

Epidemiologic Reviews devotes special issue to research on gun violence

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The journal *Epidemiologic Reviews*, a leading review journal in public health, today released a special issue of the journal focused entirely on gun violence prevention and policy research. Many of the nation's top academics in gun violence research are authors of the nine different review articles included in the special issue, which cover topics ranging from the relationship between firearm access and violence to the relationship between substance abuse and gun violence. It is the first time that the journal has devoted an entire issue to the topic of gun violence in its 23 year history.

"The time is ripe for publishing these articles reviewing epidemiologic research relevant to gun violence," said editor-in-chief Michel Ibrahim, MD, Professor of Epidemiology, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. "There is widespread concern about the staggering toll of gun violence in the U.S., and our hope is that the research presented in this issue will inform efforts to reduce gun violence."

Notable findings from the issue include:

- Review articles examine the relationship between household gun ownership and risk for gun suicide among household members, and concludes it's highly unlikely that a factor other than gun ownership explains the increase in gun suicides experienced in homes with a gun.
- Research on the relationship between use of controlled substances and violence was analyzed and indicated that further

research is needed to inform the development of criteria that accurately identify individuals involved with controlled substances who are at elevated risk of future firearm violence.

- Review of research that finds that statutes that restrict purchase and possession by individuals with a [domestic violence](#) restraining order (DVRO) show a promising impact in reducing fatal intimate partner violence.
- Research review that finds that the likelihood of gun victimization or perpetration is predicted by network distance from individuals who use guns, meaning one's network of peers has a large influence on his/her subsequent gun use. The authors recommend that the potential of social network analysis to predict gun violence should guide prevention efforts.
- Research that looked globally at the impact of various laws finds, in addition to the protective effects of DVRO laws, child access prevention laws requiring gun owners to make guns inaccessible to unsupervised youth are associated with reduced rates of firearm suicides and unintentional shooting deaths. Researchers also found that so-called Shall Issue laws have no effects on homicides.

"The research reviewed and critiqued in this special issue will be valuable to researchers, practitioners, and policymakers as they seek to better understand and prevent gun violence," said Daniel Webster, MPH, ScD, director of the Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Policy and Research who served as co-editor for the special issue. "While many important questions on how to best reduce gun violence have not been definitively answered, we do have a body of research to inform policy."

Firearm injury is one of the leading causes of death in the United States. Firearm-related homicide was the leading cause of death for Black men aged 15-34 in 2012, while firearm-related suicide was the second leading cause of death for White males aged 10-34.

"As with any area with the scope and complexity of [gun violence](#), a greater investment of resources is sorely needed," said Dr. Garen Wintemute, Professor of emergency medicine and director of the Violence Prevention Research Program at the University of California, Davis who served co-chair of the editorial committee for the special issue. "We should address firearm violence the same way we address other [public health](#) problems- by adequately funding research and then using this research to inform evidence-based solutions."

Provided by Oxford University Press

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