Gun control: Argumentized Analysis

The Gun Control Movement Needs Its Own Pro-Life Fanatic is a 2015 article by Alex Pareene, an American writer. This 2015 article touches upon gun control in America and how we need to approach the movement using the fanatical strategies of anti-abortion activists. This text is unique because it intertwines two different ideals: one from the democratic stance (pro-gun control) and one from the republican stance (anti-abortion). In his writing, Pareene is unclear about his political stance because he purely addresses rather than agrees with each activist movement. However, this makes the text compelling, and why we should consider or even care about this article and its contents. Children and adolescents are dropping dead left and right from guns, and Pareene truly makes you think about *why* this keeps happening, how we are partly at fault, and what people can *actively do* to make a difference. Adding onto this, the unbiased political view makes you genuinely focus on this main message rather than the tactics of political ideals. This is important because arguments are usually unsuccessful when addressing a view such as the gun control movement due to the politically or opinionated swayed approach.

In paragraph two, page two, Pareene states, “The gun control movement in this country is a pathetic failure.” He argues that the people are at fault for how we *approach* enforcing this movement/change. The writer then explains how anti-abortion activists use specific strategies when approaching what they are so passionate about. For example, within this activism, they have *actively* made change through aggression, threats, disturbing imagery, and perseverance. Pareene lays out how gun control activists are *passively* engaging in how they approach making

changes to what they believe in. He argues that adopting the heavy-set anti-abortion approach is what is going to make the proper change the gun control movement desires.

Pareene is strong with his argument due to the base being an unbiased political *and* general stance. He understands persuasion is not about him and uses strong decorum to ensure he "fits in" with political and general views while still arguing for one ideal. Pareene ideal/argument is how America's gun control movement is poor and argues about how *people within* that movement need to approach their activism differently to make a change. He addresses this controversial topic, but it is merely an *argumentized bystander opinion*; never once does he input his personal feelings about the subject or political ideals around it. Adding to that, Pareene starts discussing how gun control activists should adopt these effective anti-abortion fanatical strategies. Throughout this discussion, he still obtains an unbiased argument by only presenting pure observation and facts (logos). For example, he shares the stats from 2010, addressing how they passed more abortion restrictions in two years than in the entire previous decade (Pareene, 2015). This was possible by being able to "skillfully exploit… [and] fight harder than almost any political party in the United States…, but when it comes to protecting the lives of *actual* children from gun violence, fanaticism seems to be in order" (Pareene 3-4). His logical statement shows that it comes from examining the differences between the separate movements. Pareene does not use first-person language when referencing these societal situations, which is essential when trying to argue. He uses this same tactic of pure rational thought throughout the article but does not use it in an indecorous way, which makes him more persuasive. He makes the reader comfortable by not picking political sides yet sticking to the facts that support his original ideal.

Pareene uses concession and aporia to leave the reader unconsciously reasoning with all the data in front of them. He meshes these two rhetorical skills together by discussing the

approach of the two activist parties. He asks the question: “Aren’t there a couple of thousand gun control activists out there passionate enough to want to stand outside gun shops and provoke confrontations with open carry wingnuts?” (Pareene, p. 4 para. 3). He set up this question directly after talking about how anti-abortion activists are the most successful when using gruesome images and verbal harassment outside of clinics. Pareene is openly wondering and acting as if he cannot fathom a reason why the gun control movement does not adopt this strategy. This leaves the reader to adapt and wonder about their stance. Directly after, he states what would happen if they did stand outside gun shops and demonstrate said strategies. Pareene asserts that it would make a difference and that it would achieve the goal of fear and change just as the anti-abortionists achieved. Going into an article such as this, a reader would expect to see the facts for their argument and the counter side. Pareene manages to mention the counterargument of these tactics, possibly glorifying violence and aggression. As well as this, he is not indecorous. He makes sure to talk about how change is not going to happen overnight: “The government is not going to seize anyone’s guns any time soon…just as the anti-abortion movement chips away at abortion access, [it is all] working slowly toward a big prize” (Pareene, p.5 & 7, para. 5 & 2). Slipping in or acknowledging the opposing side (concession) is vital because it does not show ignorance, which improves authority, and he uses it to rebut and strengthen his argument. The way he set up these couple pages was skillful because Pareene is shifting the reader’s mind by making them think about where his stance is coming from but then solidifying or changing it with facts that follow. He is also shifting the willingness to act by having those facts be pure examples of how approaching activism in the anti-abortionist way is effective.

On top of changing the readers' willingness and minds, Pareene is also heavily focused on setting the mood of the article with heavy imagery and emotion. He does this by incorporating demonstrative, deliberative, or forensic rhetoric. All his descriptions that evoke feeling are either based on the present (demonstrative), separating good and evil, the future (deliberative), emphasizing choice and mutual goals, or the past (forensic), which deals with justice. Pareene aims to change the reader's mood by constantly painting an image of what a successful gun control movement should entail. For example, he starts off his article using forensic rhetoric when he talks about Sandy Hook and how "twenty small children were murdered" (Pareene, p.2, para 3). After this, he strategically mentions that following the disaster, our gun control proposals were a pathetic failure. His adaption of word choice of 'small' and 'murdered' makes you imagine how terrible and gruesome the situation was, which then makes you feel guilty and think, why is our gun control movement failing us? Consecutively, Pareene starts mentioning Anti-Abortion and how those activists fight with gruesome, *winning* procedures harder than any movement (Pareene, 2015). He then describes, "When it comes to the slaughter of walking, talking persons, cut down helplessly by weapons specifically designed for killing, we behave as if nothing can really be done… [and] fanaticism seems to be in order" (Pareene, p.4, para 1). By using demonstrative rhetoric, he lays out the present situation with facts. Pareene also breaks down the two categories of good and evil and clarifies who is worth celebrating. Lastly, he addresses mood through deliberative rhetoric emphasizing choice and how the gun control movement can achieve its goal. Pareene starts this off by mentioning the observation of how anti-abortionists take place in spine-chilling actions that genuinely drive their argument. He compares the gore-filled activists to how all the gun control movement does is hoist signs with pictures of smiling kids *before* their lives were taken (Pareene, 2015). He emphasizes that the

choice of taking part in a horrific protest is what will make a proper impact on the gun control movement: “It means going in all gore. It means waving gruesome photos of dead children… [and] graphic photos of bullet-riddled corpses. There will need to be more of this” (Pareene 4-5). He lays out this imagery of future choices that makes you uncomfortable, sad, and angry, but these emotions make you think about the point and where the argument is coming from.

This argument is targeted toward a wide variety of readers, which makes it so unique. It firstly is pointed toward democrats, people that are pro-gun control or are activists of gun control. This group has benefited due to Pareenes’ focus on how to make this movement more successful. On the other side, it benefits an audience of Republicans, people who are antiabortionists, or activists of such beliefs. This advantage comes from where Pareene is criticizing the gun control movement and saying that to be successful, they need to adapt to the fanatical strategies of antiabortionists. Stepping outside of activism and political views this article could be for any student or teacher, a victim of gun violence, or pure fans of politics/debate. This generalized population could benefit through education from Pareenes’ unbiased display of information and knowledge. This article could genuinely resonate with anybody, no matter the category. Their intent or love would be satisfied in some form due to Pareenes’ art of fitting in everywhere.

What I found successful in this article was Pareene’s disinterest or unbiased approach to the material. It is important to stay neutral when writing about political or controversial topics. By doing this, you are just using facts, observation, and emotion, just as he did while crafting this information. This leaves the reader to adapt their view (or willingness), and it reaches a broader audience when subjective thoughts do not influence it. Another helpful approach was his sequential layout, word choice, and imagery. Pareene sets up the article by talking about the past,

present, and future, which perfectly sets up his argument by using all ends of the spectrum. On top of this, his word choice and imagery add to his argument by making the reader shift their mind and mood. I found his argument overall successful due to the points above and his knowledge of the topic. Having authority and being trustworthy with the information brings everything together nicely. I also found it reached all intended audiences due to Pareene's ability to fit into every possible audience encountering this article. My one recommendation would be to include interviews with activists of both sides and what they think of their success or failed success. This would give the article even more validity, including facts about the approach to making effective change.

In conclusion, Pareene made it clear that if activists for gun control want to be successful, they need to adopt an antiabortion stratagem. My experience with this article was positive. In my opinion, I agree with Pareene: we need more of this point of view spread throughout society because anti-abortion activists are successful due to the way they approach activism. I agree. I think our gun control is pathetic, and we are engaging in making change very *passively* compared to other movements. This article made me think about activism and what it truly means to be an activist. Antiabortionists fight with all their heart and do not stop till they see the results they want. They go to the extreme and instill their perspective into humanity, which is what it truly means to be an *active* movement. One thing I did think of was if gun control activists rallied outside of gun shops and did what antiabortionists do, couldn't it lead to people using guns in refutation? In my opinion, they are not only protesting the wrong way but also expressing and fighting for the incorrect root of the problem. If we want people to stop dying from guns, we need to stop saying the object is capable of disaster and start looking at the *type* of capable people. Just as a fork does not directly make somebody fat, a gun does not directly kill

kids; it is the person behind the object. Imposing stricter gun control needs the root to be psychological formulations on nonprofessional individuals who want to own a gun. My question to Pareene is where he stands politically and what his personal opinions are on antiabortion and gun control. I understand that is irrelevant to his article approach, but I am curious about where he stands and if he is an activist. Why else would he write this article if there was not some fascination? His article was complex and well-written, leaving you to think: are you truly making the difference you desire?