Television Violence and Aggression: A Retrospective Study

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**ABSTRACT**

Research since the 1970s shows that television violence can affect children and encourage the development of aggressive behaviors and attitudes. This study adds to the research which focuses on people’s self-reported exposure and perception to television violence and their perceived behavior. A survey was administered to 130 undergraduate students from the University of Texas at Arlington on their perception and knowledge of television viewing habits, programming content, and behavior from when they were a child until the present time. A Pearson’s correlation coefficient was employed to study the strength of the relationship between exposure to television violence and perceived behavior. Also, a t-test was used to compare the means of the questions for males and females. This study implies that there is a relationship between childhood exposure to television violence and perceived behavior.

**Key Words:** television, violence, retrospective, children

**INTRODUCTION**
Violence in mass media (including music, film, video games and television) has come to public attention with virtually every new form of mass media entertainment. It has evoked concerns about its potentially harmful effects on children, and researchers have produced a wealth of evidence of potential harm to children (Bushman & Cantor, 2003). Groebel (2003) suggests that the media plays a major role in the development of cultural orientations, world views, beliefs, and the global distribution of values and images.

According to Huesmann and Eron (1986), because of the acceleration rate of violent crime with the entrance of television in most children’s homes, it is not surprising that television has become the scapegoat. Of all the mass media, television violence has the greatest potential for both short-term and long-term effects upon children. In light of all the situations where children are affected negatively by viewing violence, there is a need for a study of the effects of television violence on children.

The purpose of this study is to examine people’s self-reported exposure and perception to television violence and their perceived behavior. Specifically, this study will examine undergraduate students at the University of Texas at Arlington with self-report surveys.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

Children are affected by violence in the media (Ling & Thomas, 1986; Murray 1995; Freshback & Singer, 1971). The “average child,” between the ages of six and eighteen, will have spent 4,000 hours listening to radio and CDs, watched 16,000 hours of television, and watched several thousand more hours of movies (Sanders, 1994). This means that children will spend more time with the media than with their parents or in the classroom. Ling and Thomas (1986) conducted a study of children who were shown two videotapes of aggressive and non-aggressive play behavior. Only the children who viewed the aggressive video exhibited an increase in the amount of aggressive play. Film, rock music, and even the Internet amplify and reinforce the damaging content television pours into our consciousness (Medved & Medved, 1998).

**Television**

The United States is the largest consumer of television programming. In 1948, there were barely 100,000 television sets in use in the United States. According to Carter & Strickland (1975), by 1973, 96% of homes had one or more television sets, and the average set was estimated to be turned on for more than six hours a day. It is estimated that there are more television sets in the United States than there are telephones, or even toilets (Bushman & Huesmann, 2001). Today, 99% of homes have a television.

Children born in the United States have the potential of being exposed to television at almost the moment of birth, viewing television for the rest of their lives, and interacting regularly with other viewers of television (Abeles, 1980). Children also spend more time watching television than they do attending school. According to Carter and Strickland (1975), for most children, television occupies many more hours than school during their first sixteen years. In the 1990s, daily television viewing for children ages 6 to 18 has increased 70%. The average viewing time for elementary school students is 25 hours a week. By age five, the average child has received 6,000 hours of programming (Sanders, 1994).

**V-Chip**
As of January 1, 2000, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) required all new television sets 13 inches or larger to contain the V-Chip technology. The FCC states that the V-Chip reads information encoded in the rated program and blocks programs from the set based upon the ratings selected by the parent. Passage of the V-Chip legislation represents the first substantive policy adopted by the government to address the issue of media violence (Kunkel & Wilcox, 2001). Using a remote control, parents can program the V-Chip to block certain shows based on their ratings. According to Heins (1998), the V-Chip puts significant power in the hands of the people who will actually rate TV programming. Those parents who choose to activate the chip will not be evaluating programs themselves to determine if they are consonant with their own values or appropriate for the age and maturity levels of their children (Heins, 1998).

President Bill Clinton, in his 1996 State of the Union address, called on Congress to adopt legislation to establish the V-chip (violence chip) as a means of helping parents limit their children’s exposure to television violence (Kunkel, 2003). The V-chip was a result of the 1966 Telecommunication Act that mandated which new television sets are manufactured with the V-chip. This will allow parents to block out TV programs with objectionable content. However, parents have problems with the technology. During a Senate Commerce Committee hearing in July 1995, a Zenith television executive was going to demonstrate how the V-chip worked. He struggled for more than ten minutes and was not able to get the technology to work until his aide helped him. If this expert on V-chip technology cannot make it work, how will the average parent make it work (Bushman & Huesmann, 2001)?

**Television Violence**

A 2000 report from the Federal Trade Commission confirmed what parents have long suspected: that the advertising for violent movies, television shows, video games, and music CDs intentionally targets young audiences (Condon, 2002). Television makes children passive recipients of hundreds of thousands of images of violence and sex each and every day. Children receive the most exposure to television in the home.

How does all this violent television programming affect children? According to Gerbner and Cross (1980), by the time the average American child graduates high school, they will have seen more than 13,000 violent deaths on television. Bushman and Huesmann (2001) also extend this by stating by the time the average American child graduates from elementary school, they will have seen more than 8,000 murders and more than 100,000 other acts of violence on television (the numbers are higher for those children with access to cable television).

**Studies and Reports on Violence in Television Programming**

Public concern over violence in television has shifted slightly over the years but, in general (since the 1950s) about two-thirds of Americans have agreed with the statement there is “too much violence” on television (Comstock & Scharrer, 2002). Over the years, more funding and research effort has been invested in the study of television violence than in any other aspect of television output (Gunter & McAleer, 1997). The first Congressional hearing devoted to television programming was held in the House in 1952 to discuss the topics of violence and sex. In 1954, Senator Estes Kefauver, chairman of the Subcommittee on Juvenile Delinquency, conducted an investigation focusing on violence in program content. The Kefauver Subcommittee concluded that such programming in large doses could be potentially harmful to young
viewers. The late 1960s and early 1970s was the time in which most of the reports on television violence surfaced in our society.

**Eisenhower Commission**

In 1968, the Eisenhower Commission (initiated by President Johnson) focused on the impact of mass media violence. It concluded that watching television violence taught the viewer how to engage in violent behavior. The Task Force on Mass Media Violence (1969) of the Eisenhower Commission concluded three effects of television violence: (1) learning effects, (2) emotional effects, and (3) impulsive aggression. Learning effects points to the fact that aggressive behavior sequences are learned by children through exposure to realistic portrayals of aggression on television. The mass media typically presents aggression as a high effective form of behavior. Frequent exposure produced an emotional habituation to media violence. There is suggestive evidence that this results in an increased likelihood of actual aggression. Aggressive impulses may be held in check if the viewer has prior association with media violence and may serve to heighten the intensity of aggressive attacks (Carter & Strickland, 1975).

**Surgeon General’s Scientific Advisory Committee**

In March of 1969, the Surgeon General’s Program of Research, headed by Senator John Pastore, conducted a scientific study to see whether or not televised violence produced antisocial behavior in children. Pastore stated that there is a causal connection between televised crime and violence and antisocial behavior by individuals, especially children. He was not condemning all television programs, but he agreed that violent programs are not conducive to good behavior and do not excite and draw out the best attributes of character in our children. This research helped establish the Surgeon General’s Scientific Advisory Committee on Television and Social Behavior.

The Surgeon General’s Scientific Advisory Committee on Television and Social Behavior (1972), the sole inquiry primarily concerned with television violence, concluded that viewing violent programming increased the aggressive and antisocial behavior of some young viewers (Comstock, 2002). In March 1972, Surgeon General Jesse Steinfield told Congress that there is a causal relationship between televised violence and antisocial behavior, and that it is sufficient enough to warrant appropriate and immediate remedial action (Huesman & Taylor, 2003). The Committee concluded that not all children are affected and not all children are affected the same way, but there is evidence that television can be harmful to young viewers. By the time the Surgeon General’s inquiry into television began, about 50 experiments had been published showing that violent exposure increases scores of aggression immediately after viewing (Comstock, 1980).

**The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)**

The National Institute of Mental Health in 1982 reviewed the Surgeon General’s report with a ten-year follow up report, Television and Behavior: Ten Years of Scientific Progress for the Eighties. Dr. D. Pearl, one of its authors, stated that a causal relationship was established between violence found in everyday life and violence on television (Roth, 1985). The 1972 Surgeon General’s Report and the 1982 National Institute of Mental Health’s review concluded that television occupied a significant role in the lives of both children and adults.
**National Television Violence Study**

The most known study of violence in television is the National Television Violence Study. It began in June 1994 as a three-year study to assess violence on television. It was a comprehensive examination of the content of American television programs. It defined media violence as any overt depiction of a credible threat of physical force or the actual use of such force intended to physically harm an animate being or group of beings. Violence also includes certain depictions of physiologically harmful consequences against an animate being or group that occurs as a result of unseen violent means. The study says that television violence has been recognized as contributing to violent and aggressive antisocial behavior. It found that children’s television programs were high in violent content. It also concluded that there are biological, psychological, social, and cultural factors as well.

Leonard Eron (1986) did a study and found that those who watch the most television and movies in childhood were more likely to have been arrested or convicted of violent felonies. Of a group of 100 criminals, 22% confessed to having imitated or tried out criminal techniques they had seen on television (Bogart, 1980). The American Psychological Association established a Commission on Youth and Violence to examine the literature on the causes and prevention of violence (Gunter & McAleer, 1997). They concluded that American children are exposed to high levels of violence, and the heavy viewers of this violence demonstrated increased acceptance of aggressive behavior.

One of the most comprehensive analyses of TV violence was directed by George Gernber and his colleagues. This research project monitored samples of network primetime and weekend daytime programming for all the major American networks for over 20 years from 1967. Violent incidents were prevalent in primetime entertainment-oriented drama (Gunter & McAleer, 1997). This research relates to this study which suggests a relationship between viewing television violence and behavior.

**Impact of Television Violence**

Greater use of new electronic media must mean that less time is spent doing other things, and this possibly includes using more established media, such as books (Gunter & McAleer, 1997). According to Murray (1993), television has been identified as a hindrance to education in the sense that television viewing is an activity that may “steal” time from other activities more directly related to success in school. Educationalists have been worried that television viewing would displace reading and harm children’s school performance (Gunter & McAleer, 1990).

**Neurological Effects**

Some neuro-anatomists argue that excessive television viewing (more than five hours per day, seven days a week) can have a serious toll on a child’s cognition. The limbic system of the brain (the emotional part) is designated as the image-making center. They believe that the limbic system develops more slowly when a young person spends half of their life in front of the television set. A strong limbic system provides a natural defense against the constant violent images that penetrate consumer culture. Violence on television could lead to anxiety.

Another need that the media fills for children is one of entertainment. Valkenburg (2001) states that the anxiety hypothesis assumes that the television-induced fright leads to regression
in behavior, which is expressed in a reduction in the quantity of imaginative play. These television images have an effect on children’s imagination. Nowadays children do not have to engage their imagination. They do not need to make up new stories or invent games. The television studios do the work for them (Sanders, 1994).

Mean World Syndrome

Viewing violence can increase the fear of becoming a victim and a sense of mistrust of others. Research by George Gerbner and his colleagues (1980) has shown that heavy viewers tend to see the world as dangerous and are more fearful of walking alone in their own neighborhood. This is known as the “mean world syndrome”—believing that the world is a dangerous place. The more a person watches television, the more suspicious a person is and the greater the person’s expectancy of being involved in real violence (Lefkowits & Huesmann, 1980). Findings by Nabi and Sullivan (2001) indicated that the amount of television viewing directly influenced prevalence estimates of violence in society, as well as intentions to take protective measures, and indirectly affected mean world attitude.

Teaching No Nonviolent Solutions

Television violence teaches children to be violent. In the 1990s we saw many popular children’s programs (like Power Rangers and Power Puff Girls) where the heroes use violent means to solve problems. In a study by Lichter, Lichter, and Rothman (2002), across the entire primetime schedule, acts of violence were committed by good guys more often than bad guys, and they were rarely condemned for their actions. The violence in this primetime schedule rarely produced physical damage or even caused characters to behave differently afterwards.

Television violence can teach some children that there are no nonviolent solutions to problems, also explained as disinhibition. Disinhibition refers to watching violence on television that may legitimize the use of violence by the viewer in real life by undermining social sanctions against behaving violently, which normally work to inhibit such behavior (Gunter & McAleer, 1997). For example, if violence is seen to be successful for a screen hero, according to the disinhibition argument, we are likely to select a violent option for solving real life problems (Giles, 2003). Young viewers may copy their hero’s behavior to become more like them. Sometimes screen heroes have no physical problems when they are involved in violence. If children view violence from characters that are not hurt or disrupted by the violence, children will then in turn see that it is appropriate to use violence to solve their problems.

Aggressor Effect

A study carried out by Lefkowitz, Eron, Walder, and Huesmann (1977), on a ten-year follow-up of girls and boys in the third grade, found that one of the single best predictors at age nine of whether a boy will be aggressive ten years later is the amount of violent television programming he watched. Belson (1978) looked at a group of boys in London between the ages of 12 and 17. His evidence suggests that watching aggressive television is associated with aggressive behavior (Singer & Singer, 1981).

According to Bushman and Huesmann (2001), one of the reasons why the effects of television violence may be so powerful is that aggression and television violence feed off each other. This reciprocal relationship between television violence and aggression can create a vicious
cycle. It is the struggle of hero versus the shadow that is pervasive in children’s programs. This reflects children’s own struggle to form their own identities (Kolter & Calvert, 2003).

The children most at risk of forming aggressive behavior when they become young adults are those who watch a steady amount of television violence, perceive it as realistic, and identify with the aggressor (Bushman & Huesmann, 2001). The combination of extensive exposure to violence and identification with aggressive characters was a particularly potent predictor of subsequent aggression for many children (Huesmann et al., 2003). In a 15-year longitudinal study of 329 youth, Huesmann et al. found that children’s TV-violence viewing between the ages of six and nine, children’s identification with aggressive same-sex TV characters, and children’s perceptions that TV violence is realistic, were significantly correlated with their adult aggression. Childhood TV habits were not just correlated with aggression but also predicted increases or decreases in aggressive behavior. They used a longitudinal structural modeling analysis of the directionality of the effects, which suggested that it is more plausible that exposure to TV violence increases aggression than that aggression increases TV-violence viewing. This study is inclined to go beyond this research and study people’s self-reported exposure and perception to television violence and their perceived behavior.

Desensitization Effect

Joanne Cantor (2002) explained that desensitization occurs when an emotional response is repeatedly evoked, and the action tendency that is associated with the emotion proves irrelevant or unnecessary. According to Gunter & McAleer (1997), children shown a violent program sequence tend to take longer to give a warning about the violence or misbehavior of other children when compared to similar children who have not watched any television violence. For instance, a six year old boy in Florida was in his apartment fighting with a friend. They managed to take the fight onto the balcony where he pushed his friend over the railing, causing the friend to fall ten stories to his death. Twenty minutes later the police arrived and asked the boy some questions. During the questioning, the boy ate pizza and watched cartoons. He was perfectly calm (Cantor, 2002).

Imitation (Social Learning Theory)

Most of the research on television violence, according to Cedric Cullingford (1984), is designed to demonstrate a clear connection between what is seen on the screen and what is enacted in real life. Social learning theory suggests that viewing any content leads children to reproduce this content when there is good reason to reproduce it in their environment (Dorr, 1986). It rests on the hypothesis that children imitate what they see: that they model their behavior from television (Cullingford, 1984). Human social behavior is learned, and much of this process occurs through trial and error, especially in the earliest years of life (Siegel, 1974).

Observational learning takes place when children pattern their behavior to that of models. By watching television, a child can learn new forms of behavior (Van der Voort, 1986). Not only does learning from television consist of improving one’s knowledge of what is going on in the world—that is political, economic, industrial, and foreign affairs—but television is also a major source of social learning (Gunter & McAleer, 1997). According to Gunter and McAleer (1997), through television, children may learn about themselves, about life, about how to behave in different situations, about how to deal with personal and family problems, and so on.
Teachers reported first graders stabbing kittens to death and mutilating pets after seeing violent acts on television or in movies. Parents observed preschoolers attempting to drown siblings because a cartoon hero drowned an enemy (Grossman & DeGaetano, 1999). In 2001, a 12-year old boy in Florida brutally killed a six-year old girl by imitating professional wrestling moves. In 2002, a 17-year old in Texas set himself on fire after duplicating a stunt on the MTV show Jackass. These situations are referred to as the “copycat effect”—viewers will actually do what they have seen. Males copy more than females, and younger children more than older (Goldstein, 1996).

The two most influential psychologists who have explored the question of imitation are Albert Bandura and Leonard Berkowitz. According to Social Learning Theory, established by Albert Bandura in the 1960s, a child may imitate acts of aggression they see which form part of their childhood experience. Bandura’s famous research comes from the study with the Bobo doll (Bandura, 1971). He had an experimental group where he showed one group of children a person being aggressive to a Bobo doll (e.g., hitting it). He then had a control group of children who were shown the same person not being aggressive to the doll. After that, all the children were given the Bobo doll and the group who observed the aggression to the Bobo doll imitated the aggressive behavior towards the doll the same way they had observed.

Berkowitz (1972) came up with cognitive neo-association: seeing aggression on television loosens the controls a viewer holds on their own aggression (disinhibits aggression). Once disinhibited, aggressive acts are more likely to be preformed in everyday life, but there is no expectation that these acts will be exact imitations of acts seen on television. In 1984, Berkowitz again studied television violence and children and came up with a cognitive view called priming (Giles, 2003). Priming is defined as implicit (or unconscious) memories of violent scenes that can be reactivated if appropriate cues are provided. Berkowitz explains that when individuals are required to make decisions, the priming of violent stimuli may influence their choice (Giles, 2003).

**METHODOLOGY**

**Retrospective Studies**

A retrospective study is a type of longitudinal analysis that looks backward, asking subjects to recall events that happened earlier in their lives, or tracing official records of someone’s pervious actions (Maxfield & Babbie, 2001). Brewin, Andrews, and Gotlib’s (1993) article reviewed a dozen articles employing retrospective self-report measures. These authors concluded that when people are questioned about specific events that occurred late enough in life to remember, the central features of the accounts they provide are largely accurate (Harrison & Cantor, 1999). Brewin, Andrews, and Gotlib (1993) argued that “adults asked to recall salient factual details of their own childhoods are generally accurate, especially concerning experiences that fulfill the criteria of having been unique, consequential, and unexpected” (p. 87). Retrospective recall is one way of approximating observations across time, but it must be used with caution (Maxfield & Babbie, 2001).
Design of the Research and Population

The researchers employed a cross-sectional one shot case study to test the relationship between an individual’s self-reported exposure and perception to television violence and their perceived behavior. A population from the students at the University of Texas at Arlington in the College of Liberal Arts was selected for this study. A total sample size of 130 student subjects participated in the study.

Sample Group and Sampling Procedure

Nonprobability sampling was employed for this study. With restrictions on time and resources, convenience sampling was employed instead of probability sampling. The researchers used power sampling to determine the sample size required. Since the research was being conducted at the 0.05 level of significance, there was a 5% chance that a Type I error would occur (null hypothesis would be correct). The use of power sampling provided the number of subjects required to ensure, with 95% accuracy, that there would be a relationship between the variables in this study (exposure to television violence and perceived behavior).

The researcher employed Cohen’s power sampling (Keppel, Saufley, & Tokunaga, 2003, pg. 210) to conclude that a sample of 130 students would be a sufficient number of subjects needed to insure a 0.05 level of confidence. According to Cohen, a power of 0.80 is desired to have a high confidence level of predictability, with a minimum of 44 people needed for a 0.05 level of significance and a minimum of 62 people needed for a 0.01 level of significance.

Measurement

The instrument that was used to measure students’ perceptions of their exposure to television violence and their perceived behavior was a survey. The researcher composed the 39-item survey with questions relating to the literature review (Carter & Strickland, 1975; Comstock & Scharrer, 2002; Van der Voort, 1986; Easterbrook, 2002; Lefkowitz, Eron, Walder, & Huesmann, 1977; Bushman & Huesmann, 2001) on exposure to television and perceived behavior from childhood to the present time of the study. The survey was administered to students from the College of Liberal Arts in four introductory classes. The students self-reported on questions pertaining to when they were a child (ages 5 to 15 years), questions that pertain to them at the present time, and also demographic information. For the purpose of this study, childhood was classified as the age of 5 to 15 to follow the research by Gunter, Harrison, & Wykes (2003) who suggest that it is not until age 6 that children develop the ability to make sense of television storylines.

The survey instrument was critical in determining the students’ self-reported exposure and perception to television violence and their perceived behavior. It consisted of 39 questions within three sections and consisted of nominal, ordinal, and interval data.

Analyzing the Data

The survey questions consisted of a five-point Likert scale. A five-point Likert scale makes the questionnaire more assessable when using such statistical measures as Pearson’s correlation coefficient and a t-test. The data collected from the surveys were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Since the researchers are analyzing students’ perceptions of exposure to television violence and their perceived behavior, the researcher used a
Pearson’s correlation coefficient as an effective means of summarizing the degree to which values of two variables correspond with each other. The researchers also employed a t-test to observe the differences in the means of males and females. For the purposes of this study, a t-test was used to test the differences between females and males in their perceptions of their exposure to television violence and their perceived behavior. The researchers analyzed the data to compare the means of the questions for men and women with an independent t-test.

Limitations

The sample design, methodology, and implementation were devised and administered to the highest standards permissible for this data set. There remain, however, some limitations to the study. The first limitation is that this study is a retrospective study. Retrospective reports are sometimes criticized for making causal inferences (Harrison & Cantor, 1999). Some participants could have faulty memories and not be able to recall their childhood, or the participants could have lied when recalling behavior that they believe is inappropriate by society standards. Retrospective studies are also limited in their ability to reveal how causal processes unfold over time (Maxfield & Babbie, 2001).

The second limitation is that this study took place at the University of Texas at Arlington with undergraduate students in the spring of 2006. The findings of this study apply only to this sample and should not be applied to the general population. The final limitation is the possibility of the existence of rival causal factors. A “third variable” could have skewed the responses given by the participants to the survey. Examples of a “third variable” could include poverty, abuse, drug use, or family stability.

In conclusion, this study implies and reflects the hypothesis that there is a correlation between an individual’s self-reported childhood exposure to and perception of television violence and perceived behavior. It suggests that exposure to television violence affects both positive and negative aggressive behavior. The presence of this single factor (television violence) only shows a correlation, not a cause of aggressive behavior. However, with each additional risk factor (for example drug use, history of abuse, poverty), the risk of children acting aggressively escalates (Gentile & Sesma, 2003). Also, it could be that television violence does not affect aggressive behavior in people who are attracted to violence on television because they may already have aggressive tendencies.

Further research needs to be done, perhaps longitudinal studies, to fully understand the impact of television violence on children and their behavior. This further research should not only concentrate on the affects of aggressive behavior intended to be harmful to others, but should also consider that some people might exert aggressive behavior from exposure to television violence, which could become behavior that is more acceptable in our society.

FINDINGS

Findings were derived from the data after analyzing it using a measure of association and comparing the means. The primary measure of association employed was the Pearson’s correlation coefficient. For the purposes of this study a Pearson’s r was given to study the strength of the relationship between exposure to television violence and perceived behavior. This study also compared the means between males and females using a t-test.
Measure of Association

This section will focus on the findings made through the Pearson’s correlation coefficient. For this study, a strong correlation is 0.60 or above, a moderate correlation is between 0.30 to 0.50, and a weak correlation is 0.29 or lower (Healey, 2002). To help analyze the data from the Pearson’s r test, this section was divided into two sub-sections: childhood behavior and adulthood behavior. Each of these sub-sections presents the data in reference to the most significant Pearson’s r (either positive or negative) at the 0.05 level of significance. The correlations of the variables will be presented in a table with a brief qualitative analysis of the data to include the most significant correlations.

Childhood Behavior

The following sub-section presents the Pearson’s r correlations for the childhood exposure variables relating to childhood behavior variables. In this study, Questions (Q) 1 through 7, 12 through 14 and 20 of the questionnaire relate to childhood exposure to television and violence as self-reported by the sample. The researcher will test these variables against the variables of childhood behavior (Q8 through 11 and 15 through 19) to determine if there is any strength between them. A perfect positive correlation would be 1.00 and a perfect negative (inverse) correlation would be -1.00. The greater the correlation, the larger the number will be to meet a perfect correlation.

The most significant correlations for Q1 through Q5 are presented in Table 1. The correlations (**) are statistically significant at the 0.01 level. This means that there is 99% certainty that a relationship exists between the variables and it is not due to error.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q5 As a child I watched sporting events almost every day.</td>
<td>.461**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q8 As a child I actively participated in a contact sport.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3 As a child the majority of the programs I watched contained images of fighting.</td>
<td>.291**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q8 As a child I actively participated in a contact sport.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2 As a child most of the cartoons I watched involved super heroes.</td>
<td>.253**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q15 As a child I had thoughts of emulating behavior from a television program.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3 As a child the majority of the programs I watched contained images of fighting.</td>
<td>.240**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q15 As a child I had thoughts of emulating the behavior from a television program.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3 As a child the majority of the programs I watched contained images of fighting.</td>
<td>.217*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10 As a child I got in trouble at school more than three times a year.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5 As a child I watched sporting events almost every day.</td>
<td>.208*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10 As a child I got in trouble at school more than three times a year.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5 As a child I watched sporting events almost every day.</td>
<td>.205*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q18 As a child I would emulate violent behavior I saw on television.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5 As a child I watched sporting events almost every day.</td>
<td>.178*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q9 As a child I repeatedly hurt animals.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<0.05. **p<0.01.
The correlations (*) from Table 1 are statistically significant at the 0.05 level, which means there is 95% certainty that a relationship exists between the variables. A moderate correlation of 0.461 was detected between the variables “As a child I watched sporting events almost every day” and “As a child I actively participated in a contact sport”; that is, a respondent who perceives that he or she watched sporting events almost every day as a child was more likely to have participated in a contact sport as a child.

A weak correlation of 0.291 was observed between “As a child the majority of the programs I watched contained images of fighting” and “As a child I actively participated in a contact sport.” That is, a person who perceives that they watched programs that contained images of fighting as a child is likely to have participated in a contact sport as a child. A significant correlation of 0.240 was between the variables “As a child the majority of the programs I watched contained images of fighting” and “As a child I had thoughts of emulating the behavior from a television program.” It suggests that a respondent who had the perception that the majority of the programs he or she watched as a child contained images of fighting would also perceive to have thoughts as a child of emulating the behavior from a television program.

### Table 2: Most Significant Correlations of Childhood Exposure Variables (Q6, Q7 and Q12) Relating to Variables of Childhood Behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q6 As a child I watched television programs that were violent in nature (i.e., programs that contained fighting, blood, use of weapons).</td>
<td>.337**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q15 As a child I had thoughts of emulating behavior from a television program.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6 As a child I watched television programs that were violent in nature (i.e., programs that contained fighting, blood, use of weapons).</td>
<td>.289**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10 As a child I got in trouble at school more than three times a year.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q12 As a child I enjoyed playing first-person shooting video games or video games that contained violence.</td>
<td>.275**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q15 As a child I had thoughts of emulating behavior from a television program.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q12 As a child I enjoyed playing first-person shooting video games or video games that contained violence.</td>
<td>.262**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q16 As a child I was more likely to agree that it is all right to hit someone if you were mad at them for a good reason.</td>
<td>.254**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q8 As a child I actively participated in a contact sport team.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6 As a child I watched television programs that were violent in nature (i.e., programs that contained fighting, blood, use of weapons).</td>
<td>.236**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q16 As a child I was more likely to agree that it is all right to hit someone if you were mad at them for a good reason.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6 As a child I watched television programs that were violent in nature (i.e., programs that contained fighting, blood, use of weapons).</td>
<td>.220*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q18 As a child I would emulate violent behavior that I saw on television.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q12 As a child I enjoyed playing first-person shooting video games or video games that contained violence.</td>
<td>-.177*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q17 As a child I believed that the television programs represent reality.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<0.05. **p<0.01.
The most significant correlations for Q6, Q7, and Q12 as variables of childhood exposure are located in Table 2. The first six significant correlations (**) are statistically significant at the 0.01 level while the last three significant correlations (*) from Table 2 are significant at the 0.05 level. A correlation was detected between the variables “As a child I watched television programs that were violent in nature (i.e., programs that contained fighting, blood, use of weapons)” and “As a child I had thoughts of emulating behavior from a television program” with a moderate correlation of 0.377. This shows that respondents who believed as children they watched television programs that were violent in nature also believed that as children they had thoughts of emulating behavior from a television program. A weak correlation of 0.220 was observed between the variables “As a child I watched television programs that were violent in nature (i.e., programs that contained fighting, blood, use of weapons)” and “As a child I would emulate violent behavior I saw on television.” Therefore, a respondent who believes as a child he or she watched television programs that were violent also have the perception that he or she would emulate violent behavior that they saw on television as a child.

The most significant correlations for Q13, Q14, and Q20 of childhood exposure against childhood behavior can be found in Table 3. The first four significant correlations (**) are statistically significant at the 0.01 level while the last two correlations (*) are statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

| Table 3: Most Significant Correlations of Childhood Exposure Variables (Q13, Q14, and Q20) Relating to Variables of Childhood Behavior |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Variables                                      | Correlation |
| Q13 As a child I enjoyed playing video games that contained acts of violence (i.e., fighting, use of weapons, images of blood). | .326** |
| Q15 As a child I had thoughts of emulating behavior from a television program. |                         |
| Q13 As a child I enjoyed playing video games that contained acts of violence (i.e., fighting, use of weapons, images of blood). | .312** |
| Q16 As a child I was more likely to agree that it is all right to hit someone if you were mad at them for a good reason. |                         |
| Q14 As a child I watched movies that were rated “R” or above at least once a week. | .272** |
| Q18 As a child I would emulate violent behavior that I saw on television. |                         |
| Q14 As a child I watched movies that were rated “R” or above at least once a week | .239** |
| Q15 As a child I had thoughts of emulating behavior from a television program. |                         |
| Q20 As a child how many televisions did you have in your bedroom? | .205* |
| Q15 As a child I had thoughts of emulating behavior from a television program. |                         |
| Q13 As a child I enjoyed playing video games that contained acts of violence (i.e., fighting, use of weapons, images of blood). | .203* |
| Q18 As a child I would emulate violent behavior that I saw on television. |                         |

*p<0.05. **p<0.01.

A moderate correlation of 0.326 was discovered between the variables “As a child I enjoyed playing video games that contained acts of violence (i.e., fighting, use of weapons, images of blood)” and “As a child I had thoughts of emulating behavior from a television program”; that is, those who perceived playing video games that contained acts of violence as a child were likely to perceive having thoughts of emulating behavior from a television program.
A correlation can be seen between “As a child I enjoyed playing video games that contained acts of violence (i.e., fighting, use of weapons, images of blood)” and “As a child I would emulate violent behavior that I saw on television” with a correlation of 0.203. Therefore, a respondent whose perception as a child was playing video games that contained acts of violence was likely to perceive that, as a child, he or she would emulate violent behavior they saw on television.

**Adulthood Behavior**

The following sub-section presents the Pearson’s r correlations for childhood exposure variables relating to adulthood behavior variables. Questions 23 through 33 are the variables of adulthood behavior.

Table 4 shows the most significant correlations of childhood exposure variables relating to variables of adulthood behavior. The most statistically significant numerical value from this table is 0.526 between the variables “As a child I watched sporting events almost every day” and “I enjoy watching contact sports (such as boxing, football, and hockey).” That is, a respondent who perceived watching contact sporting events as a child almost every day is likely to enjoy watching contact sports now as an adult.

The variables “As a child the majority of the programs I watched contained images of fighting” and “I enjoy participating in extreme sports (like sky diving, bungee jumping, rock climbing)” had a correlation at 0.180. Therefore, it could be suggested that a person who perceives, as a child, that the majority of the programs he or she watched contained images of fighting also enjoys participating in extreme sports.
The most significant correlations for the variables Q6, Q7, and Q12 relating to the variables of adulthood behavior are found in Table 5. The most significant numerical value for this table is between the variables “As a child I watched television more than four hours a day” and “I watch more than four hours of television a day” with a moderate correlation of 0.477. This shows that respondents who perceive they watched more than four hours of television a day as children were likely to now watch more than four hours of television a day.

A correlation of 0.440 was detected between the variables “As a child I enjoyed playing first-person shooting video games or video games that contained violence” and “I enjoy participating in contact sports (such as boxing, football, and hockey)”; that is, participants who believe as children they enjoyed playing first-person shooting video games or video games that contained violence were likely to enjoy participating in contact sports.
### Table 5: Most Significant Correlations of Childhood Exposure Variables (Q6, Q7 and Q12) Relating to Variables of Adulthood Behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q7 As a child I watched television more than four hours a day.</td>
<td>.477**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q23 I watch more than four hours of television a day.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q12 As a child I enjoyed playing first-person shooting video games or video games that contained violence.</td>
<td>.440**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q27 I enjoy participating in contact sports (such as boxing, football, and hockey).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q12 As a child I enjoyed playing first-person shooting video games or video games that contained violence.</td>
<td>.403**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q29 I enjoy watching other people get into physical altercations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q12 As a child I enjoyed playing first-person shooting video games or video games that contained violence.</td>
<td>.328**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q30 I enjoy watching contact sports (such as boxing, football, and hockey).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q12 As a child I enjoyed playing first-person shooting video games or video games that contained violence.</td>
<td>.280**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q24 I enjoy participating in extreme sports (like sky diving, bungee jumping, rock climbing).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q12 As a child I enjoyed playing first-person shooting video games or video games that contained violence.</td>
<td>.278**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q32 I enjoy participating in physical altercations with others.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6 As a child I watched television programs that were violent in nature (i.e., programs that contained fighting, blood, use of weapons).</td>
<td>.273**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q24 I enjoy participating in extreme sports (like sky diving, bungee jumping, rock climbing).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6 As a child I watched television programs that were violent in nature (i.e., programs that contained fighting, blood, use of weapons).</td>
<td>.261**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q27 I enjoy participating in contact sports (such as boxing, football, and hockey).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7 As a child I watched television more than four hours a day.</td>
<td>.237**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q28 I believe it is okay to commit crimes if it is beneficial to others.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6 As a child I watched television programs that were violent in nature (i.e., programs that contained fighting, blood, use of weapons).</td>
<td>.224*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q25 I have committed a crime (crimes other than traffic tickets).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6 As a child I watched television programs that were violent in nature (i.e., programs that contained fighting, blood, use of weapons).</td>
<td>.215*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q28 I believe it is okay to commit crimes if it is beneficial to others.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7 As a child I watched television more than four hours a day.</td>
<td>.204*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q26 I enjoy watching horror movies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6 As a child I watched television programs that were violent in nature (i.e., programs that contained fighting, blood, use of weapons).</td>
<td>.188*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q29 I enjoy watching other people get into physical altercations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q12 As a child I enjoyed playing first-person shooting video games or video games that contained violence.</td>
<td>.180*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q28 I believe it is okay to commit crimes if it is beneficial to others.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<0.05. **p<0.01.
A continuation of the most significant correlations of the variables of childhood exposure with Q13, Q14, and Q20, and the variables of adulthood behavior are found in Table 6. A correlation was found between the variables “As a child I enjoyed playing video games that contained acts of violence (i.e., fighting, use of weapons, images of blood)” and “I enjoy participating in contact sports (such as boxing, football, and hockey)” with a moderate correlation of 0.422. This shows that respondents who believe they enjoyed playing video games that contained acts of violence as children also now enjoy participating in contact sports.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q13 As a child I enjoyed playing video games that contained acts of violence (i.e., fighting, use of weapons, images of blood). Q27 I enjoy participating in contact sports (such as boxing, football, and hockey).</td>
<td>.422**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q13 As a child I enjoyed playing video games that contained acts of violence (i.e., fighting, use of weapons, images of blood). Q29 I enjoy watching other people get into physical altercations.</td>
<td>.373**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q13 As a child I enjoyed playing video games that contained acts of violence (i.e., fighting, use of weapons, images of blood). Q30 I enjoy watching contact sports (such as boxing, football, and hockey).</td>
<td>.321**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q14 As a child I watched movies that were rated “R” or above at least once a week. Q23 I watch more than four hours of television a day.</td>
<td>.310**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q14 As a child I watched movies that were rated “R” or above at least once a week. Q26 I enjoy watching horror movies.</td>
<td>.290**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q13 As a child I enjoyed playing video games that contained acts of violence (i.e., fighting, use of weapons, images of blood). Q24 I enjoy participating in extreme sports (like sky diving, bungee jumping, rock climbing).</td>
<td>.273**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q20 As a child how many televisions did you have in your household? Q31 I believe committing murder is acceptable.</td>
<td>.261**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q13 As a child I enjoyed playing video games that contained acts of violence (i.e., fighting, use of weapons, images of blood). Q25 I have committed a crime (crimes other than traffic violations).</td>
<td>.258**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q13 As a child I enjoyed playing video games that contained acts of violence (i.e., fighting, use of weapons, images of blood). Q32 I enjoy participating in physical altercations with others.</td>
<td>.237**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q13 As a child I enjoyed playing video games that contained acts of violence (i.e., fighting, use of weapons, images of blood). Q28 I believe it is okay to commit crimes if it is beneficial to others.</td>
<td>.202*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q20 As a child how many televisions did you have in your household? Q26 I enjoy watching horror movies.</td>
<td>-.205*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q14 As a child I watched movies that were rated “R” or above at least once a week. Q29 I enjoy watching other people get into physical altercations.</td>
<td>.180*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<0.05. **p<0.01.
A correlation of 0.258 was found between the variables “As a child I enjoyed playing video games that contained acts of violence (i.e., fighting, use of weapons, images of blood)” and “I have committed a crime (crimes other than traffic violations).” This suggests that respondents who believe they enjoyed playing video games with violence as children also believe they have committed a crime.

The variables “As a child I enjoyed playing video games that contained acts of violence (i.e., fighting, use of weapons, images of blood)” and “I enjoy participating in physical altercations with others” have a correlation of 0.237. This might conclude that those who perceive to enjoy playing video games with violence as children are likely to enjoy participating in physical altercations with others.

Comparing the Means

A t-test is a statistical test of the difference between two means (Keppel, Saufley, & Tokunaga, 1992). For the purposes of this study, a t-test was given to study the differences in males’ and females’ perceptions of their exposure to television violence as a child and their perceived behavior. The t-test results for the variables of childhood exposure (Q1 through Q7, Q12 through Q14, and Q20) can be found in Table 7. All of the variables in this table pertain to when the participant was a child, and all of the variables are statistically significant at the 0.01 level (which means that there is a 99% certainty that a relationship exists not due to error).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Male (Means)</th>
<th>Female (Means)</th>
<th>p Value (Two-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As a child I watched television after 7:00 p.m. almost every night.</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>.004**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a child most of the cartoons I watched involved super heroes.</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a child the majority of the programs I watched contained images of fighting.</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a child my parents watched television programs with me most of the time.</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>.935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a child I watched sporting events almost every day.</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a child I watched television programs that were violent in nature (i.e., programs that contained fighting, blood, use of weapons).</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a child I watched television more than four hours a day.</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>.524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a child I enjoyed playing first-person shooting video games or video games that contained violence.</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a child I enjoyed playing video games that contained acts of violence (i.e., fighting, use of weapons, images of blood).</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a child I watched movies that were rated “R” or above at least once a week.</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a child how many televisions did you have in your household?</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>.165</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<0.05. **p<0.01.
A statistically significant difference was found between the female and male response to the majority of the programs watched containing images of fighting. The mean for males is 2.23 and the mean for females is 3.14, producing a p value of 0.000. Males indicated that they agree to have watched the majority of the programs that contained fighting while the female response was neutral.

Another statistically significant difference is for the response to watched programs that were violent in nature (i.e., programs that contained fighting, blood, use of weapons). The male mean is 2.21 and the female mean is 3.49, producing a p value of 0.000. This suggests that males watched television programs that were violent while females were not likely to have watched television programs that were violent in nature.

There was also a significant difference detected for the response of enjoyed playing first-person shooting video games that contained violence. The mean for females is 4.12 and the mean for males is 1.88. When the t-test was run for differences, it produced a p value of 0.000. Females indicated that they disagreed while males agreed strongly to enjoy playing first-person shooting video games that contained violence.

There was another statistically significant difference in response of males (versus females) for the question of enjoyed playing video games that contained acts of violence (i.e., fighting, use of weapons, images of blood). The mean for males is 1.90, and the mean for females is 4.22, producing a p value of 0.000. Males agree strongly while females disagree strongly that they enjoyed playing video games that contained acts of violence.

The primary focus of this study was to provide empirical support regarding an individual’s self-reported exposure and perception to television violence and their perceived behavior. In order to obtain the empirical evidence, a survey was administered to a sample of 130 undergraduate students from the University of Texas at Arlington. This study concludes that there is a correlation between an individual’s self-reported exposure and perception to television violence and perceived behavior.

This study defines behavior as either positive or negative aggression. Positive aggression is aggressive behavior that is not meant to be harmful to others, like participating in contact or extreme sports. Negative aggression is aggressive behavior that intends to harm others, like getting into physical altercations, hurting animals, or getting in trouble (e.g., trouble in school or committing a crime).

When examining the correlation between childhood exposure and perceived childhood behavior, there are correlations to both exposure to television violence and perceived positive aggressive behavior, and exposure to television violence and perceived negative aggressive behavior. Correlation to positive aggressive behavior can be seen with the variables of participating in a contact or extreme sport. This study concluded that a person who watched programs that contained images of fighting or that were violent in nature is likely to have participated in a contact sport or extreme sport. This suggests that a person who is exposed to violence on television as a child could possibly have an impact on their behavior in that they act aggressively in a positive way. This study also concludes that a person who watched the majority of programs with images of fighting or that were violent in nature is also likely to get into trouble at school.
more than three times a year. This suggests that a person exposed to violence on television as a child could affect a person’s behavior in that they act aggressively in a negative manner.

One concern that the study concluded is that participants who watched television programs that were violent in nature had thoughts of, or would emulate, the (violent) behavior from the television programs. These correlations support social learning theory, which states that observation learning takes place when children pattern their behavior through watching others’ behavior. Social learning can also take the form of positive aggressive behavior shown in this study, that there is a correlation between watching sporting events almost every day and participating in a contact sport. That is, a person who watched sporting events almost every day is also likely to have participated in contact sports. It could be concluded from this study that children learn and pattern their behavior from watching television.

When examining the correlation between childhood exposure and perceived adulthood behavior, there is more of a correlation of exposure to television violence and perceived positive aggression. This study implies that a person who watched programs that contained images of fighting or violent in nature or watched sporting events almost every day also enjoys participating in extreme or contact sports. This shows it could be that a person acts out his or her aggressive behavior in a more normal, socially acceptable (positive) way from their exposure to television violence.

A t-test was used to conclude if there were differences between males’ and females’ responses to the questions of exposure to television violence and perceived behavior. Males were more likely to have watched television programs that were violent in nature and also more likely to watch sporting events almost every day. Males were also more likely to enjoy playing video games that contained acts of violence. With perceived behavior, males were more likely to enjoy participating in extreme or contact sports. The results from the t-test could conclude that males are the ones who are more exposed to television violence, and that this exposure could affect males’ behavior. This study implies that males exert their behavior through aggressive acts of extreme sports or contact sports.

**Implications**

This study suggests that there is a correlation between exposure to television violence and perceived behavior. The results of this study should educate the public, parents, children, and programmers. It also makes suggestions on what could be done, by parents, programmers, and even criminologists to help further understand this subject.

When looking at who is at risk when viewing television violence, there must be awareness that media violence can affect any child from any family. It can also affect any gender, age, or social class. There needs to be some increased awareness of how television violence affects children and how can it be prevented.
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BIographical Sketches

Tiffany Slotsve received a Bachelors degree in Criminology/Criminal Justice from the University of Texas at Arlington in 2004. She is a member of the Alpha Phi Sigma National Criminal Justice Honor Society. In the future, she hopes to either focus her career at the federal government level or to go on to get her doctorate and become a professor. Ms. Slotsve is currently employed with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Arlington as an assistant Licensed Childcare Director.

Alex del Carmen is an associate professor and chair of the Department of Criminology, University of Texas at Arlington. He earned a Ph.D. in criminology and criminal justice from Florida State University in 1997. His research interests include law enforcement, racial profiling, crime prevention, and corrections. He has published over twenty-five refereed academic manuscripts in internationally recognized journals. His most recent book is titled Racial Profiling in America (2008) Prentice Hall Publishing.

Mary Sarver is a doctoral candidate at Sam Houston State University. She has worked with the U.S Marshalls Executive Development Training Program in conjunction with the Law Enforcement Management Institute of Texas. Her research interests include law enforcement training and leadership. Currently, she is studying law enforcement leadership styles in Texas.

Rita J. Villarreal-Watkins is the Executive Director of the Law Enforcement Management Institute of Texas (LEMIT). She earned a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership and Counseling from Sam Houston State University in 2000. During her employment at LEMIT at Sam
Houston State University, she has become involved in many facets of education. Her teaching and research has concentrated on the areas of cultural diversity issues, leadership development, interpersonal communication, conflict resolution, investigative techniques, and diverse workplaces.