

Everyday Violence

Lopez, German; Wu, Ashley . New York Times (Online) , New York: New York Times Company. Jul 8, 2022.

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FULL TEXT

We look at where most of America's gun violence happens.

Since a gunman killed seven people at a Chicago suburb's July 4 parade, more than 160 people have died from other gun homicides across the country. In Chicago alone, at least 10 people were killed in multiple shootings during the holiday weekend.

These everyday killings received far less attention than the mass murder at the parade. But they are the standard for American gun violence: More than 95 percent of gun homicides this year have been shootings with one to three victims.

Today, we want to help you understand where and why most everyday gun violence happens. We're going to focus on Chicago, because it has one of the country's highest murder rates and because a local group —the University of Chicago Crime Lab —keeps detailed data. But the trends in Chicago are also present in many other places.

One crucial point is that violence tends to be highly concentrated: A small sliver of blocks —just 4 percent in Chicago, for example —can account for a majority of shootings in a city or a county.

Many of the people in these blocks live in terror. The sound of gunshots is common, sometimes coming multiple times a day. Parents worry that their kids could be next, and young people fear for their own lives. As Jomarria Vaughn, a 24-year-old Chicagoan, told this newsletter: "I'm scared. I have my guard up all day."

This map of shootings in Chicago shows the concentration. Shootings are rare in much of the city, particularly on the wealthier North Side, but not on the poorer West and South Sides.

This concentration is not exclusive to Chicago. Across the U.S., neighborhoods that contained just 1.5 percent of the population accounted for 26 percent of gun homicides, a 2017 analysis by The Guardian found.

Here is a look at four other cities, with data provided by the Princeton University researchers Alisabeth Marsteller and Patrick Sharkey:

Poverty and violence

There are several factors behind the concentration of violence. A major one is poverty.

In Chicago, violence and poverty closely overlap, as these maps demonstrate:

Experts have long debated why violence and poverty are linked. Is it something specific to poverty, such as insufficient housing or jobs? Is it the environment that poverty fosters, in which people are stressed and desperate —and more likely to act out?

One theory, cited by Sharkey, blames the breakdown of "collective efficacy." That might sound academic, but the concept is straightforward: When society's institutions have unraveled, people feel that they are on their own. They are then less likely to watch over one another or come together to address common interests.

By reducing social trust, concentrated poverty hurts communities' ability to enforce norms against violent behavior. And when people are left unchecked and feel they have nothing to lose, they are more likely to take extreme measures, such as violence, to solve their problems.

The past few years may help you understand this dynamic even if you're not poor. Many Americans felt a hit to their own collective efficacy because of the Covid pandemic, George Floyd's murder and its aftermath, and the polarized political atmosphere. Sure enough, murders and other violent crimes increased during this period.

A spiral downward

It is difficult to talk about gun violence without talking about race, because Black Americans are most likely to be the victims of shootings. Poverty explains part of the disparity, since Black people are more likely to be poor. But individual poverty is not the full explanation.

Black Americans are also less likely to live in communities with strong institutional support. Exclusionary housing policies and discrimination have pushed Black Americans into segregated neighborhoods. Both governments and the private sector then neglected these neighborhoods, leaving people without good schools, banks, grocery stores and institutions.

This kind of economic neglect, which experts refer to as disinvestment, fosters violence. These maps show the correlation in Chicago between shootings and a lack of banks:

The relationship also goes the other way, Roseanna Ander, executive director of the Crime Lab, told us: Violence can perpetuate disinvestment. Business owners do not want their shops, restaurants and warehouses in violent neighborhoods. People do not want to live in places where gunshots are fired daily. And governments shift resources away from places that officials deem lost causes. It is a vicious cycle.

A greater understanding of this spiral in recent years has driven activists and policymakers to address not just violence itself but its root causes, too. The Chicago mayor's office told us it had adopted a broader approach to combating violence, focused on boosting businesses, local clubs, mental health care and other social supports, on top of traditional policing work. As this newsletter has explained before, most experts support an all-of-the-above strategy to crime, involving both the police and alternative approaches.

But this work is difficult and, even if it succeeds, takes money and time —years or decades to rebuild long-neglected communities. Until then, the people in these neighborhoods will likely suffer the worst of American gun violence.

THE LATEST NEWS

Assassination in Japan

- Shinzo Abe, 67, former prime minister of Japan, died after being shot while giving a speech.
- The police said a 41-year-old man was in custody.
- From the scene: Two loud sounds and a plume of smoke before Abe collapsed.
- Abe, Japan's longest-serving prime minister, resigned in 2020 because of ill health. Read his obituary.

Politics

- Gov. Greg Abbott ordered the authorities to apprehend migrants and return them to the border, setting up a clash with the federal government.
- The I.R.S. asked an internal watchdog to review its Trump-era audits of James Comey and Andrew McCabe.
- Senate Democrats are trying to revive pieces of Biden's domestic policy bill, including taxing high earners to fund Medicare.
- Biden awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom to 17 people, among them the gymnast Simone Biles.

Other Big Stories

- Brittney Griner, the W.N.B.A. star detained in Russia, pleaded guilty to drug charges, saying that she had accidentally brought a banned substance into the country.

- Derek Chauvin, the former Minneapolis police officer already serving a long prison term, was sentenced to 21 years for violating George Floyd’s civil rights.
- Elon Musk is planning to file a lawsuit to end his \$44 billion deal to buy Twitter.
- A jury found Sunny Balwani, a former executive at the failed blood testing start-up Theranos, guilty of fraud.
- Rafael Nadal withdrew from Wimbledon before his semifinal, citing an injury.

Opinions

To protect abortion rights, Democrats should embrace the politics of fear, *Ana Marie Cox* says.

Circumstances, not mental health issues, drive most mass shooters to violence, *David Brooks* argues.

MORNING READS

Biography: Ken Auletta has finally written the Harvey Weinstein story he wanted to tell.

Deals: How Wish built —and fumbled —a dollar store for the internet.

Modern Love: Losing a pregnancy, a marriage and pearls.

A Times classic: The power of touch.

Advice from Wirecutter: Repurpose used candle jars.

Lives Lived: James Caan’s Oscar-nominated performance as Sonny Corleone in “The Godfather” was so convincing that some people thought he was a real mobster. “I’ve been accused so many times,” Caan once said. He died at 82.

SPORTS NEWS FROM THE ATHLETIC

What went wrong for Baker Mayfield? The former No. 1 pick was hailed as the quarterback to end decades of frustration in Cleveland. Now traded away four years later, what happened?

Picking the M.L.B. All-Star rosters: Ken Rosenthal’s full roster picks are here. He’s courting controversy with his starting pitchers.

N.H.L. draft shake-up: Shane Wright, once the presumptive No. 1 pick in the 2022 N.H.L. draft, fell to No. 4 last night. Here’s a breakdown of every first-round pick, and the biggest winners.

A World Cup locked in: The U.S. women’s national soccer team qualified for the 2023 World Cup last night, with new stars rising.

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ARTS AND IDEAS

The future of opera

Yuval Sharon, 42, is a visionary opera director who has worked around the world and who won a MacArthur Foundation “genius” grant in 2017. His boldest venture to date may be his decision to become the artistic director of Detroit Opera, Mark Binelli writes in *The Times Magazine*: “Sharon has already radically elevated Detroit Opera’s status in the larger cultural ecosystem.”

In April, Sharon directed “La Bohème” for Detroit Opera, and he wasn’t interested in putting it on in a traditional way. His version unfolded in reverse order, opening with Act IV, in which Mimì dies, and ending with Act I, in which she and her lover, Rodolfo, first meet.

“Detroit has died and been reborn so many times that Sharon’s reworking of the classic felt like an oblique nod to the city,” Mark writes. It also helps show what modern opera can be. “The future of American opera unfolding in Detroit was not a plot twist I saw coming,” Mark writes.

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

This lemon-garlic kale salad is snappy and fresh.

What to Read

In "Son of Elsewhere," Elamin Abdelmahmoud writes about emigrating from Sudan to Canada when he was 12.

What to Watch

Stream these great movies starring James Caan.

Take the News Quiz

How well did you keep up with the headlines this week?

Now Time to Play

The pangrams from yesterday's Spelling Bee was *appliance, capellini, pelican* and *pinnacle*. Here is today's puzzle. Here's today's Mini Crossword, and a clue: 100% (five letters).

And here's today's Wordle. After, use our bot to get better.

Thanks for spending part of your morning with The Times. See you tomorrow.

P.S. Katherine Miller is joining Times Opinion to write about threats to democracy.

Here's today's front page.

"The Daily" is about Boris Johnson. On "The Ezra Klein Show," Michelle Goldberg discusses feminism.

Claire Moses, Ian Prasad Philbrick and Tom Wright-Piersanti contributed to The Morning. You can reach the team at themorning@nytimes.com.

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DETAILS

Subject:	Poverty; African Americans; Tournaments & championships; Mental health; Gun violence; Mass murders; Neighborhoods; Assassinations & assassination attempts; Soccer; Crime laboratories
Location:	Chicago Illinois; United States--US; Detroit Michigan; Japan
People:	Floyd, George
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