

Violence Goes to College: An Authoritative guide to Prevention and Intervention

By John Nicoletti
Sally Spencer-Thomas
Christopher Bollinger

Conceptualizing violence as a virus:

“Violence is like a virus with many different strains. Motives, perpetrators profiles, victims and outcomes are diverse and like a virus, these features of violence mutate when exposed to different hosting sites. Understanding violence in terms of its similarities to a virus can help prevention and intervention efforts.”

No one antibody exists.

Violence typologies

1. Predatory-- the thrill is the kill or assault (planning, execution, aftermath).
2. Avenger- violence becomes the only possible resource for perceived grievances.
 - a. String of perceived injustices ending with some form of rejection or discipline.
 - b. The perpetrator initiates a resolution.
 - c. Problem-solving narrows and prep begins to create a violent fantasy
3. Relationship-based- Most common and most frequently devastating
 - a. One on one attachment that is exploited
 - b. Relationships that have both power differential and privacy are most vulnerable.
 - i. Parent-child
 - ii. Husband-wife
 - iii. Pledge-pledge master
 - c. Ownership mentality over submissive partner.
4. Group induced
 - a. Group swept into mob mentality
 - b. Diffusion of responsibility
 - i. Kitty Genovese
 - ii. Gang rape at the high school with 20-30 people watching
 - iii. Behavior contagious
 - iv. Bystanders play a critical role in group-induced violence (passive approval for act)

Analyzing Threats

1. Credibility
2. Seriousness
3. Lethality

Direct Threats- the more specific the threats the more concerned the protector should be.

Conditional Threats- “if”/”or”. A conditional threat is made contingent on a certain set of circumstances. Designed to manipulate or intimidate the target into compliance.

If threats are not met with resistance and clear signs of intolerance, they are likely to increase.

Veiled Threats- Hardest to address

- Very real for recipients
- Perpetrator minimizes the type of threat refuting the receiver's interpretation.
- Used in harassment and stalking

Distal Cues: General indicators of violence potential.

1. History of violence
 - a. Mutilation or torture of animals
 - b. Run-ins with police
 - c. Prior offenses
2. Poor impulse control
 - a. Moving traffic violations
 - b. Destruction of property
3. Unsuccessful personal history
4. Perceived injustice history
5. Obsession
6. Substance abuse
7. Fascination and proficiency with weapons
8. Personality disorders
 - a. Develop as maladaptive patterns of behavior become deeply entrenched over a long time
 - b. Antisocial tendencies: lying, fire setting, bedwetting, harm to animals, narcissism, vacillate between worthlessness and superiority
9. Major mental illness
 - a. Paranoia
 - b. Severe depression
 - c. Delusions
 - d. Hallucinations
10. Preoccupation with violence
11. Situational variables
 - a. Stress
 - b. Inadequate or deviant social network
 - c. Medical or neurological disorder
 - d. Current psychological disorders
 - e. History of recent help-seeking behavior
 - f. Limited future opportunities

Conceptualizing Prevention and Intervention

1. Detection and awareness
2. Delay and insulation- be the tree. Put a roadblock in the path of a violent individual
3. Strategic response