

The Role of Attitudes in Violent Behaviour

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Attitudes Toward Violence

- How positively or negatively one views violent behaviour
- General violence
 - "It's not wrong to hit someone who puts you down"
 - "Sometimes you need to fight to keep your self-respect"
 - "Men should be allowed to sort their differences out by fighting"
 - "It's ok to use violence to get what you want"



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- Intimate partner
 - "If a husband hits his wife, or vice versa, the person who got hit probably deserved it"
 - "It is alright for a man to hit his girlfriend if he finds out she has been unfaithful"
 - "Suppose a man really embarrasses his partner/wife, do you think it is wrong for her to hit him?"
 - "A woman who makes her girlfriend jealous on purpose deserves to be hit"



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- Children
 - "Children should be spanked for temper tantrums"
 - "Sometimes a spank is the best way to get my child to listen"
- War
 - "Our country should be aggressive with its military internationally"
- Criminal justice
 - "Violent crimes should be punished violently"



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Cognitive Distortions/Rape Myths

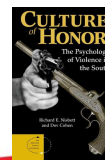
- Beliefs that condone, justify, excuse, minimize, rationalize, or otherwise support sexual violence
 - "Most children would enjoy having sex with an adult, and it wouldn't harm the child in the future"
 - "A child can make their own decision as to whether they want to have sex with an adult or not"
 - "Although most women wouldn't admit it, they generally find being physically forced into sex a real 'turn-on'"
 - "If a woman goes home with a man she doesn't know, it is her own fault if she is raped"



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Masculine Honour Ideology

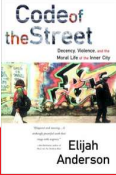
- Belief that men must respond aggressively to threats or insults to maintain respect
 - "A man has the right to act with physical aggression toward another man who insults his mother"
 - "A real man will never back down from a fight"



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Code of the Street

- Belief that violence is an appropriate and necessary response to disrespect, exploitation, or harm by others
 - “When someone disrespects you, it is important that you use physical force or aggression to teach them not to disrespect you”
 - “People will take advantage of you if you don’t let them know how tough you are”



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Link to Behaviour

- Attitudes are thought to be important for the explanation, prediction, and reduction of violent behaviour
 - Theory
 - Practice

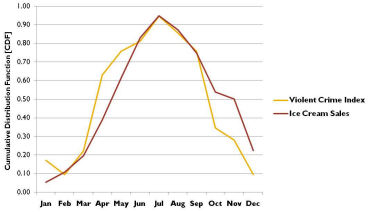
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Violent Attitudes Correlate with Violent Behaviour

- Correlation (cross-sectional designs)
 - Attitudes more supportive of violence are associated with more current and past violent behaviour
- Prediction (longitudinal designs)
 - Attitudes more supportive of violence predict more future violent behaviour

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But Correlation ≠ Causation



Month	Violent Crime Index (CFI)	Ice Cream Sales
Jun	0.10	0.10
Jul	0.90	0.90
Aug	0.95	0.95
Sep	0.70	0.70
Oct	0.30	0.30
Nov	0.10	0.10
Dec	0.05	0.05

- Few experimental tests of whether violent attitudes play a **causal** role

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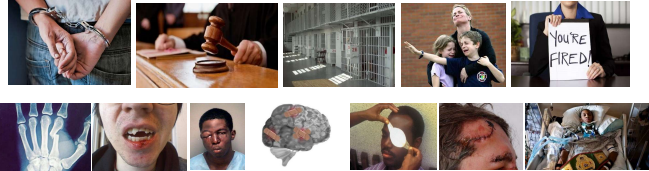
Causal Influence?

- Randomized experiments to test effect of violent attitudes on violent behaviour
- Randomly assigned participants to either
 - Anti-violence message or
 - Control condition
- Measure violent behaviour

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Anti-Violence Attitude Message

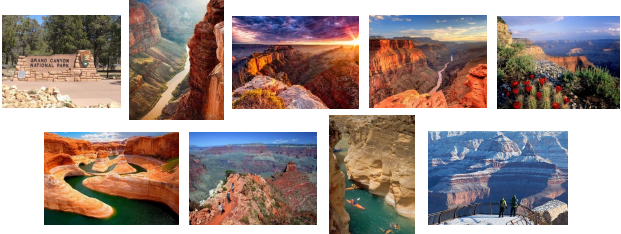
- Violence is a “lose-lose” situation, with negative consequences for everyone involved.



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Control Message

- The Grand Canyon is an impressive site with something for everyone to enjoy.

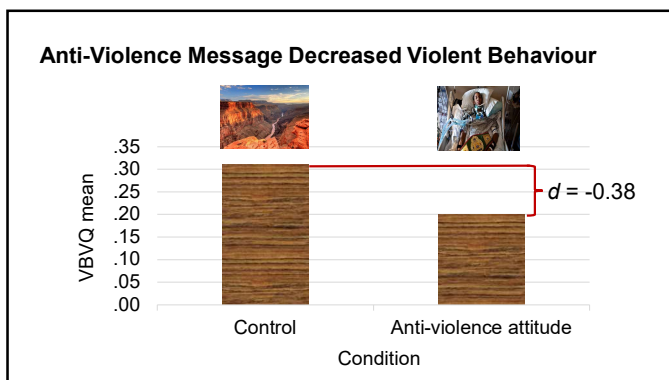


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Violent Behavior Vignette Questionnaire (VBVQ)

- You're at a bar standing beside your girlfriend/wife when a guy strolls up to her, puts his arm around her, and starts trying to pick her up. He acts like you aren't even there.
- What do you do?
 - Report it to someone
 - Talk it out
 - Insult him
 - Joke about it
 - Shove him
 - Hit, punch, kick, or tackle him
 - Threaten to hurt him
 - Ignore it
 - Leave


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Conclusion



- Consistent with theory and practice, violent attitudes are correlated with, predictive of, and may play a causal role in violent behaviour



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Remaining Questions



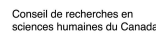

- Violent behaviour measures
- Other types of violence
- Other populations

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Thank you!

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