

**Human Aggression (PSYC 328)**  
**Graduate Seminar**  
**Fall Semester, 2002**

**Class meets:** Tuesdays, 2:00-4:30, 347 Davie Hall

**Professor:** Bruce Bartholow (Office: Davie 328)

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:30-11:00am, Davie 328

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**Required Texts**

- Geen, R.G. (2001). Human Aggression (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Buckingham, UK: Open University Press. (A.k.a., **Geen**)
- Geen, R.G., & Donnerstein, E. (Eds.) (1998). Human aggression: Theories, research, and implications for social policy. San Diego, CA: Academic Press. (A.k.a., **G & D**)

**Recommended Text**

- Berkowitz, L. (1993). Aggression: Its causes, consequences, and control. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.  
(We will read a number of chapters from this book, but I opted not to require you to purchase it. You still may wish to do so, but if not, photocopies of assigned chapters will be made available.) (A.k.a., **Berk**)

**Additional Readings**

In addition to the above texts, we will be reading a number of articles and chapters on specific topics in aggression. These will be assigned at least 1 week in advance. Due to the reserve reading desk recently moving to House Undergraduate Library, there is a major wait for articles put on reserve to be available. Furthermore, I have found the quality of reserve papers to be rather low when articles are scanned for download (i.e., e-reserves). Thus, master copies of the additional readings for this class will be kept in the office of the Social program secretary (Room 314 Davie Hall), and you will be responsible for making photocopies for yourselves. Or, in some cases, you may be able to find the journal articles in the Thibaut Room library (327 Davie Hall) and take them to be copied. Davis library is always another option.

**Course Description & Goals**

It is my belief (or at least my hope) that at the level of graduate education, the instructor and students all share the goal of learning more about given topics (human aggression in this case). As such, I have decided not to impose a rigid structure onto this class. Instead, I have come up with what I feel are the necessary features of the course, and within the general framework outlined below, there will be flexibility concerning how some aspects of these features are implemented. The primary purpose of instituting the necessary features is to help ensure that class time is well spent, that our discourse is stimulating, and that a relatively high level of knowledge acquisition takes place.

As I see it, the minimal goals of the course are: (1) That each student learn the basic psychological approach to understanding human aggression as currently represented in social psychology; (2) That each student explore in considerable detail one aspect of human aggression via a research project. Other goals include: (3) Fostering a theory-based understanding of current societal problems involving aggression and violence; (4) Opening the field of aggression to students who previously may not have been interested in the topic; (5) Creating a greater understanding of the challenges (as well as the excitements) of studying human aggression, particularly in the laboratory; and (5) Inspiring students to examine aspects of the aggression phenomenon in their own research at whatever level is of interest, be it individual, familial, cultural, or societal.

## **The Necessary Features**

1. We will be reading and discussing some recent books on aggression (listed above), as well as a number of other chapters and articles.
2. Students will be expected to type outlines of the readings for each week. I see three excellent reasons for making outlines: (1) To help everyone keep up with the readings; (2) To help students discuss the week's readings; and (3) To make it easier to review the material read previously. In addition to summarizing the readings, your outlines should contain questions that you would like to pose and discuss with the group. Below, I have outlined the kinds of issues you should consider when forming your discussion questions. During each class meeting, I will randomly call on one of you to "facilitate" group discussion of the reading, presumably based on your discussion questions. Finally, although I consider these outlines to be mandatory, I will not ask you to turn your outlines in to me, at least initially. However, if it becomes clear that some students are not completing these outlines, I will start asking you to turn them in each week for grading.
3. Some type of research project will be conducted. Depending on your preferences, this may take any of several forms. Here are some possibilities that make sense to me (in no particular order): (A) Each student does an individual research project, including lit review and theory development, proposed method, and data collection and analysis of at least a few pilot subjects; (B) Same as A, except that students work in groups of 2 or 3 on a joint project (in this case it will have to be clear that all involved contributed); (C) The class as a whole works jointly on one major project, including all of the elements of A but with complete data collection. In this case, it would probably be necessary to run a survey study of some type, a simple laboratory experiment, or an archival study (e.g., meta-analysis).
4. Both written and oral presentations of the research project will be given at the end of the semester.

I hope it is clear from the above features that there is still considerable latitude in how we proceed with the course. For instance, the issue of student evaluation (i.e., grading) still remains largely open, and I would like the students as a group to determine how this will happen. One option would be to have a midterm and final exam, in addition to the research project. This way, your grade for the course is not as heavily dependent upon your research project.

## **Discussion Issues to Consider**

Here are a few suggestions to keep in mind when framing your questions for discussion in class:

- What theoretical issues are important here? Have theoretical questions been properly framed by the investigators?
- How can the issues being raised in the present reading be integrated with other readings or perspectives?
- Will this stimulate discussion? Will there be follow-up issues to discuss?
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**Tentative Course Calendar**  
*(Some readings and topics are still to be arranged)*

<b>Week</b>	<b>Class Meetings</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Readings</b>
1	August 20	Introduction to aggression	Geen Chapter 1 G & D Chapter 1
2	August 27	Methodology in the study of aggression, and methods of aggressing	G & D chapter 2 Giancola, & Chermack, 1998 Giancola & Zeichner, 1995 Anderson & Bushman, 1997 Geen, 1998 ( <i>Note: not our text</i> )
3	September 3	Affective vs. instrumental aggression	G & D chapter 3 Berk chapter 1 Bushman & Anderson, 2001a
4	September 10	Major theories, I: Cognitive neo-association theory	Geen chapter 2 Berkowitz, 1989 Berk chapter 3
5	September 17	Major Theories, II: Social information processing models of aggression	G & D, chapter 4 Dodge & Coie, 1987 Burks et al., 1999
6	September 24	Major theories, III: The General Aggression Model	Anderson & Bushman, 2002 Lindsay & Anderson, 2000 Anderson, Dueser, & Deneve, 1995
7	October 1	“Aggressive Personality”: Development and consequences	Caprara et al., 1994 Caprara et al., 1996 Berk Chapter 5
8	October 8	Media violence and aggression: The harm in having a little fun	Bushman & Anderson, 2001b G & D chapter 7 Geen chapter 6
9	October 15	Individual differences in aggression, I: Executive functioning	Giancola, 1994 Giancola & Zeichner, 1994 Hawkins & Trobst, 2000
10	October 22	Individual differences in aggression, II: Sex and cultural differences	Bettencourt & Miller, 1996 Geen chapter 4
11	October 29	Biological & Physiological approaches to the study of aggression	Berk chapter 12 Harmon-Jones & Sigelman Giancola, 1995 Wong, 2001
12	November 5	Temperature and aggression	G & D chapter 10 Cohn & Rotton, 1997 Rotton & Cohn, 2000

13	November 12	Linking drugs and aggression	G & D chapter 6 Giancola & Zeichner, 1997 Ito et al., 1996
14	November 19	Violence in families	Geen chapter 5 G & D chapter 8
15	November 25	How can aggression and violence be controlled/reduced?	Berk Chapter 10, 11 Huesmann & Reynolds, 2001
16	December 3	Presentations	
17	December 10	Papers due?	

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### Additional Readings

#### Week 2

Anderson, C.A., & Bushman, B.J. (1997). External validity of "trivial" experiments: The case of laboratory aggression. *Review of General Psychology, 1*, 19-41.

Geen, R.G. (1998). Aggression and antisocial behavior. In Gilbert, Fiske, & Lindzey (Eds.), *Handbook of social psychology* (4<sup>th</sup> ed., Vol. 2; pp. 317-356). Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill. [NOTE: For this chapter, we will focus on pp. 335-347]

Giancola, P.R., & Zeichner, A. (1995). Construct validity of a competitive reaction-time aggression paradigm. *Aggressive Behavior, 21*, 199-204.

Giancola, P.R., & Chermack, S.T. (1998). Construct validity of laboratory aggression paradigms: A response to Tedeschi & Quigley (1996). *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 3*, 237-253.

#### Week 3

Bushman, B.J., & Anderson, C.A. (2001). Is it time to pull the plug on the hostile versus instrumental aggression dichotomy? *Psychological Review, 108*, 273-279. (Available online at: <http://www.psychology.iastate.edu/faculty/caa/abstracts/2000-2004/01BA.pdf>)

#### Week 4:

Berkowitz, L. (1989). Frustration-aggression hypothesis: Examination and reformulation. *Psychological Bulletin, 106*, 59-73.

#### Week 5

Dodge, K. A., & Coie, J. D. (1987). Social-information processing factors in reactive and proactive aggression in children's peer groups. Special issue: integrating personality and social psychology. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 53*, 1146-1158.

Burks, V. S., Laird, R. D., Dodge, K. A., Pettit, G. S., Bates, J. E. (1999). Knowledge structures, social information processing, and children's aggressive behavior. *Social Development, 8*, 220-236. (Available online via UNC-CH electronic journals: <http://eresources.lib.unc.edu/ejournal/list.php?letter=S>)

#### Week 6

Anderson, C. A., & Bushman, B. J. (2002). Human aggression. *Annual Review of Psychology, 53*. (Available online at: <http://www.psychology.iastate.edu/faculty/caa/abstracts/2000-2004/02AB.pdf>)

Lindsay, J. J., & Anderson, C. A. (2000). From antecedent conditions to violent actions: A general affective aggression model. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 26*, 533-547. (Available online at: <http://www.psychology.iastate.edu/faculty/caa/abstracts/2000-2004/00LA.pdf>)

Anderson, C. A., Deuser, W. E., & DeNeve, K. (1995). Hot temperatures, hostile affect, hostile cognition, and arousal: Tests of a general model of affective aggression. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *21*, 434-448. (Available online at: <http://www.psychology.iastate.edu/faculty/caa/abstracts/1995-1999/95ADD.pdf>)

### Week 7

Caprara, G. V., Barbaranelli, C., Pastorelli, C., & Perugini, M. (1994). Individual differences in the study of human aggression. *Aggressive Behavior*, *20*, 291-303.

Caprara, G. V., Barbaranelli, C., & Zimbardo, P. G. (1996). Understanding the complexity of human aggression: Affective, cognitive, and social dimensions of individual differences in propensity toward aggression. *European Journal of Personality*, *10*, 133-155.

### Week 8

Bushman, B. J., & Anderson, C. A. (2001). Media violence and the American public: Scientific facts versus media misinformation. *American Psychologist*, *56*, 477-489. (Available online at: <http://www.psychology.iastate.edu/faculty/caa/abstracts/2000-2004/01BA.ap.pdf>)

### Week 9

Giancola, P. R. (1994). Neuropsychological functioning and antisocial behavior: Implications for etiology and prevention. In D.H. Fishbein (Ed.), *The science, treatment, and prevention of antisocial behaviors: Application to the criminal justice system* (pp. 11-1 to 11-16). Kingston, NJ: Civic Research Institute.

Giancola, P. R., & Zeichner, A. (1994). Neuropsychological performance on test of frontal-lobe functioning and aggressive behavior in men. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, *103*, 832-835.

Hawkins, K. A., & Trobst, K. K. (2000). Frontal lobe dysfunction and aggression: Conceptual issues and research findings. *Aggressive and Violence Behavior*, *5*(2), 147-157. Available online via UNC-CH electronic journals: <http://eresources.lib.unc.edu/ejournal/list.php?letter=A> (then follow links to this journal and article)

### Week 10

Bettencourt, B.A., & Miller, N. (1996). Gender differences in aggression as a function of provocation: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, *119*, 422-447.

Aronson, E. (2000). *Nobody left to hate: Teaching compassion after Columbine*. New York, NY: W. H. Freeman, Co. (Chapters 2 through 5 only)

### Week 11

Giancola, P.R. (1995). Evidence for dorsolateral and orbital prefrontal cortical involvement in the expression of aggressive behavior. *Aggressive Behavior*, *21*, 431-450.

Harmon-Jones, E., & Sigelman, J. (2001). State anger and pre-frontal lobe brain activity: Evidence that insult-related relative left-prefrontal activation is associated with experienced anger. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *80*, 797-903.

Wong, M. (2001). *Neuroimaging in human aggression*. In Martinez (Ed.), *Prevention and control of aggression and its impact on its victims* (pp. 83-93). New York: Plenum Press.

## Week 12

Cohn, E. G., & Rotton, J. (1997). Assault as a function of time and temperature: A moderator-variable time-series analysis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 72, 1322-1334.

Rotton, J. & Cohn, E. G. (2000). Violence is a curvilinear function of temperature in Dallas: A replication. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 78(6), 1074-1081.

## Week 13

Giancola, P.R., & Zeichner, A. (1997). The biphasic effects of alcohol on human physical aggression. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 106, 598-607.

Pederson, W. C., Aviles, F. E., Ito, T. A., Miller, N., & Pollock, V. E. (2002). Psychological experimentation on alcohol-induced human aggression. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 7(3), 293-312.

## Week 14

TBD

## Week 15

Huesmann, L. R., & Reynolds, M. A. (2001). Cognitive processes and the development of aggression. In Bohart & Stipek (Eds.), *Constructive and destructive behavior: Implications for family, school, and society* (pp. 249-269). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.