. Will Reward the Careful and Critical Reader
By David Yamane
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 it? -- The Gun Debate was very useful for my class, taught me a lot, and will definitely reward the careful and critical reader interested in the role of guns in society.³ of 4 people found the following review helpful. Good book. Solid writing.
By Ben
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.

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 Know 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 Know is a registered trademark of Oxford University Press.

"...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 "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 About the Author 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.