Research suggests historically redlined areas see more modern-day gun violence

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In the 1930s, the United States government introduced redlining, a discriminatory practice that categorized neighborhoods based on people's race or ethnicity and denied financial services to residents in
certain areas—redlining disproportionately affected marginalized communities. While redlining was officially outlawed in 1968, new research from Boston Children's Hospital suggests a relationship between historic redlining and present-day gun violence.

"We found a significant, dose-dependent correlation between discriminatory designations from the 1930s and the incidence of non-suicide firearm fatalities from 2014–2022. Of note, in areas designated 'hazardous' 80 years ago, non-suicide firearm fatalities are nearly six times more likely to occur today than in areas designated 'best,'" said Dr. Eric Fleegler, a pediatric emergency physician and senior author of the paper.

The findings, published online in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* on April 22, speak to the lasting detrimental impact of redlining on firearm fatalities today.

The researchers used data from 202 cities across 38 states for nearly 9,000 different areas graded by the Home Owners' Loan Corporation on a scale from A to D, with A being "best" and D being "hazardous."

They found that 76% of the cities they examined had a higher rate of non-suicide firearm fatalities in D areas compared to A regions. Additionally, the team discovered that there are more than six times the rate of non-suicide firearm fatalities in D areas compared to A regions.

Despite accounting for other factors associated with firearm fatalities, such as poverty, firearm prevalence, and legislation, the researchers found that the relationship between redlining designation and fatalities today persists. This suggests that there might be other consequences of redlining that impact non-suicide firearm fatalities.

"Firearm fatalities are a leading cause of mortality in the United States,
and the epidemic of gun violence continues to affect marginalized communities disproportionately. Our findings warrant further research on and investment in nuanced solutions to the detrimental impacts of historical redlining," said Dr. Ayesha Dholakia, Chief Resident in Pediatrics at Boston Children's Hospital and Boston Medical Center and first author of the paper.


Provided by Children's Hospital Boston

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