
10 | A Decade Later: Nine More Years of Data and Nine More States

Introduction

Ten years have passed since the second edition of this book. During that time, both the argument and the data have been hotly debated. This debate has often been unpleasant, vociferous, and even disingenuous. To say that my career has suffered as a result is something of an understatement and, alas, an unpleasant warning to other scholars who dare to go against the academic grain. And yet, as this chapter will document, within the scholarly community the research has withstood criticism and remains sound. Further, the additional ten years of data provide continued strong support for the arguments I initially put forward on right-to-carry and other gun-control laws.

I would never have predicted that I would still be working on gun control a decade and a half after I started thinking about the issue. Back in 1993, I had done extensive research on crime, having served as chief economist at the United States Sentencing Commission, but the issues I was interested in were corporate and white-collar crime. I had little interest in the gun-control issue, and I rarely read academic papers on the topic. It is strange how seemingly small decisions can cascade into results that one would never guess. In my case, the impetus came when I was teaching at the Wharton Business School from a couple students asking if I could spend a little