

Time Warner Shareholder Meeting Question
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My name is Justin Danhof, I am here as a proxy for colleague David Ridenour, and I am representing the National Center for Public Policy Research – a conservative, free-market think-tank. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

Mr. Bewkes, just weeks after the tragic shooting at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, Time Warner announced that it would no longer accept any gun advertisements that showed a semi-automatic weapon or a gun pointed at an individual. However, the announcement mentioned nothing about banning those depictions in Time Warner's cable programs or movies, and that makes it hypocritical. It also exposes the company to unnecessary reputational and financial risks.

In 2008, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the Second Amendment protects the rights of American citizens to keep and bear arms. The National Rifle Association has five million members and is growing in numbers and influence, as is Gun Owners of America. According to a Rasmussen Poll, “[t]wo-out-of-three Americans recognize that their constitutional right to own a gun was intended to ensure their freedom” against tyranny. Why would the company's leaders make a knee-jerk political decision that aligns Time Warner against the U.S. Constitution, the U.S. Supreme Court and the majority of American citizens that support and respect gun rights?

Your decision also comes at a time when American gun crime is rapidly declining, with gun killings plunging 39 percent, and non-lethal gun crimes dropping 69 percent, between 1993 and 2011. Despite these clear facts, a recent Pew Research poll found that most Americans think gun crimes are on the rise. The public can be forgiven for their misperception because of the way shooting tragedies such as Sandy Hook and Aurora are relentlessly exploited by partisan activists such as Piers Morgan on your cable new network CNN. That's right: the media bias from CNN and others is so bad that it has actually altered most American's perception of reality.

The public can also be forgiven for their misperceptions of gun crimes because of the gratuitous violence that can be witnessed at all hours of the day on Time Warner's cable offerings.

So my question is: why is Time Warner willing to profit from the excessive glorification of gun violence and partisan cable news ranting about guns, but not willing to profit from advertisements from legal gun shops, many of which are small businesses that legally sell firearms and ammunition to people who overwhelmingly use firearms in a lawful and safe manner, including self-defense, from doing the same?

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