

Characteristics of Gun Violence

A Break Out Panel of a Public Workshop, Committee on Priorities
for a Public Health Research Agenda to Reduce the Threat of
Firearm-Related Violence

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Research Question #1

Firearms in Context

- How is the effect of firearms on fatal and nonfatal violence differ dependent on social and cultural contexts?
- A. Legal context, e.g., “shall issue” vs. “may issue” states, stand your ground laws, background checks
- B. Urban vs. rural context, e.g., the interaction of firearms with drug markets
- C. The interaction of legal and illegal firearms markets

Research Question #2

Mass Killings and Victimizations

- What are the limitations in our understanding of mass killings?
- Current policy debates are being guided by a recent series of mass shootings in public places that are not representative of mass murders
- Current data sources on mass killings are incomplete and limited
- A comprehensive data set merging information from SHR, NIBRS, the media, and case files is an essential need for enhancing research
- Case file information is necessary to answer questions related to triggers, target selection, etc. related to prevention

Research Question #3

Lethality

- How do the characteristics of firearms and other variables influence fatal vs. nonfatal outcomes of violent encounters?
- Type of firearm, firing mechanism, magazine capacity, etc.
- The importance of medical resources and EMS transportation for the survival of penetrating wounds victims; road network connectivity (a concept from disaster studies) may be an important mediating variable

Research Question #4

Measurement

- How do we improve measurements of concepts that are essential to our understanding of firearm violence?
- A. Gun availability; gun suicides/suicides is limited; FOID cards per capita in Illinois
- B. Illegal gun availability; gun thefts, % of arrestees with a firearm at time of arrest (NIBRS)—may prove important for evaluations of legal changes related to firearms

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- *Lin Huff-Corzine, Greg Weaver, John Jarvis, James McCutcheon, Aaron Poole, Nick Libby and others contributed directly and indirectly to this presentation.