

CLASS SESSIONS

Wednesdays, 1:00 – 3:50pm, Hammer 305

INSTRUCTOR

Primary Instructor:

Ted Alcorn, MHS, MA

15th floor, Allan Rosenfield Building, 722 W. 168th Street

Additional Instructor:

Charles Branas, PhD

15th floor, Allan Rosenfield Building, 722 W. 168th Street

TEACHING ASSISTANT

Paul Reeping, MS

15th floor, Allan Rosenfield Building, 722 W. 168th Street

COURSE DESCRIPTION

More U.S. residents have been killed with guns since 1968 than died in all the wars since the country's founding. Addressing this crisis means solving tenacious public health problems in the realms of science and of politics. In this course we will review the epidemiology of gun violence and the empirical foundations of efforts to address it through policy, study design, programmatic interventions, and environmental/physical design. We will consider obstacles to the rigorous study of gun violence as well as the innovative approaches researchers have adopted to overcome them, whether in the fields of epidemiology, medicine, criminology, or economics. And we will place all of this in the political and legal context that shapes our collective actions. Through lectures and discussion, students will become familiar with the main factors connected with firearm injury, the study of gun violence, the policy actors that have influenced the U.S. response to date, and the underlying beliefs and behaviors that define the U.S. relationship with guns. By reviewing both new and canonical research throughout the course, students will learn how diverse study designs are well-suited to shed light on different aspects of this subject.

PREREQUISITES

Completion of the MPH Core or permission of instructor

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- Describe the epidemiology of gun violence in the U.S. including etiologies of domestic violence, community gun violence, suicide, mass shootings, and so-called “justifiable” homicides.
- Analyze the connections between gun culture (beliefs, behaviors), interest groups' goals and tactics for building power, and the epidemiology of firearm injuries.
- Describe the components of leading legislative and non-legislative approaches for reducing gun violence and the role different stakeholders play in successful implementation.
- Compare the strength of evidence supporting various interventions for addressing gun violence and highlight gaps in current knowledge.

- Appraise campaigns to enact gun violence prevention laws or implement non-legislative gun violence prevention programs, highlighting the roles of key stakeholders.
- Critique studies of gun violence and of measures to prevent it, cognizant of obstacles that circumscribe the data available and approaches that are feasible.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING POLICY

Student grades will be based on:

Reading responses and classroom participation	30%
Group data exercise.....	20%
Final paper	50%

Reading responses and classroom participation: By noon *the day before class*, students must prepare a brief, informal response to that week’s readings, which will be posted to Canvas to prepare for group discussion. These responses can be as little as 150 words and *no more than 400 words* and can adopt any format: drawing connections between readings, critiquing them, or articulating questions. They will not be graded on content or prose, but may be referenced during class discussion. In class, students are expected to listen actively and offer their viewpoints. Inactive presence in class will result in a reduction from the overall grade, whereas students who prepare reading responses and make active contributions in class showing mastery of concepts and methods will receive full points for participation. A detailed rubric detailing the expectations around course citizenship and engagement will be distributed during the first class-session. If you have concerns about classroom participation, please see the instructor in person early in the semester.

Group data exercise: Working in groups of 3-4, students will obtain and analyze epidemiological data related to gun violence morbidity and mortality. During class, students will be introduced to the CDC’s Web-based Injury Statistics Query And Reporting System (WISQARS) and Wide-ranging Online Data for Epidemiologic Research (WONDER), which are portals to national data on gun-related fatalities, but students may also seek approval from the instructors to work with the CDC’s non-fatal injury data, FBI Supplementary Homicide Report data, municipal-level shooting data, or any other dataset that is sufficiently complex to allow for elaboration of meaningful patterns in gun misuse, morbidity, or mortality. Students should develop a hypothesis and identify data appropriate to test it, and then produce analyses and visualizations of their findings. The finished product should be a brief written document with a statement of intent, methods pursued, questions tested, and results yielded (with figures visualized), culminating in conclusions. Students must submit their proposed plan by the 4th week of class and the final product by the 7th week. Assignments will be graded on thoughtfulness of topic of inquiry, accurate interpretation of data, organization and clarity of writing and visualizations, and attention to detail (including accurate spelling and grammar).

Final paper: Students will choose a topic for a final paper that draws on a topic or topics covered during the span of the course. Students might review one or some of their reading responses for a starting point, and then rely on required and optional course readings to support their arguments. The final product should be 2,000-3,000 words and could take several forms: It could be a policy brief, addressed to a specific policymaker of their choice, explaining the benefits or drawbacks of a particular approach to gun violence prevention, or an array of approaches to address a particular facet of gun violence. Or it could be an exploration of how a particular epidemiological method or study design has been applied to gun violence, highlighting canonical papers where it has been employed and their limitations. The paper should cite sources (citations will not count towards

word-count). Students must submit a <100-word statement of topic by the 9th week of class and the final paper by the 14th week of class. Assignments will be graded on clarity of writing, accurate and thoughtful employment of supporting evidence, relevance to content covered during the course, and quality of argument.

Grading

- A+ Reserved for highly exceptional achievement.
- A Excellent. Outstanding achievement.
- A- Excellent work, close to outstanding.
- B+ Very good. Solid achievement expected of most graduate students.
- B Good. Acceptable achievement.
- B- Acceptable achievement, but below what is generally expected of graduate students.
- C+ Fair achievement, above minimally acceptable level.
- C Fair achievement, but only minimally acceptable.
- C- Very low performance.
- F Failure. Course usually may not be repeated unless it is a required course.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students are expected to complete all readings and participate in discussion.

A majority of a student's grade will be determined by their writing assignments, and those will be held to a high standard. They will be graded on clarity of writing, accurate and thoughtful employment of supporting evidence, relevance to content covered during the course, and degree to which they satisfy their specific form (described more below).

Late assignments will be penalized 10% per day late.

COURSE STRUCTURE

The course is organized in three sections. First it introduces the science of gun violence, to establish the scope of the topic from a public health perspective, challenges that epidemiologists will face in assessing it empirically, and the intersection of behaviors that heighten risk of injury but also codify cultural identities. Second, because "gun violence" is not one but a group of related problems all involving guns, the course reviews the epidemiology of major causes of firearm related injury and unique empirical methods that have been applied to the study of each. Third, the course reviews strategies for addressing gun violence including the evidence supporting them and major outstanding questions for epidemiologists to tackle. Content will be presented in a combination of lectures and small-group and class-wide reading discussions.

CUIMC/MSPH RESOURCES

There are potential topics in this class that may be troubling for some students. If you find yourself struggling with a topic, please feel free to reach out to the Instructors, the TA, and/or the following list of resources:

MSPH Office of Student Affairs

Marlyn Delva, Dean of Students
Eric Ratner, Director of Student Affairs (emr2211)
Sarah Tooley, Associate Director of Student Support (st3146)
Office Location: ARB 1014
msph-osa@columbia.edu
212-342-3128

Student Health Services

Phone Number: (212) 305-3400

Hours: Monday & Tuesday: 8am-7pm, Wednesday & Thursday: 8am-4pm, and Friday: 9am-4pm

Address: 60 Haven Avenue, Tower 1, Lobby Level, Suite B234

Please visit the [Medical Services webpage](#).

Mental Health Services

Phone Number: (212) 305-3400

Hours: by appointment

Address: 60 Haven Avenue, Tower 1, First Floor, Suite 1D

Emergencies

If you or a friend have an immediate concern about suicide, call 212-305-3400 and request to speak with the on call clinician. You may also call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or walk yourself or friend to the nearest Emergency Room.

Please visit the [website](#).

Center for Student Wellness

Phone Number: (212) 305-3400

Hours: Monday - Wednesday: 10am to 7pm, Thursday: 10am to 6pm, and Friday: 10am to 5pm

Address: 50 Haven Avenue, Bard Hall, Suite 107 & Rm 101

Please visit the [website](#).

Addiction Information & Management Strategies

Phone Number: (212) 305-3400

Hours: Monday - Thursday: 9:30 am - 5:30 pm

Address: 50 Haven Avenue, Bard Hall, Suite 102

Please visit the [website](#).

Sexual Violence Response

Phone Number: (212) 854-4357 for 24/7/365 support

CUMC Location: 60 Haven Avenue, 206 Bard Hall, New York, NY 10032

Please visit the [website](#).

Office of the University Chaplain

Jewelnel Davis

University Chaplain and Associate Provost

Address: W710 Lerner Hall

Mailing Address: 2980 Broadway, MC 2008, NY, NY 10027

Phone Number: (212) 854-1493

Fax Number: (212) 854-5899

Email: chaplain@columbia.edu

Please visit the [website](#).

Ombuds Office

Medical Center

Address: 154 Haven Avenue, Room 412

Phone Number: (212) 304-7026

Please visit the [website](#).

TECHNOLOGY POLICY

A body of evidence demonstrates that use of mobile devices and laptops inhibits learning, both of students employing them and their fellow classmates. Technology policy will be discussed in the first session — but the goal of the class is engagement and participation, not note-taking.

MAILMAN SCHOOL POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS

Students and faculty have a shared commitment to the School's mission, values and oath.

mailman.columbia.edu/about/mission-history

Academic Integrity

Students are required to adhere to the Mailman School Honor Code in the student handbook.

mailman-handbook.com/2015/node/165

Disability Access

In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations, students must first be registered with the Office of Disability Services (ODS). Students who have, or think they may have a disability are invited to contact ODS for a confidential discussion at 212.854.2388 (V) 212.854.2378 (TTY), or by email at disability@columbia.edu. If you have already registered with ODS, please speak to your instructor to ensure that s/he has been notified of your recommended accommodations by Lillian Morales (lm31@columbia.edu), the School's liaison to the Office of Disability Services.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Please see the lecture section of Canvas to download the readings and lecture slides.

Session 1 – The science of gun violence: Asking better questions

9/4/19

Reducing gun violence in the U.S. depends on developing new evidence and provoking new actions, and public health practitioners must learn how to ask better questions to advance both.

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe epidemiology of firearm injury in the U.S.
2. Apply conceptual models (epidemiological triad, health belief model, etc.) to firearm injury in the U.S., and appreciate how different conceptualizations suggest disparate solutions.

Readings:

Follman, Mark et al. (Cost analyses by Ted Miller, PIRE). "The True Cost of Gun Violence in America." *Mother Jones*. April 15, 2015. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2HjCMzO>

Kahan, Dan M. And Donald Braman. (2003). "More Statistics, Less Persuasion: A Cultural Theory of Gun-Risk Perceptions." *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* v151 n4: 1291-1327.

Cook PJ and J Ludwig. (2003) "Fact-Free Gun Policy?" *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* v151 n4: 1329-1340.

Optional readings:

Everytown for Gun Safety. "Firearm Technology and Vocabulary." Available at: <https://every.tw/2H8HSy8>

Film: Kim Snyder, *Newtown*, 2016. [Available for rental on Amazon/iTunes/Netflix; a screener can be provided on request.]

Branas, Charles C., Michael L. Nance, Michael R. Elliott, Therese S. Richmond, and C. William Schwab. "Urban–rural shifts in intentional firearm death: Different causes, same results." *American Journal of Public Health* 94, no. 10 (2004): 1750-1755.

Grinshteyn, Erin and David Hemenway. "Violent Death Rates: The US Compared with Other High-income OECD Countries, 2010." *American Journal of Medicine* 129, no. 3 (March 2016): 266-273.

U.S. Department of Justice. "The Nation's Two Measures of Homicide." July 2014. Available at: <http://bit.ly/2IU0Miq>.

Session 2 – The science of gun violence: measuring “gun culture” with surveys and ethnographic research

9/11/19 Gun violence and gun politics in the U.S. are preceded by a prevalent and durable culture of gun ownership and use.

Learning Objectives:

1. Consider the ways in which surveys and qualitative research inform firearm-related research.
2. Describe patterns in firearm ownership, behaviors, and beliefs across demography and geography and over time, highlighting measurement error and gaps in research
3. Examine synergistic connections between gun behaviors possession, cultural identity, and political beliefs

Assignments: Interview a gun-owner

Readings:

Jennifer Carlson, *Citizen Protectors* (2015) [Chapter 3, p. 58-84].

Boine, Claire, Ted Alcorn, Michael Siegel, Craig Ross, Michael Siegel. 2019. "What is gun culture? A state-level analysis to characterize its elements and trends." *Under review*.

Shapira, Harel, and Samantha J. Simon. "Learning to Need a Gun." *Qualitative Sociology*, vol. 41, no. 1, 2018, pp. 1–20., doi:10.1007/s11133-018-9374-2.

Optional readings:

Azrael, Deborah, Lisa Hepburn, David Hemenway, and Matthew Miller. 2017. "The Stock and Flow of U.S. Firearms: Results from the 2015 National Firearms Survey." *RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences* 3(5): 38–57.

Pew Research Center. June 2017. "America's Complex Relationship with Guns." Available at: <https://pewrsr.ch/2xfG4h7>

Shapira, Harel, et al. "Trends and Patterns of Concealed Handgun License Applications: A Multistate Analysis." *Social Currents*, vol. 5, no. 1, 2017, pp. 3–14., doi:10.1177/2329496517725334.

Smith, Tom, Faith Laken and Son Jaesok. "Gun ownership in the United States: Measurement Issues and Trends." January 2014. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2H4c3qn>

Session 3 – Violence in focus: mass shootings

9/18/19 Mass shootings account for just 1-2% of total gun homicides but play a disproportionate role in the public's understanding of gun violence and the policy responses to it.

Learning Objectives:

1. Compare different definitions of 'mass shooting' societal responses to them (panic buying, contagion), and consider the meaning these events have for policymakers.
2. Acquire and analyze CDC data on violent deaths.

In-class activity: introduction to WISQARS

Readings:

Reeping P.M., Cerdá M, Kalesan B, Wiebe D.J., Galea S, Branas C.C. State Gun Laws, Gun Ownership, and Mass Shootings in the US: Cross-sectional Time Series. *BMJ - British Medical Journal* 364: 1542-8, 2019.

McGinty, Emma E., Daniel W. Webster, and Colleen L. Barry. 2013. "Effects of News Media Messages about Mass Shootings on Attitudes toward Persons with Serious Mental Illness and Public Support for Gun Control Policies." *The American Journal of Psychiatry* 170 (5): 494–501.

Lankford, A. and Tomek, S. (2018), Mass Killings in the United States from 2006 to 2013: Social Contagion or Random Clusters? *Suicide Life Threat Behav*, 48: 459-467. doi:[10.1111/sltb.12366](https://doi.org/10.1111/sltb.12366)

Optional readings:

Klarevas, Louis. Rampage Nation: Securing America from Mass Shootings. Preface and Part 1: Problem. 2016 Prometheus Books.

Beland, Louis-Philippe, Dongwoo Kim. 2016. "The Effect of High School Shootings on Schools and Student Performance." Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis.

Wallace, Lacey N. "Responding to violence with guns: mass shootings and gun acquisition." *The Social Science Journal* (2015) (52): 156-67.

Koper, Christopher S. "Updated Assessment of the Federal Assault Weapons Ban: Impacts on Gun Markets and Gun Violence, 1994-2003." July 2004. Report to the National Institutes of Justice. Available at: <https://bit.ly/1KVCjZ>

Session 4 – Violence in focus: Gun violence in cities - risk, gangs, and illegal gun supply

9/25/19 Cities bear a disproportionate burden of gun violence — together the 25 largest cities in the U.S. account for one in five of the nation's gun homicides.

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe the etiology of gun violence in cities, and what is currently understood about the function of urban gun markets.
2. Demonstrate the contribution of network analysis to gun violence-related research.
3. Discuss models of decision-making related to illegal firearm carrying, and theories of deterrence.

Readings:

Jill Leovy, *Ghettoside: A True Story of a Murder in America*, 2015. [Part 1, p. 3-96].

Roberto, E., Braga, A.A. & Papachristos, A.V. "Closer to Guns: the Role of Street Gangs in Facilitating Access to Illegal Firearms" *J Urban Health* (2018) 95: 372. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11524-018-0259-1>

Sampson, Robert J., and William Julius Wilson. 1995. "Toward a Theory of Race, Crime, and Urban Inequality." In *Crime and Inequality*, edited by J. Hagan and R. D. Peterson. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Optional readings:

Hureau, David and Anthony Braga. "The Trade in Tools: The Market for Illicit Guns in High-Risk Networks" *Criminology* (August 2018): 510-45.

Cook, Phillip, Susan T. Parker, Harold Pollack. "Sources of guns to dangerous people: what we learn by asking them," *Preventative Medicine*. 79: 28-36.

Braga, Anthony A., Andrew V. Papachristos, and David M. Hureau. 2009. "The

Concentration and Stability of Gun Violence at Micro Places in Boston, 1980–2008.” *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* 26 (1). Springer US: 33–53.

Cook, Philip, Jens Ludwig, Sudhir Venkatesh, and Anthony Braga. 2005. “Underground Gun Markets.” *National Bureau of Economic Research*, November. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research. doi:10.3386/w11737.

Everytown for Gun Safety, *Strategies for Reducing Gun Violence in American Cities* (2016).

Loeffler, C. and Flaxman, S., 2017. Is gun violence contagious? A spatiotemporal test. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, pp.1-19.

Wiley, S.A., Levy, M.Z. and Branas, C.C., 2016. The impact of violence interruption on the diffusion of violence: a mathematical modeling approach. In *Advances in the Mathematical Sciences* (pp. 225-249). Springer, Cham.

Session 5 – Violence in focus: domestic violence with guns

10/2/19 More than half of women murdered in the United States are killed by intimate partners or family members — and more than half of intimate partner homicides of women are committed with guns.

Learning Objectives:

1. Examine the epidemiology of firearm violence by intimate partners or family members and the interplay with mass shootings and murder-suicides
2. Discuss how case-control study designs inform the study of risk factors for relatively rare outcomes like domestic violence gun homicide
3. Introduce state and federal legal framework for restricting access to guns by high-risk groups.

Readings:

Campbell, Jacquelyn C., Daniel Webster, Jane Koziol-McLain, Carolyn Block, Doris Campbell, Mary Ann Curry, Faye Gary, et al. 2003. “Risk Factors for Femicide in Abusive Relationships: Results from a Multisite Case Control Study.” *American Journal of Public Health* 93 (7): 1089–97.

Wintemute GJ, Frattaroli S, Wright MA, Claire BE, Vittes KA, Webster DW. Firearms and the incidence of arrest among respondents to domestic violence restraining orders. *Injury Epidemiology*. 2015;2(1):14. doi:10.1186/s40621-015-0047-2.

Everytown for Gun Safety. 2015. “Domestic Abuse Protective Orders and Firearm Access in Rhode Island.” Available at: <https://every.tw/2y8cKz1>

Assignments: Submit topic for group data exercise.

Optional readings:

Sorenson, Susan and Rebecca Schut. 2016. "Nonfatal Gun Use in Intimate Partner Violence - A Systematic Review of the Literature." *Trauma, Violence & Abuse*, 1-12.

Wintemute GJ, Frattaroli S, Claire BE, Vittes KA, Webster DW. Identifying Armed Respondents to Domestic Violence Restraining Orders and Recovering Their Firearms: Process Evaluation of an Initiative in California. *American Journal of Public Health*. 2014;104(2):e113-e118. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2013.301484.

Vittes, Katherine A., and Susan B. Sorenson. 2008. "Keeping Guns out of the Hands of Abusers: Handgun Purchases and Restraining Orders." *American Journal of Public Health* 98 (5): 828–31.

SMU Dedman School of Law. Spring 2017. "Taking Aim At Family Violence: A Report on the Dallas County Gun Surrender Program."

Session 6 – Violence in focus: gun suicide and unintentional injury

10/09/19 The majority of gun deaths in the US are not homicides but suicides, and many of them are committed by legal possessors, so unique considerations must be taken into account in measures to reduce them — as well as rarer but equally tragic unintentional gun injuries.

Learning Objectives:

1. Explain the epidemiology of gun suicide deaths and the role lethal means play in suicide fatality.
2. Weigh the evidence around legislative and non-legislative measures for addressing them (including point of sale interventions, safe storage requirements, gun violence restraining orders, and lethal means counseling).
3. Describe the epidemiology of unintentional firearm injuries.

Readings:

Kellerman AL, Rivara FP, Somes G, et al. Suicide in the Home in Relation to Gun Ownership. *New England Journal of Medicine*. 1992; 327(7):467-472

Barber, Catherine W., and Matthew J. Miller. 2014. "Reducing a Suicidal Person's Access to Lethal Means of Suicide." *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 47 (3). Elsevier: S264–72.

Jeffrey W. Swanson, Michael A. Norko, Hsiu-Ju Lin, Kelly Alanis-Hirsch, Linda K. Frisman, Madelon V. Baranoski, Michele M. Easter, Allison G. Robertson, Marvin S.

Swartz & Richard J. Bonnie, Implementation and Effectiveness of Connecticut's Risk-Based Gun Removal Law: Does it Prevent Suicides?, 80 *Law and Contemporary Problems* 179-208 (2017). Available at: <https://scholarship.law.duke.edu/lcp/vol80/iss2/8>

Optional readings:

Branas C.C., Richmond T.S., Ten Have T.R., Wiebe D.J. Acute alcohol consumption, alcohol outlets, and gun suicide. *Substance Use & Misuse* 46(13): 1592-1603, 2011.

Johnson, Renee M., Catherine Barber, Deborah Azrael, David E. Clark, and David Hemenway. 2010. "Who Are the Owners of Firearms Used in Adolescent Suicides?" *Suicide & Life-Threatening Behavior* 40 (6): 609–11.

Harvard School of Public Health, "Means Matter," available at: <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/means-matter/>

Vriniotis, Mary, Catherine Barber, Elaine Frank, Ralph Demicco, and New Hampshire Firearm Safety Coalition. 2015. "A Suicide Prevention Campaign for Firearm Dealers in New Hampshire." *Suicide & Life-Threatening Behavior* 45 (2): 157–63.

Runyan, Carol W., Amy Becker, Sara Brandspigel, Catherine Barber, Aimee Trudeau, and Douglas Novins. 2016. "Lethal Means Counseling for Parents of Youth Seeking Emergency Care for Suicidality." *The Western Journal of Emergency Medicine* 17 (1): 8–14.

Wintemute GJ, MD; Carrie A. Parham, MSc, et al. "Mortality Among Recent Purchasers of Handguns" *New England Journal of Medicine*, Vol. 341, No. 21, November 18, 1999, pp. 1583-1589.

Session 7 – Violence in focus: Public carry, justifiable homicides, and Stand Your Ground laws

10/16/19 The predominant reason Americans give for owning firearms has shifted from hunting and sportsmanship to self-defense. Beliefs about defensive gun use, and laws that tailor the justice system to it, have major implications for gun violence and the politics of preventing it.

Learning Objectives:

1. Review epidemiological research on defensive gun use and its limitations
2. Appreciate the rhetorical role of this research in gun politics, the expansion of 'Stand Your Ground' laws, and their impact on justifiable homicides by civilians
3. Describe the epidemiology of law-enforcement involved shootings

Readings:

Branas, C.C., Richmond, T.S., Culhane, D.P., Ten Have, T.R. and Wiebe, D.J., 2009. Investigating the link between gun possession and gun assault. *American Journal of Public Health*, 99(11), pp.2034-2040.

Donohue, John, et al. "Right-to-Carry Laws and Violent Crime: A Comprehensive Assessment Using Panel Data, the LASSO, and a State-Level Synthetic Controls Analysis." 2017, doi:10.3386/w23510.

Humphreys, David K., Antonio Gasparrini, and Douglas J. Wiebe. n.d. "Evaluating the Impact of Florida's 'Stand Your Ground' Self-Defense Law on Homicide and Suicide by Firearm." *JAMA Internal Medicine* 2016, 6811.

Assignments: Group data exercise due

Optional readings:

Hemenway, D., D. Azrael, and M. Miller. 2000. "Gun Use in the United States: Results from Two National Surveys." *Injury Prevention: Journal of the International Society for Child and Adolescent Injury Prevention* 6 (4): 263–67.

Washington Post, "Fatal Force," (series) (2016).

Film: Abigail Disney, Kathleen Hughes, *The Armor of Light*, 2015. [Available for rental on Amazon/iTunes/Netflix; a screener can be provided on request.]

Mayors Against Illegal Guns, *Shoot First: 'Stand Your Ground' laws and their effect on violent crime and the criminal justice system* (2013).

Hemenway, D., 1997. The myth of millions of annual self-defense gun uses: a case study of survey overestimates of rare events. *Chance*, 10(3), pp.6-10.

Session 8 – Evidence into action: how public health research shapes and is shaped by gun politics

10/23/19 Impactful public health scientists understand how their work is likely to be applied because generating new knowledge is never apolitical.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify major "gun rights" and gun violence prevention groups and how they shape understanding of the issue by the public and policymakers.
2. Examine how interest groups have influenced how gun violence research is conducted and history and jurisprudence are interpreted.

Readings:

Alcorn T. Trends in Research Publications About Gun Violence in the United States, 1960 to 2014. *JAMA Intern Medicine* 2017;177(1):124–126.

Goss K. *Disarmed: The Missing Movement for Gun Control in America* (2006). [Chapters 1-2, pp. 1-72]

Lacombe, Matthew. “The Political Weaponization of Gun Owners: The National Rifle Association’s Cultivation, Dissemination, and Use of a Group Social Identity.” *The Journal of Politics* 2019.

Optional readings:

Branas C, Wiebe D, Schwab C, Richmond T. Getting past the “F” word in federally funded public health research. *Injury Prevention*. 2005;11(3):191.

Patterson, Kelly D. and Matthew M. Singer. 2006. “Targeting Success: The Enduring Power of the NRA.” In *Interest Group Politics*, edited by Allan J. Cigler and Burdett A. Loomis, 37-64. Washington, DC: CQ Press.

Metcalf, Dick. “Target: Me.” *Politico*. Jan. 14, 2014. Available at: <https://politi.co/2Kd9f9q>

Siegel, Reva B., "Dead or Alive: Originalism as Popular Constitutionalism in Heller" (2008). Faculty Scholarship Series. 1133. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2LSy6Tx>

Han, Hahrie. “Want Gun Control? Learn from the N.R.A.” *New York Times*, Oct. 4 2017, available at: <https://nyti.ms/2y1uOJB>

Richard Harris, “If You Love Your Guns,” *The New Yorker*, April 20, 1968.

Michael Waldman, *The Second Amendment, A Biography* (2014).

Everytown for Gun Safety, *Access Denied*, 2013. Available at: everytownresearch.org/reports/access-denied

Session 9 – Evidence into action: laws to keep guns out of dangerous hands

10/30/19 Legislative change is prominent among efforts to address gun violence. This session will consider its possibilities and limitations.

Learning Objectives:

1. Summarize the present risk-factor-based paradigm of U.S. gun laws.
2. Assess the existing criminal background check system and its shortcomings (abusive boyfriends, unlicensed sales).

3. Explain how time-series study designs and cohort studies have been employed to evaluate significant legislative interventions.

Readings:

Morrall AR et al. (2017) *The Science of Gun Policy A Critical Synthesis of Research Evidence on the Effects of Gun Policies in the United States*. The Rand Corporation. Available at: https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2088.html. (Read: Summary, xvii-xxviii.)

Ludwig J, Cook PJ. Homicide and Suicide Rates Associated With Implementation of the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act. *JAMA*. 2000;284(5):585–591. doi:10.1001/jama.284.5.585

Readings by group for in-class analysis and presentation:

- **Group 1:** Webster, Crifasi Vernick. n.d. “Effects of the Repeal of Missouri’s Handgun Purchaser Licensing Law on Homicides.” (See [response by CPRC](#))
- **Group 2:** Crifasi et al "Effects of changes in permit-to-purchase handgun laws in Connecticut and Missouri on suicide rates"
- **Group 3:** Rudolph, Kara E et al. “Association Between Connecticut's Permit-to-Purchase Handgun Law and Homicides” *American journal of public health* vol. 105,8 (2015): e49-54. (See [response by CPRC](#))
- **Group 4:** Collins, T., Greenberg, R., Siegel, M. et al. *J Urban Health* (2018) 95: 322. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11524-018-0251-9>
- **Group 5:** Crifasi, C.K., Merrill-Francis, M., McCourt, A. et al. “Changes in the legal environment and enforcement of firearm transfer laws in Pennsylvania and Maryland.” *J of Urban Health* (2018) <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11524-018-0273-3>
- **Group 6:** Castillo-Carniglia, Kagawa, Webster et al. “Comprehensive background check policy and firearm background checks in three US states.” *BMJ*, 2017. (See [response by Alcorn](#))
- **Group 7:** Kagawa, Castillo-Carniglia, Vernick et al. “Repeal of Comprehensive Background Check Policies and Firearm Homicide and Suicide.” *Epidemiology* (2018).

Assignments: Submit topic for final paper

Optional readings:

Cook, Philip J., and Harold A. Pollack. 2017. "Reducing Access to Guns by Violent Offenders." *RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences* 3(5): 1–36.

Webster, Daniel W., and Garen J. Wintemute. 2015. "Effects of Policies Designed to Keep Firearms from High-Risk Individuals." *Annual Review of Public Health* 36 (March): 21–37.

Braga, Anthony A. and David M. Hureau. "Strong gun laws are not enough: The need for improved enforcement of secondhand gun transfer laws in Massachusetts." *Preventative Medicine* 79: 37-42,

Session 10 – Cops and docs: law enforcement and medical responses to gun crimes and injuries

11/6/19 In the U.S., the preeminent (and best-funded) response to gun violence is policing, and law enforcement often view addressing gun violence as their top priority. In this session we will examine the evidence of the positive impact police can have on violence, and the harm their reaction to it can cause. We will also examine the ways that the medical system has adapted to better address gun injuries.

Learning Objectives:

1. Examine the role that law enforcement play in solving gun crimes, preventing violence through proactive techniques, and gun-focused investigations and interventions.
2. Review the harms that the criminal justice system can cause, and the relationship between police-community trust and violence prevention.
3. Consider how the responsivity of medical practitioners and systems can affect outcomes for people with gun injuries.

Readings:

Alcorn T. "Who Should the Police Answer To?" July 2019. *The Atlantic*. Available at: <http://bit.ly/2z2VM2B>

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2017. *Proactive Policing: Effects on Crime and Communities*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. doi: <https://doi.org/10.17226/24928>. (Read: Summary, page S1 – S10)

Band R.A., Salhi R.A., Holena D.N., Powell E., Branas C.C., Carr B.G. Severity-adjusted mortality in trauma patients transported by police. *Annals of Emergency Medicine* 64(13): 1582-1585, 2013.

Barach E.R., Tomlanovich M.I., Nowak R.I. Ballistics: a pathophysiologic examination of the wounding mechanisms of firearms. *The Journal of Trauma*. 1986 Mar;26(3):225-35.

Optional readings:

Sherman L, Shaw J, Rogan D. The Kansas City Gun Experiment. National Institute of Justice Research in Brief. 1995. http://www.popcenter.org/problems/drive_by_shooting/PDFs/Sherman_etal_KansasCity_1995.pdf

Cook, Philip J. Anthony Braga. 2001. "Comprehensive Firearms Tracing: Strategic and Investigative Uses of New Data on Firearms Markets." *Arizona Law Review*.

Branas, C.C., MacKenzie, E.J., Williams, J.C., Schwab, C.W., Teter, H.M., Flanigan, M.C., Blatt, A.J. and ReVelle, C.S., 2005. Access to trauma centers in the United States. *JAMA*, 293(21), pp.2626-2633.

MacKenzie, E.J., Rivara, F.P., Jurkovich, G.J., Nathens, A.B., Frey, K.P., Egleston, B.L., Salkever, D.S. and Scharfstein, D.O., 2006. A national evaluation of the effect of trauma-center care on mortality. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 354(4), pp.366-378.

Session 11 – Evidence into action: Behavioral interventions and gun violence in cities

11/13/19 Among the most evidence-based interventions for reducing gun violence are those seeking to directly reshape the norms of those at highest-risk of victimization and perpetration.

Learning Objectives:

1. Compare interventions to reduce urban gun violence through shifts in social norms—including focused deterrence, violence interruption, and cognitive-behavioral therapy— highlighting challenges to implementing and replicating them.
2. Explain how quasi-experimental and natural experiments are used in gun violence research.

Readings:

David Kennedy, *Don't Shoot: One Man, a Street Fellowship, and the End of Violence in Inner-City America* (2012) [pp. 44-75].

Heller, Sara B., Anuj K. Shah, Jonathan Guryan, Jens Ludwig, Sendhil Mullainathan, Harold A. Pollack. 2017. "Thinking, Fast and Slow? Some Field Experiments to Reduce Crime and Dropout in Chicago." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 132 (1): 1-54.

Butts, Jeffrey A., Caterina Gouvis Roman, Lindsay Bostwick, and Jeremy R. Porter. 2015. "Cure Violence: A Public Health Model to Reduce Gun Violence." *Annual Review of Public Health* 36 (March): 39–53.

Optional readings:

Rose G (Department of Epidemiology, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Keppel Street, London WC1E 7HT, UK). Sick individuals and sick populations. *International Journal of Epidemiology* 1985;14:32–38.

Beckett, Lois. “How the Gun Control Debate Ignores Black Lives.” *ProPublica*. Nov. 24, 2015. Available at: <https://bit.ly/1lg51Dh>

Sharkey, Patrick, et al. “Community and the Crime Decline: The Causal Effect of Local Nonprofits on Violent Crime.” *American Sociological Review*, vol. 82, no. 6, 2017, pp. 1214–1240., doi:10.1177/0003122417736289.

Film: Steve James, *The Interrupters*, 2011. Available online at: <https://to.pbs.org/2EvelAT>

Braga, A., Weisburd, D. The effects of “pulling levers” focused deterrence strategies on crime. *Campbell Systematic Reviews* 2012:6 DOI: 10.4073/csr.2012.6

Sampson, R. *Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighborhood Effect*. (2011).

Session 12 – Evidence into action: Environmental interventions and gun violence

11/20/19 Just as changes in the built environment have proven crucial in reducing motor vehicle accidents and addressing infectious disease, a growing body of research suggests place-based interventions can have a role in curbing gun violence.

Learning Objectives:

1. Explain how randomized control trials can be used to study gun violence.
2. Summarize research on urban blight and violence.

Readings:

Branas, C.C., South, E., Kondo, M.C., Hohl, B.C., Bourgois, P., Wiebe, D.J. and MacDonald, J.M., 2018. Citywide cluster randomized trial to restore blighted vacant land and its effects on violence, crime, and fear. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 115(12), pp.2946-2951.

Branas, C. C., Kondo, M. C., Murphy, S. M., South, E. C., Polsky, D., & MacDonald, J. M. (2016). Urban blight remediation as a cost-beneficial solution to firearm violence. *American Journal of Public Health*, 106(12), 2158-2164.

Cozens, Paul, and Terence Love. "A review and current status of crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED)." *Journal of Planning Literature* 30.4 (2015): 393-412.

Optional readings:

Kondo M.C., Keene D., Hohl B.C., MacDonald J.M., Branas C.C. A difference-in-differences study of the effects of a new abandoned building remediation strategy on safety. *PLoS One*: 1-14, 2015.

Bogar S., Beyer K.M. Green Space, Violence, and Crime: A Systematic Review. *Trauma Violence Abuse*. March 2015

Branas, C.C., Cheney, R.A., MacDonald, J.M., Tam, V.W., Jackson, T.D. and Ten Have, T.R., 2011. A difference-in-differences analysis of health, safety, and greening vacant urban space. *American journal of epidemiology*, 174(11), pp.1296-1306.

Session 13 – Canceled for Thanksgiving Holiday

11/27/19

Session 14 – New frontiers of gun violence prevention

12/4/19 Although effective interventions for reducing gun violence exist, no researcher or policymaker believes we yet employ all the interventions necessary to eliminate gun violence as a serious public health concern. Drawing on the foundation of knowledge built during the course, we will review new and emerging avenues for violence reduction, thinking critically about their feasibility from scientific and political standpoints.

Learning Objectives:

1. Examine vanguard policies for gun violence prevention such as gun licensing and registration, or expansive prohibitors on gun ownership including violent misdemeanors and alcohol-related crimes.
2. Describe the firearm manufacturing and retail industry and examine the role it might play in injury prevention, with historical context from car manufacturers and others.
3. Review advances in firearm related technology, including distributed manufacturing and personalized firearms and locking devices, and consider how they could shift the paradigm for gun violence prevention.

Readings:

Wintemute GJ, Beckett L, Kass PH, et al. Evaluation of California's Armed and Prohibited Persons System: study protocol for a cluster-randomised trial. *Injury Prevention* 2017;23:358.

Kaufman E., Morrison C.N., Branas C.C. “Never use alcohol, over-the-counter drugs or prescription drugs before or while shooting”. *JAMA Internal Medicine*, (in press), 2019.

Parloff, Roger. (Apr. 22, 2015) "Smart Guns: They're ready. Are we?" *Fortune*, available at: <https://for.tn/1Gj9ZI3>

Assignments: Submit final paper

Optional readings

Wintemute GJ, Wright MA, Castillo-Carniglia A, *et al.* Firearms, alcohol and crime: convictions for driving under the influence (DUI) and other alcohol-related crimes and risk for future criminal activity among authorised purchasers of handguns. *Injury Prevention* 2018;24: 68-72.

Monheti, BM and J Debney – American Outdoor Brands Corporation. (March 6, 2018). "Letter to Global Head of Blackrock."

Carr, B.G., Wiebe, D.J., Richmond, T.S., Cheney, R. and Branas, C.C., 2009. A randomised controlled feasibility trial of alcohol consumption and the ability to appropriately use a firearm. *Injury prevention*, 15(6), pp.409-412.

The Brady Campaign. *Smoking Guns*. Available at: <http://www.bradycampaign.org/sites/default/files/smokingguns.pdf>

Barrett, Paul. (Dec. 17, 2016). "Three Days Behind the Counter at a Vegas Gun Shop." *Bloomberg Businessweek*. <https://bloom.bg/2LcK8qj>

Wintemute, G. J., M. A. Wright, C. M. Drake, and J. J. Beaumont. 2001. "Subsequent Criminal Activity among Violent Misdemeanants Who Seek to Purchase Handguns: Risk Factors and Effectiveness of Denying Handgun Purchase." *JAMA: The Journal of the American Medical Association* 285 (8): 1019–26.