Exposure to gun violence among adolescents coming of age in Chicago, 1995–2021

This study uses newly collected data from the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods (PHDCN+) to document patterns in exposure to gun violence over the life-course of four birth cohorts of children living in Chicago in 1995 and followed through 2021—a period bracketed by the highest peaks in firearm homicides in the city’s history. First, we leverage the project’s multicohort design to examine the relationship between macrosocial change and cohort differences in exposure to gun violence. Second, we document life-course disparities in gun victimization by race, sex, and childhood social context. Finally, we use data from the Gun Violence Archive to assess the current residential contexts of gun violence for respondents now scattered throughout the United States.

Chuck Lanfear is an Assistant Professor at the Institute of Criminology in the Faculty of Law at the University of Cambridge. His research focuses on how characteristics of communities impact crime, victimization, and social control. He approaches this topic with methods from demography, computational social science, and causal inference.