**Writing Assignment**

**Alex Lundin**

**GOVT 2305**

**What are the social and economic factors that affect gun violence in the United States?**

“Gun violence is not a gun problem, it’s an economic problem”. In the video the speaker stated this quote to drive the following point home. Gun violence is directly correlated with joblessness. As the level of well-paying jobs diminishes, the violence goes up. Detroit was mentioned in the film as being a prime example of a once booming economic economy whose violence increased as the manufacturing jobs went away.

problem.

**What are the effects of mass incarceration on political rights, social dynamics, and personal economic achievement?**

Mass incarceration encroaches in each of these three categories in specific ways. Political rights, such as voting, are taken away from criminals upon their first felony. This is one of our constitutional rights that we deem every citizen empowered to have. Yet we take this away from our criminals. For social dynamics, there are huge barriers for reentering society. The first one is the feeling of getting out. Some criminals have been behind bars so long they feel anxious about life outside. After a significant adjustment timeframe, criminals also face red tape designed to filter them out of the job market. Most applications for jobs, apartments and even government aid programs like food stamps will deny criminals. This leaves them with virtually no options. Then finally we come full swing to economic achievement. Without a job, place too live or government aid it is extremely difficult to make money. This in turn leads to a vicious cycle of more violent activity because criminals have basically no economic opportunities at all after getting out, due to the social barriers placed on them. This results in a permeant economic status for criminals as second-class citizens.

**What are the causes and effects of the War on Drugs?**

Causes:

We ended war on poverty

Started new war, War on Drugs.

Political motives – securing the vote

Get tough policies

White people scared they will lose jobs to African Americans

Effects:

Caste based system

Legal discrimination on a set of individuals who are predominantly African American

**What are the complexities of finding a solution to the problem of mass incarceration?**

Visibility

Structures already in place

Public opinion

Dangerous criminals, who really are in jail for good reason

**What are my thoughts?** Do you agree or disagree significantly with any parts of her argument? Feel free to candidly respond. Your opinion itself will not be used to determine your grade, but the quality (in terms of its analytical rigor) in your argument will.

I agree with the speaker’s argument.

Facts:

Crimes rates and incarceration rates are independent.

Prison population 4X over the last 30 years. Crime rates have fluctuated.