**Letter to the Editor**

**Indianapolis Star, July 2, 2010**

**Don’t feel so safe having guns at home**

The Supreme Court has decided that its new incorporation into the second amendment of a gun owning right based on self protection should be incumbent on states and cities. The decision was no surprise from this radical court. Unfortunately, this is a right to make a dangerous mistake. The relative risk of suicide is four times higher for men in homes with guns. Women in the home are more likely to be murdered. Homes with guns are as or more likely to be burglarized than their neighbors. Civilian weapons are rarely used to defend against criminals, despite widespread gun ownership. Less than three percent of burglaries are resisted with a firearm and less than one percent of victims of violent crimes defend themselves with guns.

 A gun supporter in the Chicago case was quoted saying that owning a gun was as safe as playing golf. Fifteen Hoosiers died from accidental shootings in Indiana in 2007, but I can find none accidentally killed by golf balls or clubs. Just the other day, a Don Guns’ customer shot himself in the head. A Purdue student playing with a gun recently killed a buddy, and a small child in southern Indiana killed his sibling not long ago.

The liberty of gun ownership may be associated with a feeling of power, an opportunity to kill game, or amusement from shooting targets or cans, but it brings far more risk than safety into a home.

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