



Tapping into *The Wire*

Peter L. Beilenson, Patrick A. McGuire

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Did Omar Little die of lead poisoning? Would a decriminalization strategy like the one in Amsterdam end the War on Drugs? What will it take to save neglected kids like Wallace and Dukie? *Tapping into 'The Wire'* uses the acclaimed television series as a road map for exploring connections between inner-city poverty and drug-related violence. Past Baltimore City health commissioner Peter Beilenson teams up with former Baltimore Sun reporter Patrick A. McGuire to deliver a compelling, highly readable examination of urban policy and public health issues affecting cities across the nation. Each chapter recounts scenes from episodes of the HBO series, placing the characters' challenges into the broader context of public policy.

A candid interview with the show's co-creator David Simon reveals that one of the intentions of the series is to expose gross failures of public institutions, including criminal justice, education, labor, the news media, and city government. Even if readers haven't seen the series, the book's detailed summaries of scenes and characters brings them up to speed and engages them in both the story and the issues. With a firm grasp on the hard truths of real-world problems, *Tapping into 'The Wire'* helps undo misconceptions and encourage a dialogue of understanding.

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