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Private Guns, Public Health

David Hemenway

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Private Guns, Public Health David Hemenway
"In this small book David Hemenway has produced a masterwork. He has dissected the various aspects of the gun violence epidemic in the United States into its component parts and considered them separately. He has produced a scientifically based analysis of the data and indeed the microdata of the over 30,000 deaths and 75,000 injuries which occur each year. Consideration and adoption of the policy lessons he recommends would strengthen the Constitutional protections that all of our citizens have to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."
-Richard F. Corlin, Past President, American Medical Association

"This lucid and penetrating study is essential reading for anyone who wishes to understand the tragedy of gun violence in America and-even more important-what we can do to stop it. David Hemenway cuts through the cant and rhetoric in a way that no fair-minded person can dismiss, and no sane society can afford to ignore."
-Richard North Patterson, novelist

"The rate of gun-related homicide, suicide, and accidental injury has reached epidemic proportions in American society. Diagnosing and treating the gun violence epidemic demands the development of public health solutions in conjunction with legislative and law enforcement strategies."
-Kweisi Mfume, President and CEO of NAACP

"In scholarly, sober analytic assessments, including rigorous critiques of NRA-popularized pseudoscience, David Hemenway constructs a convincing case that firearm availability is a critical and proximal cause of unparalleled carnage. By formulating such violence as a public health issue, he proposes workable policies analogous to ones that reduced injuries from tobacco, alcohol, and automobiles."
-Jerome P. Kassirer, Editor-in-Chief Emeritus, New England Journal of Medicine, and Distinguished Professor, Tufts University School of Medicine

"As a former District Attorney and Attorney General, I know the urgency of providing safe homes, schools and neighborhoods for all. This remarkable tour-de-force is a powerful study of one promising solution: a data-rich, eminently readable demonstration of why we should treat gun violence as an American epidemic."
-Scott Harshbarger, Former Attorney General of Massachusetts, President and CEO of Common Cause

On an average day in the United States, guns are used to kill almost eighty people, and to wound nearly three hundred more. If any other consumer product had this sort of disastrous effect, the public outcry would be deafening; yet when it comes to guns such facts are accepted as a natural consequence of supposedly high American rates of violence.

Private Guns, Public Health explodes that myth and many more, revealing the advantages of treating gun violence as a consumer safety and public health problem. David Hemenway fair-mindedly and authoritatively demonstrates how a public-health approach-which emphasizes prevention over punishment, and which has been so successful in reducing the rates of injury and death from infectious disease, car accidents, and tobacco consumption-can be applied to gun violence.

Hemenway uncovers the complex connections between guns and self-defense, gun violence and schools, gun prevalence and homicide, and more. Finally, he outlines a policy course that would significantly reduce gun-related injury and death.

With its bold new public-health approach to guns, *Private Guns, Public Health* marks a shift in our understanding of guns that will-finally-point us toward a solution.

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