Problem Statement

In general, the article tries to convince the audience that increasing gun control in the US would dramatically reduce deaths by firearms in America, from mass shootings to suicides to police deaths.
The article begins with a slew of charts showing that the United States has an extremely large amount of guns as well as an extremely large amount of gun-related homicides and mass shootings. The article later moves to suicides and gun ownership and police deaths and gun ownership, and finishes with some graphics on popular sentiment on gun control policies. Throughout the article the author makes the connection between gun control and less deaths, and more freely available guns and more deaths in the United States.

Some of the graphics are more convincing than others. The most effective visuals are the ones that have pretty clearly defined metrics like #5, which uses relative rather than absolute measurements--gun ownership as percentage of adults, and gun deaths per 100,000 residents (on the other hand, I'm not sure the bright yellow backdrop is doing the graphic any favors). Some visuals, like #11 and #14 are less effective because I'm not sure what exactly is the difference between a "low-gun state" or "high-gun state" or "highest rates" of gun control vs. "lowest rates." Furthermore, some visuals, such as #11 seem to have unnecessary information--the number of non-firearm suicides does not seem to be relevant to the argument. In addition, the pie charts in #12 are only from Indiana, which is not representative of the entire U.S. population (let alone worldwide), so that graphic is not very persuasive.

I personally also think there are simply too many charts in this article for it to be cohesive and concise. I also think the flow of the article could be improved a bit as well--it seems a bit choppy at times. I think the article tries to handle a lot of arguments at once, and the flow makes it difficult to follow at times. I think the data

product might be improved by reordering the graphics and strengthening transitions as well to improve flow of the argument.

For the redesign I think some of the more ambiguous and thus less convincing charts need to be revised so that the audience can clearly see what kind of data the visual is attempting to represent. Secondly, I think the data product could be improved by reducing the number of visuals, keeping only the most powerful ones to alleviate clutter. So for a redesign, I think what could improve the data product the most would be to try to convey the same amount of information in fewer, more clearly defined visuals. So maybe if some of the data on suicides from the relevant charts could be combined, so that there are less charts cluttering the data product.

For example, if instead of non-firearm suicides included as the second bar in chart #11, perhaps we can include firearm homicides for the highest and lowest rates of gun ownership. That would convey the main information from both #10 and #11. In addition, the redesign should also clarify what those highest and lowest rates are; according to the source provided, the percent of households with guns for the "highest rates" category is 47%, and 15% for the "lowest rates" category.

I think perhaps #1 and #6 might be combined as well, since they are both trying to show that the more guns, the more gun deaths. I'm also wondering if information from #7 might be contrasted with this information on the same graphic as well, so that we might see the contrast between guns and gun deaths, and violent crime in general in the U.S. I think it might help convey the "deadliness" factor.

Chart #15 might be a good candidate for a redesign as well--closer look at the raw/related data shows that there are interesting splits on gun control along racial and gender lines, that could be further evidence in the author's argument that gun control is a highly divisive topic.

I think an easy starting visual for deception is #8, since several states without tighter gun control laws have less firearm deaths than ones that do. We would just need to emphasize those states that do not have stricter gun control but have less deaths, and those states that do have stricter gun control policies but have more deaths. This is deceptive because we can see from the original that the stricter policies may be related to reducing firearm deaths, but there are enough counterexamples to argue the opposite.

#13 may be another candidate for distortion, since the firearm suicides were dropping well before the buyback program, and thus we can use the visual to argue the ineffectiveness of such a program. The graphic could note that the decrease in firearm suicides before the start of the buyback campaign is actually greater than the decrease after the start: the six years before the campaign showed a little more than 1 less firearm suicide per 100,000 residents, and the six years after showed a decline of less than 1 firearm suicide/100,000 residents. Of course, this is deceptive since we are looking at absolute changes instead of relative (percent changes).