

Nicole Drew
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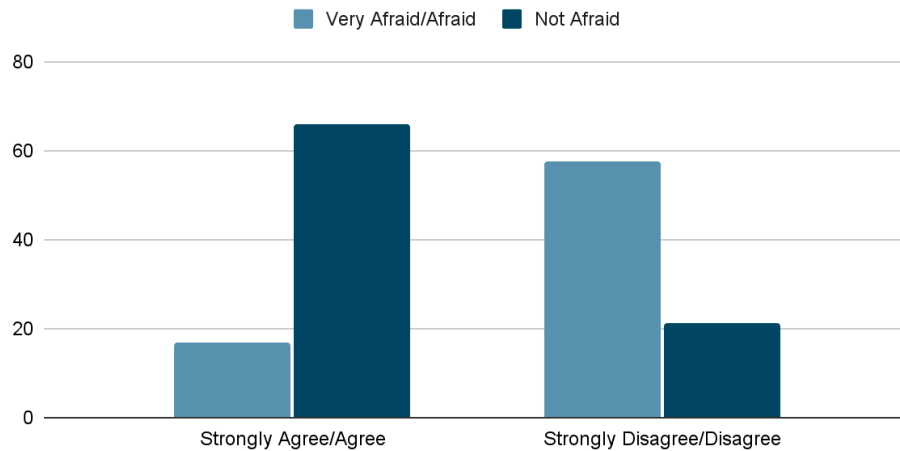
Views on Race & Immigration and Fear of Increased Gun Restrictions
The Chapman University Survey of American Fears

The last decade has seen a surge in gun violence in the United States. Shootings in schools, malls, and other public places have become common occurrences, and there is a push from interest groups and individuals to change gun laws in the United States to prevent more mass shootings and gun deaths. Yet, like most issues in American politics, gun control remains very divisive. Guns are ingrained in American society, and a central point of debate in American politics, and a majority of Americans support them, yet there remains a sector of the population that is opposed to any increased gun laws.¹ The issue of who fears increased restrictions on guns and firearms is particularly interesting and pertinent when looking at the debate on gun control in the United States. In particular, the connections between fear of increased gun restrictions and views on race and immigration are interesting topics for research. To explore this connection, I will utilize the Chapman Survey of American Fears (CSF), Wave 8 2022.

¹ Schaeffer, Katherine. "Key Facts about Americans and Guns." Pew Research Center, Pew Research Center, 13 Sept. 2021, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/09/13/key-facts-about-americans-and-guns/>.

Table 1: Support for BLM & Fear of Increased Gun Restrictions

How strongly do you agree with the following statement: I support Black Lives Matter (BLM)



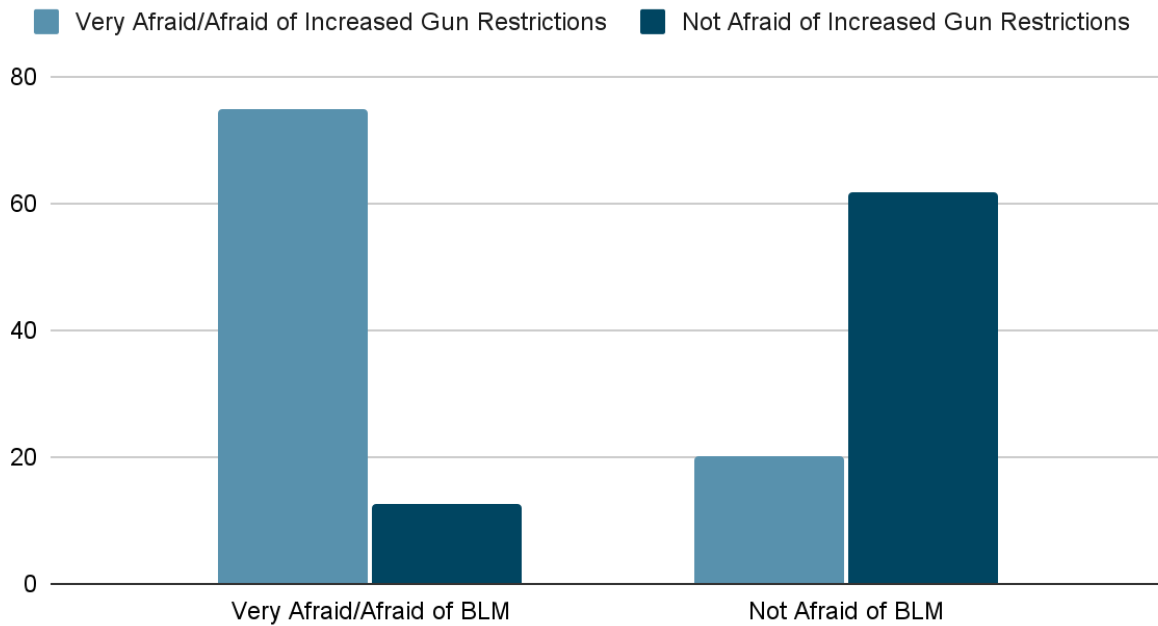
n = 1017

Source CSAF, Wave 8, Chapman University

Table 1 shows a clear divide between those who support Black Lives Matter (BLM) and those who do not. Only 16.93% of those who said they strongly agree or agree with the statement “I support Black Lives Matter” stated that they are afraid or very afraid of increased restrictions on guns and firearms. By contrast, 57.56% of those who disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement “I support Black Lives Matter” stated that they are afraid or very afraid of increased restrictions on guns and firearms. A large majority (65.96%) of those who strongly agreed or agreed with the statement about Black Lives Matter reported not being afraid of increased gun restrictions, a stark contrast to 23.33% of those who disagreed and strongly disagreed, who reported not being afraid of increased gun restrictions.

Table 2: Fear of BLM and Fear of Increased Gun Restrictions

How afraid are you of Black Lives Matter (BLM)?



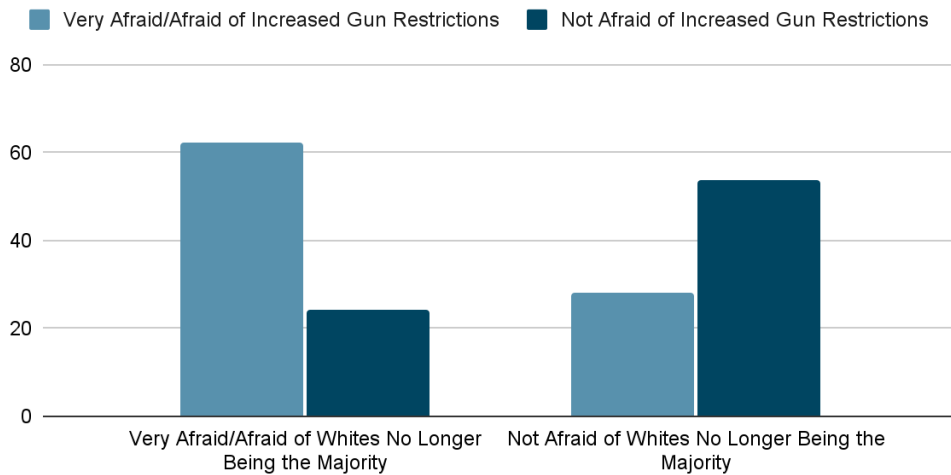
n = 1,001

Source CSAF, Wave 8, Chapman University

Table 2 shows stark differences in the levels of fear of increased gun restrictions among those who are afraid and very afraid of BLM and those who are not afraid of BLM. Of those who said they are very afraid or afraid of BLM, 75% stated that they are very afraid or afraid of increased gun restrictions. Only 12.5% of those from the same group said that they are not afraid of increased gun restrictions. Among those who said they are not afraid of BLM, 61.83% said that they are not afraid of increased restrictions on guns and firearms, while 20.17% said they are very afraid of such restrictions.

Table 3: Fear of Whites No Longer Being the Majority in the US & Fear of Increased Gun Restrictions

How afraid are you of Whites no longer being the majority in the US?

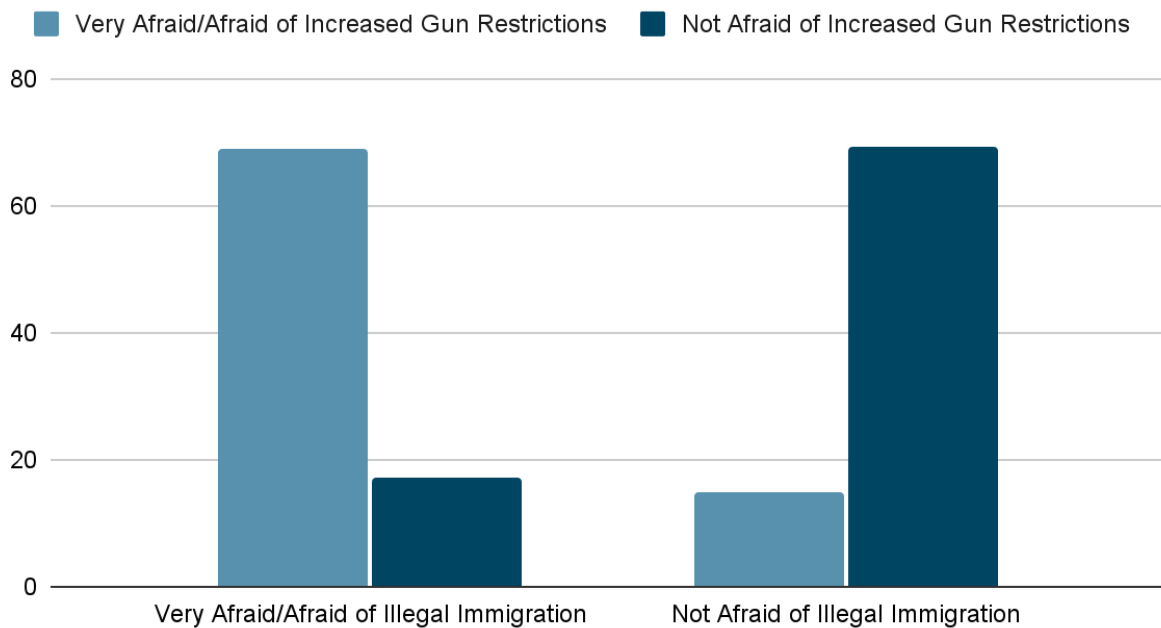


n = 1,018 Source: CSAF, Wave 8, Chapman University

Table 3 shows disparities in the levels of fear among people who answered that they are afraid or very afraid of whites no longer being the majority in the United States and those who answered that they are not afraid. A majority (62.11%) of those who said they are very afraid or afraid of whites no longer being the majority in the US said they are very afraid or afraid of increased restrictions on guns and firearms. Among those who said they are not afraid of whites no longer being the majority in the US, only 28.07% said they are afraid or very afraid of increased restrictions on guns and firearms, while 53.71% said they are not afraid of increased gun restrictions. Meanwhile, only 24.21% of those who said they are very afraid or afraid of whites no longer being the majority in the US said that they are not afraid of increased gun restrictions.

Table 4: Fear of Illegal Immigration and Fear of Increased Gun Restrictions

How afraid are you of illegal immigration?

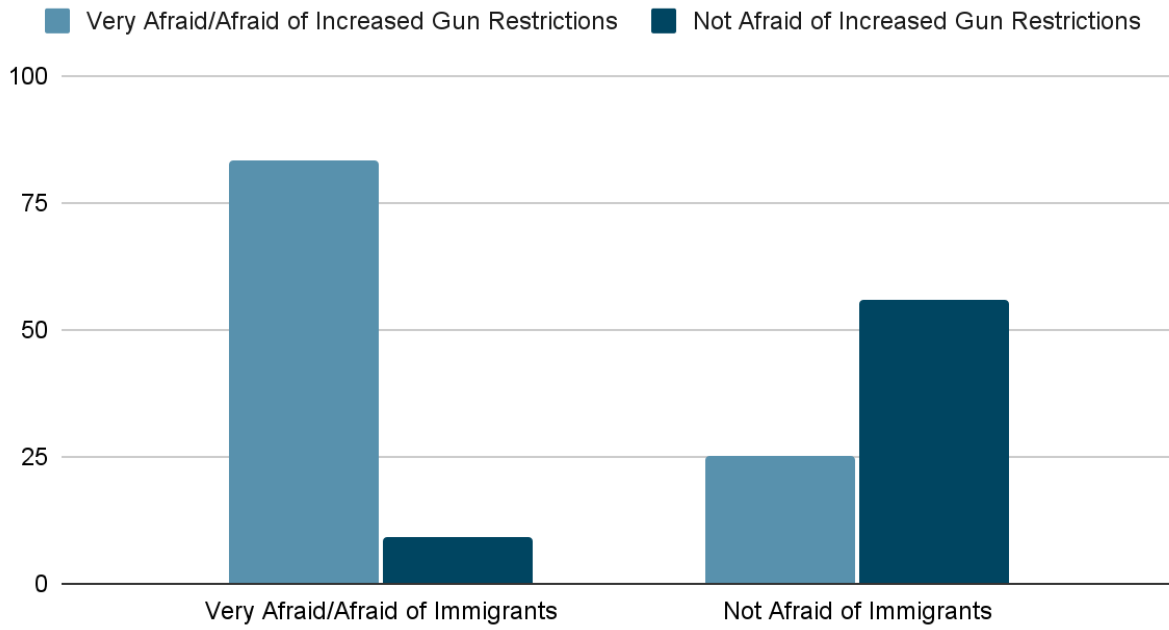


n = 1,017 Source: CSAF, Wave 8, Chapman University

Table 4 demonstrates a clear difference in how those who fear immigration and those who do not fear immigration feel the possibility of increased gun restrictions. Of the people who say they are very afraid or afraid of illegal immigration, 68.94% say they are afraid or very afraid of increased restrictions on guns and firearms. Only 17.05% of respondents from the same group say they are not afraid of increased gun restrictions. By contrast, of those who said they are not afraid of illegal immigration, only 14.93% say they are afraid or very afraid of increased gun restrictions, while 69.16% say they are not afraid.

Table 5: Fear of Immigrants and Fear of Increased Gun Restrictions

How afraid are you of immigrants?



n = 1,008 Source: CSAF, Wave 8, Chapman University

Table 5 demonstrates disparities in how those who fear immigrants and those who do not fear immigrants view increased gun restrictions. An extremely high percentage (83.33%) of respondents who say they are very afraid or afraid of immigrants state that they are very afraid or afraid of increased restrictions on guns and firearms. Only 9.09% of respondents from the same group say they are not afraid of increased gun restrictions. The divide is not as great among those who say they are not afraid of immigrants. From this group, 25.09% of respondents say that they are very afraid or afraid of increased restrictions on guns and firearms, while 55.81% say that they are not afraid of such restrictions.

There are several factors that can explain this apparent relationship between fear of increased gun restrictions and a person's views on race and immigration. Racial and immigration issues, like gun control, are extremely partisan issues that often fall along political lines. However, the relationship between an individual's views on race and immigration and their fear of increased restrictions on guns and firearms is extremely interesting and is something that ought to be studied further to understand where this relationship stems from.

