

Dear Editor,

Both liberals and conservatives seem to agree that facts are important. Determining whether something is more likely or less likely to be true is a useful activity and hence the value of historians, scientists and scholars to society. However, some people seem to have difficulty differentiating between how things really are and their own desires of how they wish things were.

For example, liberals claim the founding fathers never intended "the people" to have the right to bear arms, only militias. This claim is made in spite of the fact American militias at that time were composed of citizen farmers and that the constitutional language is consistent with other personal rights described therein. Now we might discuss whether it is a good idea that every one over the age of 16 be armed with an AK-47, but that is an entirely different argument. We could note the founding fathers were not infallible (voting rights, slavery, etc), and aware that sentiments change, they allowed for a constitutional amendment process.

On the other hand, while conservatives invoke facts when they support the right to bear arms, they have trouble accepting facts such as human caused global warming, because like liberals dancing around the 2nd Amendment, they confuse the facts of the matter with their desires. Maybe climate change is good, or maybe there are economic impacts to global warming, but let's first accept the facts of these matters and then discuss what we should do on the basis of these established facts.

John Donovan
Eugene, OR