

FIREARMS RESEARCH ARCHIVE 1990-1998

I. GUN STORAGE

We analyzed a number of national random-digit dial telephone surveys. Major Findings: Many gun owners report storing their guns loaded and unlocked. Gun training is often associated with an increased likelihood of storing firearms in this manner.

Publication: Weil, DS, Hemenway D. Loaded guns in the home: an analysis of a national, random survey of gun owners. *JAMA*. 1992; 267:3033-37. See response: Weil DS, Hemenway D. Violence in America: guns. *JAMA* 1992; 268:307

Publication: Hemenway D, Solnick SJ, Azrael DR. Firearm training and storage. *JAMA*. 1995; 273:46-50. See response: Hemenway D, Solnick SJ, Azrael DR. Firearms training. *JAMA*. 1995; 273:1733-34.

II. SELF-DEFENSE GUN USE

We use epidemiological theory to explain why the "false positive" problem for rare events can lead to large overestimates of the incidence of rare diseases or rare phenomena such as self-defense gun use. We then try to validate the claims of many millions of annual self-defense uses against available evidence.

Major Findings: The claim of many millions of annual self-defense gun uses by American citizens appears to be invalid.

Publication: Hemenway D. Survey research and self-defense gun use: An explanation of extreme overestimates. *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*. 1997; 87:1430-1445.

Publication: Hemenway D. The myth of millions of annual self-defense gun uses: A case study of survey overestimates of rare events. *Chance (American Statistical Association)*. 1997; 10:6-10.

Publication: Cook PJ, Ludwig J, Hemenway D. The gun debate's new mythical number: How many defensive uses per year? *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*. 1997; 16:463-469.

Publication: Hemenway D, Azrael D. Gun Use in the United States: Results of a National Survey. Report to the National Institute of Justice. 1997

III. PUBLIC OPINION

We analyzed surveys of the American public over time.

Major Findings: Household gun ownership levels have been decreasing in the United States since the 1980s. Most adults, and even most gun owners, favor most gun control laws short of bans on gun ownership.

The large majority of adults would feel less safe, rather than safer, if more people in their community were to acquire firearms.

Publication: Blendon RJ, Young JT, Hemenway D. The American public and the gun control debate. *JAMA*. 1996; 275:1719-22.

Publication: Young JT, Hemenway D, Blendon RJ, Benson JM. Poll trends on guns.

Public Opinion Quarterly. 1996; 60:634-649.

Publication: Hemenway D, Solnick SJ, Azrael DR. Firearms and community feelings of safety. Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology. 1995; 86:121-132.

IV. GUN OWNERS

We analyzed data from national random-digit-dial telephone surveys.

Major Findings: National Rifle Association (NRA) members are similar to other gun owners in many respects, but they are more likely to own six or more guns. Unlike the NRA leadership, both NRA members and non-member gun owners support waiting periods and mandatory registration of handguns.

Owners of semi-automatic weapons are more likely than other gun owners to be male, own a gun for protection, and report binge drinking.

Publication: Weil DS, Hemenway D. I am the NRA: an analysis of a national random sample of gun owners. Violence and Victims. 1993; 8:353-65. See also Weil DS, Hemenway D. A response to Kleck (NRA). Violence and Victims. 1993; 8:377-85.

Publication: Hemenway D, Richardson E. Characteristics of automatic or semi-automatic firearm ownership. American Journal of Public Health. 1997; 87:286-88.

V. ADOLESCENTS

We surveyed 7th and 10th graders in inner city schools in Boston and Milwaukee.

Major Findings: Almost a quarter of 7th grade boys had already carried a gun, illegally. The overwhelming reason for carrying was self-protection. While guns were easily acquired, the large majority of respondents, and even the majority of those who had already carried a gun, wanted to live in a society where it was impossible for teens to get guns.

Publication: Hemenway D, Prothrow-Stith D, Bergstein JM, Ander R, Kennedy B. Gun carrying among adolescents. Law and Contemporary Problems. 1996; 59:39-53.

Publication: Bergstein JM, Hemenway D, Kennedy B, Quaday S, Ander R. Guns in young hands: A survey of urban teenagers' attitudes and behaviors related to handgun violence. Journal of Trauma. 1996; 41:794-798.

VI. LESS LETHAL WEAPONS

We make the case that more research needs to be done to make firearms safer, more effective, and less lethal.

Publication: Hemenway D, Weil DS. Phasers on stun: the case for less lethal weapons. Journal of Policy Analysis and Management. 1990; 9:94-98.

Publication: Hemenway D, Weil D. Less lethal weapons. Op-Ed, Washington Post, May 14, 1990.

VII. PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH

This interview explains the public health approach for reducing firearm injury.

Publication: Hemenway D. Guns, public health and public safety. In: Henigan DA, Nicholson EB, Hemenway D. Guns and the Constitution. Northampton, MA: Aletheia Press, 1995.