

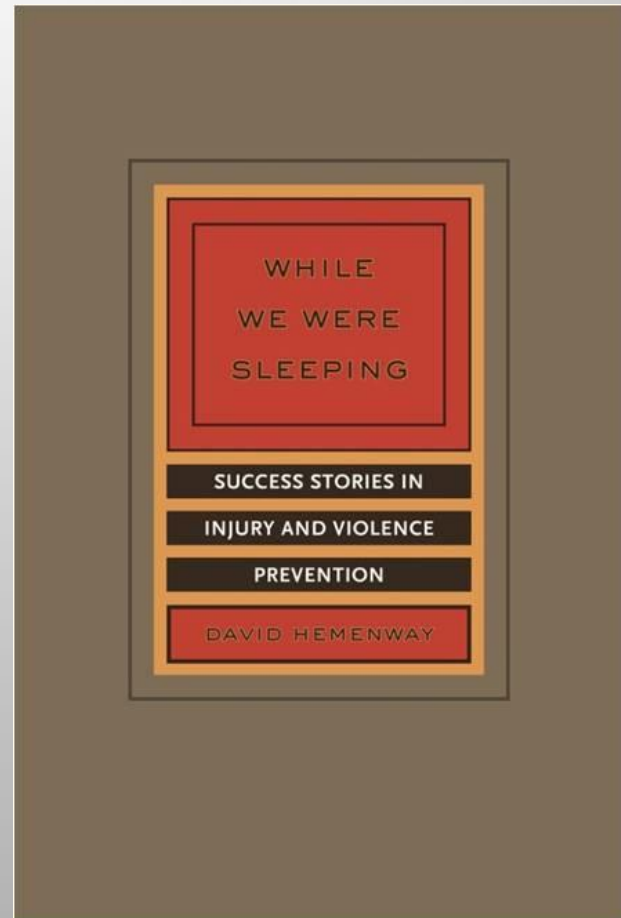
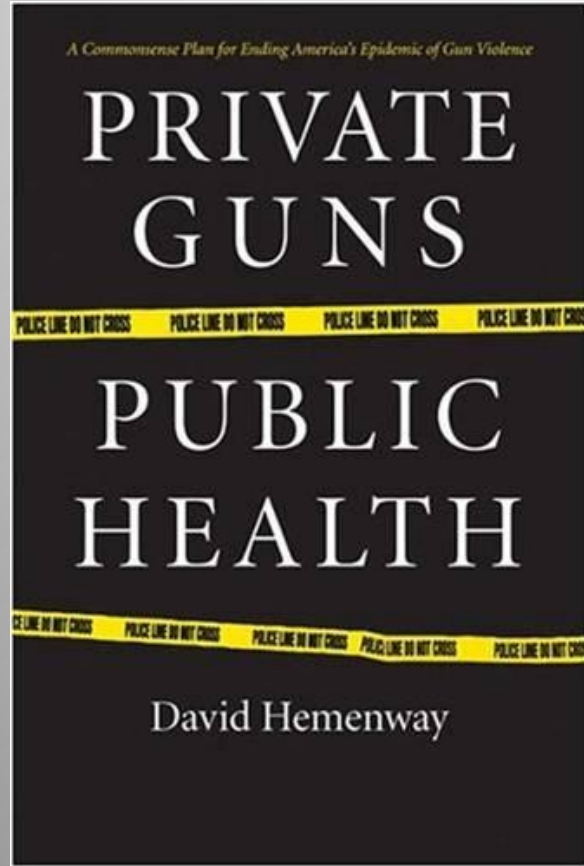
Exploring the Link between Guns and Violence

David Hemenway

Harvard School of Public Health

Public Health Institute Webcast

July 10, 2013



Major Points

- Guns have little to do with most crimes/violence
- Strong relationship between gun prevalence and violent death
- Currently guns create major public health problems for the United States
- For most families, a gun in the home increases the risk of violent death
- Unlike drugs, virtually all guns start in the hands of “law-abiding citizens”
- Crime guns move

Focus on Data and Studies

Better data and more studies would be extremely helpful

U.S. Gun Injuries

In 2010: Per Day

>250 shot

>85 die

Intimidations (e.g., robbery; IPV)

2010 Violent Deaths

Suicides	38,364
Firearm Suicides	19,392 (51%)
Homicides	16,259
Firearm Homicide	11,078 (68%)
Unintentional Firearm Deaths	<u>606</u>
Total Firearm Deaths	31,672

U.S. vs. Other First World Countries

Similar Crime

Similar Violence

Similar Bullying rates

Similar Fighting/Depression rates
among school children

Percentage of People Victimized in 2000

(from comparable victimization surveys)

Nation	Car Theft	Burglary	Robbery	Sexual Incident	Assault or Threat	11 Crimes**
United States	0.5	1.8	0.6	1.5	3.4	21.1
17 Industrialized Nations*	1.0	1.8	0.8	1.7	3.5	21.3

*Australia, Belgium, Canada, Catalonia (Spain), Denmark, England & Wales, Finland, France, Japan, Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Poland, Portugal, Scotland, Sweden, Switzerland, USA

**Additional crimes: theft from car, car vandalism, motorcycle theft, bike theft, attempted burglary, personal theft

U.S. vs. Other First World Countries

Differences

- More private guns

Handguns

+ Permissive gun laws

= More gun homicides

= **MORE HOMICIDES**

Firearm Regulations

Country	License System	Storage Regulations	Training Certificate Needed for Purchase	Handgun Ownership Permitted for Protection
Australia	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Austria	Yes	Yes		Yes
Belgium	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Canada	Yes	Yes	Yes	No*
Finland	Yes	No		No
Germany	Yes	Yes		Yes
Japan	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
New Zealand	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Norway	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Spain	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sweden	Yes	Yes		No
Switzerland	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
UK	Yes	Yes		No*
United States	No	No		Yes

Source: United Nations International Study of Firearm Regulation. New York: United Nations. 1998.

A blank indicates "No Response."

*In exceptional cases, permit may be issued.

Firearm and Non-Firearm Homicide Rates per 100,000

Nation	Firearm Homicide Rate	Non-Firearm Homicide Rate	Total Homicide Rate	Percentage of Households with Guns
United States	3.1	1.5	4.6	35%
United Kingdom	0.1	1.3	1.4	7%
Canada	0.6	1.2	1.8	24%
Australia	0.1	1.3	1.4	15%
New Zealand	0.2	0.9	1.1	23%

Sources: UK: UCR 2009, norc.org (2006)

UK: UNODC 2008; Small Arms Survey 2007

Canada: Beattie 2009, Royal Canadian mounted Police 2010

Australia: AU Bureau of Statistics 2009; Small Arms Survey 2007

New Zealand: UNODC 2008; Small Arms survey 2007

Homicide, Suicide, and Unintentional Gun Deaths among 5-14 year olds:
The United States vs. the Other High Income Populous Countries, early 2003

	Mortality Rate Ratio
Homicides	
Gun homicides	13.2
Non-gun homicides	1.7
Total	3.4
Suicides	
Gun Suicides	7.8
Non-gun Suicides	1.3
Total	1.7
Unintentional firearm deaths	10.3

Within the U.S.

Ecological Studies

Case Control Studies

Where more guns,
more homicide because more gun homicide
more suicide because more gun suicide

State Studies:

Factors held constant:

- Poverty
- Alcohol Consumption
- Unemployment
- Urbanization
- Divorce
- Education
- Violent Crime

- Major Depression
- Suicidal Thoughts
- Suicide Attempts (Hospitalized)

Violent Deaths, 2001-2007, U.S. Children (aged 5-14)

	High-Gun States	Low-Gun States	Mortality Rate Ratio (High Gun : Low Gun)
Total population, 5-14 Year Olds (2001-2007)	36.7 million	37.5 million	
Homicides			
Gun homicides	184	79	2.3
Non-gun homicides	141	130	1.1
Total	325	209	1.6
Suicides			
Gun Suicides	117	10	11.7
Non-gun Suicides	178	119	1.5
Total	295	129	2.3
Unintentional firearm deaths	112	12	9.3

The 15 States with the highest average levels of household gun ownership (based on the 2001 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System) were WY, MT, AK, SD, AR, WV, AL, ID, MS, ND, KY, WI, SC, UT, and LA. The 6 States with the lowest average gun levels were HI, MA, RI, NJ, CT, and NY.

Source: WISQARS

Violent Deaths to US Women

2001-2007

	High-Gun States	Low-Gun States	Mortality Rate Ratio (High Gun : Low Gun)
Total population, Female (2001-2007)	134.1 million	144.4 million	
Homicides			
Gun homicides	1978	780	2.5
Non-gun homicides	2305	2240	1.0
Total	4283	3020	1.4
Suicides			
Gun Suicides	2926	406	7.2
Non-gun Suicides	3621	3638	0.9
Total	6547	4044	1.6
Unintentional firearm deaths	205	29	7.0

A Gun in the Home

Suicide: a gun in the home increases risk for:

- Gun owner
- Gun owner's spouse
- Gun owner's children

1. Suicides often impulsive

2. Risks Transitory

3. Guns are highly lethal

Ecological Studies (e.g. New England))

Suicide Rate 1994 – 1998
per 100,000

State	Households with Firearms (%)	Overall	Firearm	Non-Firearm
ME	45%	13.5	7.9	5.6
VT	48%	12.3	7.9	4.4
NH	33%	12.1	6.8	5.3
CT	21%	8.9	3.7	5.2
RI	16%	8.3	3.0	5.3
MA	14%	8.2	2.4	5.8
NJ	12%	7.3	2.4	4.9

Source: Miller et al., J Trauma, 2004.

A gun in the home also

- Increases risk of femicide
- Increases risk of gun accidents

Benefits of Guns?

- Deterrence?
Where more guns, more burglaries
- Protect by thwarting crime?

Self-Defense Gun Use: Effectiveness

Percent of Victims Physically Injured after Self-Defense (1992-2001) NCVS	
Type of Victim Action	
Call Police	0.9
Run Away	1.8
Threaten/Attack w/ Gun	2.5
Struggled	4.1
<i>All</i>	2.4

If we are to have lots of guns

- Need better public policies
- Changes in social norms

Gun Manufacturers and Dealers Protections

- 1) No agency has oversight for safety
- 2) Almost impossible to sue
- 3) ATF hands tied in numerous ways

Restrictions on Data and Research

- NVDRS
- BRFSS
- ATF tracing data

- Very Little money for research
- (from government or foundations)

- CDC afraid to say the word “guns”

Huge Problem

Lots of Aspects

- If Not Now, When?
- Other developed nations respond to their mass killings

