
THE BULLETIN OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH ON AGGRESSION

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President: Caroline Blanchard, blanchar@hawaii.edu

President-Elect: Menno R Kruk, m.kruk@lacdr.leidenuniv.nl

Treasurer: John F. Knutson, john-knutson@uiowa.edu

Treasurer (from January 2005): Jacquelyn White, jackie_white@uncg.edu

Executive Secretary: Deborah Richardson, drichardson@aug.edu

Archivist:(from January 2005): Paul Brain, p.brain@swansea.ac.uk

North American Editor of the ISRA Bulletin: Roger N. Johnson, Ramapo College, Mahwah, N.J. USA,07430, rjohnson@ramapo.edu

European Editor of the ISRA Bulletin: Jane L. Ireland, Ashworth Hospital, Liverpool, UK, L31 1HW and University of Central Lancashire, Lancashire, UK, PR1 2HE, JL.Ireland1@uclan.ac.uk

ISRA home page: www.israsociety.com, webmaster: rjohnson@ramapo.edu

The European Editor produced this issue

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Editorial

Welcome to the December edition of the ISRA bulletin, the first after the 2004 World Meeting. Thanks are extended to Kaj Björkqvist and Karin Österman for their hard work in putting together an excellent conference. The bulletin starts with a commentary by our president-elect, Menno R. Kruk, who offers an interesting perspective on the conference, focusing on its link to further fields including ostracism and terrorism.

This bulletin includes the usual Society information following a World Meeting namely a Treasurer's report, and minutes from the Council and Business meetings. Prof. Jolanta Zagrodzka then presents a call for interest in a workshop on aggression due to be held in Poland in May 2005. Also included within the bulletin is a paper by Paul Smith and Mitch Waterman that may be of interest to ISRA members. In this paper they report on the measurement of impulsivity and aggression among prisoners and highlight the lack of applied research into this area. The bulletin concludes with a small random selection pictures taken at the World Meeting with thanks to John Archer and Ed Donnerstein for providing these.

As always, comments on the bulletin are most welcome, particularly those relating to how it can be developed in the future. Short articles, book reviews, conference or brief journal reviews are warmly invited and can be sent direct to myself for possible inclusion.

Jane L. Ireland, European Editor

JLIreland1@uclan.ac.uk

or

Irelan-j@ashworth.nwest.nhs.uk

IMPORTANT ISRA BULLETIN NEWS

This is to be the final bulletin that will be circulated to members via non-electronic mail. Sending an email version only of the bulletin in future was discussed at the ISRA Council Meeting and it was agreed sending only an email version in future would be appropriate. To aid a period of transition it was agreed to send the current bulletin by traditional post as well.

If you have NOT received an email version of this bulletin this means the ISRA have an incorrect email for you. You should therefore contact the ISRA Treasurer to ensure the society has a correct address for you.

On ISRA, Thira, terrorism and belonging: A personal view

Menno R. Kruk,
Leiden,
The Netherlands.
m.kruk@lacdr.leidenuniv.nl

Santorini

Having just returned from a long trip through the US, I find time to reflect on our last World Meeting on Santorini and on the ISRA. I am still impressed by the magnificent venue. There were breathtaking sunsets from the terrace of the conference building, and beautiful misty sunrises from the veranda of our hotel at breakfast. We had nightly views of vast cruise ships, moored, far below us in a moonlit bay. We visited a relatively small island society living on the rim of an active volcano. We witnessed its wonderful accomplishments in ancient history as well as in the present. A society, isolated by sea, but maintaining wide-ranging creative contacts with other societies. I myself could not help drawing – admittedly superficial - analogies with our own small scientific society.

Updating on the other fields

A beautiful venue helps but, of course, does not determine the impact of a meeting. That does depend on the topics and the participants. For a behavioural neuroscientist like myself, ISRA meetings are an excellent opportunity to learn what is current, and what is new in aggression research outside neuroscience. The growth of the field of bullying research since Dan Olweus' first pioneering studies decades ago impressed me. I also noticed the lasting attention to the importance of family violence. Everyone, of course, has his or her own favourites among the topics presented.

Ostracism

My favourite, this time, was the eye-opening presentation of Kipling D. Williams' "*Ostracism is aggression: ostracism can cause aggression*". What a powerful and interesting concept to explore. I ordered, but haven't received the book yet¹. I could not stop my mind, however, playing around with this concept while travelling the US and Europe after the meeting and trying to apply it on the individual, group, ethnic or even national level. I assume everyone has got experience with feeling ostracized. I imagine that ostracizing in a socially surviving species like humans can be worse than bullying.

Belonging

Travelling through the US, we were visiting towns with open lawns and unfenced gardens and open backdoors. But we also noticed the heavily walled condominiums with armed guards at the gates in other areas. And we could not help wondering whether ostracism isn't a pervasive problem in our society. While travelling I read the autobiography of Barack Obama², the son of a white Kansas mother and a black Kenyan father whom he hardly knew. Barack, grew up in Hawaii and Indonesia. He started organizing in the Chicago South Side, in an effort to rehabilitate and create communities where people would be proud to belong. Barack became the first black editor of the Harvard Law Review. I read the book as an alternating insider-outsider's perspective on racism, belonging and community. Indeed one can read a lot on the effects of ostracism in the book, although the word isn't used. I understand that Barack Obama has been recently elected to the US Senate for Illinois.

Murder in Holland

Obama touches on a general problem. Allow me a small digression: on the day of the US elections, a Dutchman of Moroccan extraction murdered a Dutch film maker in the streets of Amsterdam, leaving a letter threatening a member of the Dutch Parliament with the same fate. The threatened representative, a Somali-born ex-muslim with a Dutch Nationality, had instigated the production of a short TV-movie denouncing abuse of women in Islam. Many muslims as well as non-muslims considered the movie, when it was shown on Dutch television, as extremely provocative. This, of course, is no excuse for murder. Politicians reacted according to their reflexes: calls were made for an immediate and forceful repression of Islamic extremist groups, for closure of extremist Mosques, for extradition of fundamentalists, for increased surveillance of extremist groups and for increased efforts towards forced integration of foreigners. Officials called for calm and continued dialogue. Yet an Islamic primary school was bombed the next day. These were rude awakenings from a dream of tolerance and successful integration in Holland.

Identity and integration

In the days after the murder a few sobering facts emerged. The suspect was born and raised in the Netherlands, from Moroccan parents living in the Netherlands. He had Dutch nationality and had successfully finished high school in Amsterdam. Moreover, his high school teachers described him as a nice, frank, open, sociable, and sensitive pupil³. When he left high school teachers were confident he would successfully make it into society. What, in the following years, changed him into a murdering religious fanatic? We don't know yet, but one can guess.

Trajectory to terrorism

A teacher provides a few cues: "Society doesn't offer these kids equal opportunities". These 'kids' themselves assert literally: "an American who badly speaks the Dutch language, gets more opportunities here than I do". Also, "Especially if you are a high school pupil with excellent capabilities, and you cannot develop these qualities in society, and if there is little appreciation for educational achievements at home, then polarization may set in"³. Another cue is given by an official from the council for multicultural development, "These youngsters have ever-increasing expectations on their future achievements in the receiving society, especially if they are well trained and qualified. If they fail, their background provides little incentive for self-criticism and adjustment...their self-esteem suffers...they seem to withdraw and isolate themselves...then they become vulnerable to ideologies that offer a sense of belonging and that help to restore some kind of 'positive' identity"³. In this case that was apparently an orthodox Islam. An Islam referring to a heroic, though largely mythical history. Some, ultimately, as in the case of this suspect, finally engage in extremist activities.

Discontent and terrorism

It is clear the prototypical terrorist, or revolutionary, is not an unintelligent, uneducated person. It is not a person who is ignorant of the society he opposes. Often, and especially among the leaders, one finds persons who, at a first glance, seem very well placed for a successful career in the society they fight. In this respect what happened in the streets of Amsterdam seems rather predictable, though unfortunately not the where and when of the actual violence. The related themes of identity, belonging, and indeed, real or perceived ostracism come to our mind as important factors. One can find these themes in Obama's book too. I still remember how important belonging to a group was as an adolescent, and my family has been Dutch for generations. But back now to the ISRA....

Science could contribute

Most ISRA-members will be aware that there is a substantial scientific literature on hate groups, on aggression and antisocial behaviour in adolescents, and on the social problems of second-generation immigrants. Very little of this knowledge, however, seems to play a role in the development of a long-term vision on how to cope with such problems in society. There may be a task here for ISRA members and ISRA meetings. It may be a good idea to expand these themes at a next World Meeting. These are certainly themes that concern the general public, so we should consider addressing them.

Belonging in science

On a smaller less dramatic scale, ostracism also has a role in the scientific community. We appreciate it when everyone likes our findings and theories. But we usually don't mind if others disagree and criticize, for criticism sharpens our ideas and confirms that we exist. If no one takes notice, however, and everyone ignores our findings then that is very bad indeed. Ostracism again? Of course it happens, also with good research. Especially so, if someone is too far ahead of the flock, or goes against established fashions. There are many fashions in aggression research.

A role for ISRA

Let me digress again for a while, to tell you how periodically being excluded and accepted by different scientific communities shaped our own research. ISRA played an important role here. The sponsors of my PhD study, the Dutch ethologists, lost interest in aggressive brain mechanisms as ethology drifted more and more into socio-biology. Gradually I got the feeling I didn't exist. Then as a young post-doc, I was invited and made feel welcome by established ISRA members. People like Steve Maxson, Caroline Blanchard, Mike Potegal, Paul Brain, Kirsti Lagerspetz, Pierre Karli, Marguerite Vergnes, to mention only a few. All expressed their interest in what we were doing. I still remember Jose Delgado, a grand old man in aggressive brain mechanisms at that time, asking me at lunch, "Young man, what in your opinion is the most important question in this field?" and the animated discussion following my response. These initial encouragements and criticisms did shape our work. They still do so today. There again is an idea to consider for the next World Meeting. Let us try and make a concerted effort to make young scientists feel welcome in our community.

ISRA as caring community

ISRA also was instrumental to our survival. At one moment the Medical School of the Leiden University decided aggression was not a clinical problem (!). Therefore, our group had to be disbanded and all of us fired. No matter that we had just received an important national multi-centre grant for an integrative study on aggression. In the Netherlands in that period, it was impossible to move to another faculty or university, while also taking along ones funding. So we were stuck, and the end of our studies in aggression seemed at hand. Then something unexpected happened.

At the ISRA World Meeting in Swansea, Robert Hinde and a few others asked whether writing a letter to our Dean would help. I said I didn't know, but it seemed worth a try. More than 50 letters of protest were received by our Dean, mostly from ISRA Members. In the end the plans to disband our group were cancelled. A few years later, we happily associated with a group of excellent behavioural neuroendocrinologists who were very much interested in social stressors and aggression. Very stimulating. We did not use the term 'ostracism' then, but looking back, it seems clear to me how the periods of local 'ostracism' affected the output of our group.

A welcoming ISRA

There then, is another suggestion to consider for our next meeting. Many a good scientist in our field is working in an environment, such as a hospital, a mental ward, in a zoo, in a jail, in the

jungle or in another place where aggression is **not** the central theme. Such scientists may be more vulnerable to institutional pressures, especially during reorganisations and cutbacks. Yet, precisely because such scientists work in out-lying positions, they may bring novel perspectives into ISRA. We could try and identify such workers and give them the necessary exposure in our meetings. That should reduce their vulnerability, it could possibly bring back disciplines and fields we have almost lost over the years, and it could establish links with fields we have not yet reached as a society.

Working towards the next World Meeting

Hopefully the reader of these personal reflections on ISRA will be inspired to offer other ideas, ideas that can be put into effect at our next World Meeting. Visiting the wonderful city of Minneapolis a few days ago, we found Mike Potegal already in full swing, full of creative ideas on the 2006 World meeting in the Twin Cities. Mike has worked in the brain sciences as well as in human aggression, he is well placed to overview the entire field of aggression research. Therefore we will count the days till we meet you again in Minnesota and look forward to your suggestions.

- 1 Kipling D. Williams: Ostracism: The Power of Silence, (2002) The Guilford Press
ISBN: 1572308311.
- 2 Barack Obama: Dreams from My Father, a Story of Race and Inheritance (1995, 2004) Three Rivers Press, NY. Revised edition. ISBN 1-4000-8277-3.
- 3 NRC-Handelsblad, The Netherlands, 3rd of November, as translated by MRK

Treasurers Report

Presented here is the final Treasurer's report to be produced by John Knutson who has provided over a decade of dedication to this role. Taking over from John (imminently) is Jacqueline White (jackie_white@uncg.edu).

Financial Statement : July 31, 2002 - July 31, 2004

Balance on July 31, 2002:	\$63,338.75
Income:	\$57,808.12
Dues:	\$24,690.00
Interest:	\$1,890.62
Wiley:	\$31,227.50
Expenditures:	\$38,182.41
Wiley:	\$23,076.60
Bulletin, Meetings, Web, Treas. Office, Mailing, etc.	\$15,105.81
Balance on July 31, 2004:	\$82,964.46

IMPORTANT

This bulletin has gone out to all ISRA members who paid their subscriptions in **2003** as well as those who are paid up until 2004. If you have not received copies of *Aggressive Behavior* for a while it means that your dues for 2004 are outstanding. You should therefore contact the ISRA Treasurer to request a dues statement as it may mean your statement has gone astray.

Council Meeting Minutes

18 September 2004: Santorini, Greece

- Kaj Björkqvist announced that approximately 150 people are in attendance at the conference. Council congratulated Kaj on a successful meeting.
- Elections: Deborah Richardson, Executive Secretary, reported on the results of the election. Based on 54 legitimate ballots, the following were elected to office:
 - President-Elect: Menno Kruk
 - Treasurer: Jacquelyn White
 - Archivist: Paul Brain
 - 5 Council members with most votes: Richard Trembley, Sergio Pellis, Barbara Krahe, Pierre Karli, Alyson Bond.
 - Council selected 5 more new members of Council, based on number of votes, involvement in ISRA, and diversity of location, gender, and speciality: Cathy Widom, Natalia Kudryavtseva, Murray Straus, Stephen Maxson, Yvon Delville.
 - Richardson will inform newly elected officers and members of Council. Those in attendance will be invited to join Council meeting on 20 September.
- John Knutson, Treasurer, presented the financial report. Council discussed current financial state of the organization. There was some discussion of raising dues but consensus was that it was not necessary at this point. Ron Baenninger noted that dues might have to increase as journal becomes more expensive with page increases.
- John Knutson also reported on membership: 241 people paid dues in 2003 or 2004; 75 lapsed for 2004. Council discussed the need for a membership drive and suggested that the President appoint a membership committee.
- John Archer, President, explained difficulties organizing committee for Scott Award and for selection of Life Fellows. Caroline Blanchard, President-Elect, assured that those selections would be made for the 2006 meeting. Archer appointed a committee to review nominees for the New Investigator Award, and they are prepared to make that selection in time for the business meeting on the last day of the conference.
- Jane L. Ireland and Roger Johnson, editors, reported on the status of the *Bulletin*. Johnson wishes to resign as North American editor. Council agreed to seek interested parties and report back at next Council meeting.
- A motion was made and seconded that the *Bulletin* would be sent only by email after one transitional issue that would be distributed by both post and email. After considerable discussion, Council voted: 16 yea, 4 nay. The motion passed.

20 September 2004: Santorini, Greece

- Newly elected officers (Kruk, White) and Council members (Maxson, Straus) were welcomed to Council.
- Council discussed current status of *Aggressive Behavior*. Ron Baenninger has selected Rowell Huesmann to serve as new editor-in-chief.
 - Rowell Huesmann has a 5-year contract with Wiley, beginning 1 January 2005. In addition, Rowell Huesmann has negotiated a contract between Wiley and the University of Michigan for a \$10,000 annual budget to cover 20% of an assistant's time, postage, and mailing. This contract is independent of ISRA's contract with Wiley.
 - Council members raised the issue of the procedures for selection of editor. Ron Baenninger explained that the precedent has been for each editor to select a successor. A suggestion was made that the procedures should be more inclusive and public in the future.
 - Rowell Huesmann reported that his goal is to improve the impact rating of *Aggressive Behavior*, to decrease the publication lag and review time, and to move to an all-electronic system. He expects reorganization of the Editorial Board to be completed by January, with 4 Associate Editors (2 European, 2 North American, distributed between biological and human specialities) and a board of Consulting Editors. He reported that Paul Brain, European editor, is pleased with these proposals and has agreed for all manuscripts to be processed through the Ann Arbor office.
- Archer appointed a committee to provide a slate of 5 nominees for new North American *Bulletin* editor. The members of that committee are Rowell Huesmann, Jane L. Ireland, and Roger Johnson.
- Council reviewed Michael Potegal's proposal for the 2006 World Meeting to be held in Minneapolis. After considerable discussion, Council agreed unanimously to accept his proposal. Richardson will communicate this information to Michael Potegal along with suggestions for dates and program committee.

**Council and Officers of
International Society for Research on Aggression**

Council Members Elected in 2004 (serving from 1 January 2005 to 31 December 2009)

Alyson Bond
Yvon Delville
Pierre Karli
Barbara Krahe
Natalia Kudryavtseva
Stephen Maxson
Sergio Pellis
Murray Straus
Richard Trembley
Cathy Widom

Council Members Elected in 2002 (serving until 1 January 2007)

Craig Anderson
Marina Butovskaya
Jane L. Ireland
Roger Johnson
Lucyna Kirwil
Simha Landau
Manuela Martinez
Mike Potetal
Lea Pulkkinen
Martin Ramirez
Gordon Russell

Officers (as of 1 January 2005):

Past President: John Archer
President: Caroline Blanchard
President-Elect: Menno Kruk
Executive Secretary: Deborah South Richardson (serving until 1 January 2007)
Treasurer: Jacquelyn White (serving until 1 January 2009)
Archivist: Paul Brain

ISRA Website

The ISRA would like to draw the attention of the membership to the official ISRA website (www.israsociety.com). Suggestions for what should be included on the website are particularly welcome. All information concerning the website, including requests for information to be added, should be sent directly to Roger Johnson, Ramapo College, Mahwah, N.J. USA, 07430: rjohnson@ramapo.edu

Business Meeting Minutes

Business meeting of the 16 annual convention of ISRA, called to order by Executive Secretary Deborah Richardson, on 22 September 2004 at 4pm.

ISRA 2004 CONFERENCE

Report from organizer of 16th annual convention, Kaj Björkqvist. Over 150 registered attendees and 38 accompanying persons. 100 registered for the bus tour, 138 the boat trip and 80 for the banquet. Kaj indicated the break-even point for the meeting was 150 registrants, and that there might be a small surplus to return to the Society.

TREASURERS REPORT

Members: 2003 or 2004 dues paid 241; Active members (paid 2004): 154; Student members: 12

A lively discussion ensued, concerning whether this represented a declining membership base or not. The treasurer indicated the situation had been stable for several years, and that, partly due to the fact that January issues of *Aggressive Behavior* are sent out even to Members who have not paid dues for that year, a certain segment of the membership apparently believes themselves to have paid, resulting in a substantial and systematic late payment for these members.

COUNCIL ACTIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

Council actions (from 2 council meetings during the previous days) included:

- Selection of site for 2006 meeting. This will be Minneapolis, Minnesota (USA), hosted by Mike Potegal. The President has appointed Menno Kruk to be the program chair for the meeting. Menno will be in Minneapolis next month, to confer with Mike Potegal concerning coordination of efforts.
- A committee was set up by the President to nominate a new North American editor, as the current editor, Roger Johnson, is stepping down.
- The President will also appoint an ad hoc membership committee, reflecting concerns about the static or potentially declining membership of the society.

Subsequent discussion of how to add to the membership focused on the welcome given to newcomers at the annual meeting. The focus of agreement was to provide larger badges (less peering at small-type names); identify officers on badges, and encourage “old” members to welcome the new. Additional suggestions included provision of group lunches at the meetings, informal discussions of specific topics in aggression, and use of the conference email list to get in touch with new attendees and thank them for coming to the meeting, outline the benefits of membership in the Society, and express hopes to see them in Minneapolis. The value of having meeting registration fees that are sharply higher for non-members, as a strategy for encouraging membership, was also discussed.

Additional discussion related to earlier meetings of the Ex. Sec, President, President-Elect, and incoming President-Elect, concerning new ISRA activities. These included encouraging development of interim meetings with a focus on students, to feature cheap accommodations, foci on cutting edge technology or current topics, and workshop paradigms. Specifically, a 2005 meeting in Manchester, to focus on the Evolutionary basis of aggression, and on the molecular genetics of aggression, was mentioned.

Forthcoming aggression workshop in Poland: Call for interest

FROM KNOWLEDGE TO PREVENTION - NEUROBIOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOSOCIAL APECTS OF VIOLENCE

Within the scope of the currently running FP5 BRAINS project (<http://brains.nencki.gov.pl>) the EU Center of Excellence in Neurobiology at the Nencki Institute will host an international workshop on aggression. The proposed time is **May 2005**.

This two-day workshop, organized by prof. Jolanta Zagrodzka from the Nencki Institute of Experimental Biology, Warsaw, Poland and prof. Kaj Björkqvist from Abö Academi University, Turku, Finland, is intended to provide a forum for exchanging up-to-date multidisciplinary research results, various approaches, and current ideas in the area of biological and psychosocial determinants of aggression.

The scientific program will include lectures by the leading European researchers and short presentations on the following topics:

1. Functional Anatomy of Aggression
2. Genetic and Molecular Bases of Aggression
3. Stress, Hormones and Aggression
5. Gender and Aggression
6. Aggression in Society (media, family, school violence, alcohol & drug abuse)

We invite workshop participants to prepare a short (15 min) oral presentation on the above lecture topics. Materials will be published in a special issue of Acta Neurobiol. Exp. Selected lectures and reports with most pronounced practical implications will be translated into Polish and published as a free brochure for practitioners dealing with the problems of social maladjustment in public institutions.

If you are interested in participating in the workshop please fill out the registration form (to be found on www.ptbun.org.pl/aggression and also within this bulletin). E-mail (or fax) this to Ms. Anna Sadlik at the Department of International Cooperation and Project Management:

a.sadlik@nencki.gov.pl
phone: (+48 22) 589 2330
fax: (+48 22) 668 6586

For questions on the content of the presentations or any other scientific and organizational issues please contact the organizer, Prof. Jolanta Zagrodzka at:

j.zagrodzka@nencki.gov.pl
phone: (+48 22) 589 2246

***FROM KNOWLEDGE TO PREVENTION -
NEUROBIOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOSOCIAL APECTS OF VIOLENCE***

PARTICIPANT REGISTRATION SHEET

Surname:

First name:

Home institution name:

Mailing address:

City:

Postal Code:

Country:

E-mail:

Contact telephone:

Fax:

Position held (indicate if a graduate student):

Field of research, studies, or occupation:

Interested in giving short oral presentation:

Yes

No

If yes, on which subject?

Presentation format (Power point preferred):

Relevant additional information:

Levels of aggression and impulsivity in prisoners using self-report questionnaires

*Paul Smith and Mitch Waterman,
School of Psychology,*

University of Leeds, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS2 9JT, UK: p.smith@leeds.ac.uk

The psychometric assessment of traits theoretically linked to human aggression remains a popular topic of concern to research psychologists. Whilst there is a growing body of research using these measures with forensic populations (e.g. Patton, Stanford and Barratt, 1995; Archer and Haigh, 1997; Ireland and Archer, 2004) the majority of published studies have utilised psychology undergraduates (whose availability and status put them at the mercy of the demands of researchers).

Often psychometric measures are used simply to designate high and low aggression groups prior to undertaking some other experimental procedure. Moreover, whilst many of these scales appear to be relatively efficient in distinguishing between male and female undergraduates there is a paucity of empirical data that relates to normative scores in offenders. It is often assumed that high scores reflect an increased likelihood of that individual engaging in antisocial behaviours with little or no corroborating evidence. As part of an ongoing research project examining information processing bias in offenders, the authors recently had the opportunity to collect data from a large sample of male and female prisoners in the North of England using some commonly used questionnaire measures. During the analysis it struck us that this was an ideal opportunity to examine offender's self-reported levels of aggression as a within-groups exercise rather than the more traditional (in mainstream psychology) between-groups analysis. We predicted that offenders (differentiated by gender and conviction for a violent or non-violent index offence) would show substantive differences in their self-reports with violent offenders reporting higher levels of aggression and impulsivity. We also predicted that a more detailed analysis of the index offences themselves would produce differences in terms of reported levels of aggression and impulsivity.

This paper aims to share these results with an informed readership. The large number of questionnaires administered to each respondent inevitably increases the complexity of any statistical analysis. This article is not intended to provide a comprehensive summary of the findings, this is provided elsewhere (Smith and Waterman, in press). We shall restrict ourselves in this paper to looking at the main group and gender effects for each measure and highlighting those areas likely to be of interest to forensic practitioners.

Participants

A total of 248 offenders from a high security prison, a category B local prison and a closed female prison, took part in the study. The only information collected was age, gender and index offence of the respondent. The average age of the male offenders (n=115) was 28.0 years (SD = 8.3) and the average age of the female offenders (n=133) was 26.8 years (SD = 6.8). There was no significant age difference between the groups. Index offences were as follows: (n=76) violent offence, (n=67) acquisitive offence, (n=11) sexual offence, (n=40) drugs offence, (n=34) motoring offence and (n=20) other offences.

Measures

All the respondents completed four questionnaires. The revised Expressive Aggression Questionnaire (EXPAGG) is based upon the premise that whilst males appear to conceptualise their aggression in terms of control over others, females tend to see their aggression in terms of a loss of

control (Campbell and Muncer, 1987; Campbell, Muncer and Coyle, 1992; Archer and Haigh, 1997). So the scores obtained are taken to represent an individual's view of aggression as being a relatively instrumental or expressive behaviour. The instrumental and expressive components of the scale each comprise 20 questions, with the expressive scores reversed and it is assessed via a 5 point Likert scale (1 = strongly agree and 5 = strongly disagree).

The Aggression Questionnaire (AQ: Buss and Perry, 1992) was developed from the Buss-Durkhee Hostility Inventory (Buss and Durkhee, 1957). It is a 29-item questionnaire that records self-reported feelings and behaviours and records levels of physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger and hostility. All the test items are assessed using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = never or hardly ever applies to me and 5 = very often applies to me).

The Barratt Impulsivity Scale (BIS-11: Barratt, 1994) is designed to assess levels of impulsivity in clinical and non-clinical populations and is a measure of impulsivity across behaviours rather than of impulsive aggression per se. The BIS identifies three components (second-order factors) of impulsivity; an ideomotor component defined as "acting without thinking" (motor impulsivity); a careful planning component defined as "paying attention to details" (cognitive impulsivity) and a coping stability component that is defined as "orientation towards the future" (non-planning impulsivity). The current version of the instrument (BIS-11) consists of 30-items. All test items are assessed using a four point Likert scale (1 = rarely or never and 4 = almost always).

The Aggressive Acts Questionnaire (AAQ: Barratt, 1998) is a self-report measure based upon a structured clinical interview designed to help measure reactive (or impulsive aggression) and proactive (or premeditated aggression). This records in some detail the frequency and content of aggressive experiences in the preceding six-month period. For the purposes of the current research the AAQ was administered in a questionnaire and not an interview format.

Participants were also asked to complete a 22-item questionnaire for the four most recent and extreme acts they can remember. All test items are assessed using a five point Likert scale (1 = definitely yes and 5 = definitely no). The questions generate scores on four factors: impulsive aggression, premeditated aggression, mood and agitation.

Results

Alpha reliability coefficients for the questionnaires were as follows: EXPAGG instrumental 0.83, EXPAGG expressive 0.81; AQ physical 0.84, AQ verbal 0.68, AQ Anger 0.74, AQ Hostility 0.74; BIS-11 0.83 and AAQ 0.56. The alpha values for EXPAGG, AQ and BIS-11 were all consistent with those from other forensic samples (Archer and Haigh, 1997; Patton et al, 1995). No previous alpha values for forensic samples were available for the AAQ but the alpha value was comparable with that observed within a student sample (Barratt, Stanford, Dowdy, Liebman and Kent, 1999). Table 1 presents the mean scores across these measures. 'Violent' vs. 'Non-Violent' refers to the offender's index offence.

Table 1. Offenders mean scores (with standard deviations in parentheses) for the self-reported measures of aggression and impulsivity (EXPAGG, AQ, BIS-11 and AAQ).

Measure	Male Violent n = 57	Male Non-Violent n = 58	Female Violent n = 66	Female Non-Violent n = 67
EXPAGG	61.6 (14.4)	57.8 (10.9)	59.6 (13.3)	52.4 (12.4)
Instrumental				
EXPAGG	62.7 (9.7)	62.2 (6.6)	62.3 (8.5)	66.4 (9.9)
Expressive				
AQ	30.6 (7.9)	26.0 (8.3)	29.9 (8.5)	23.8 (8.5)
Physical				
AQ	17.1 (4.3)	15.2 (4.0)	16.5 (4.3)	14.6 (4.1)
Verbal				
AQ	22.8 (5.4)	18.8 (6.2)	21.3 (6.1)	18.3 (5.6)
Anger				
AQ	24.5 (6.2)	23.3 (6.2)	24.7 (6.3)	21.2 (6.4)
Hostility				
AQ	95.0 (19.5)	83.2 (20.4)	92.3 (21.9)	77.9 (19.5)
Total Score				
BIS	27.5 (10.5)	23.7 (6.4)	27.0 (6.9)	22.4 (6.5)
Motor				
Impulsivity				
BIS	18.6 (5.7)	16.0 (4.8)	17.8 (4.8)	15.4 (4.8)
Cognitive				
Impulsivity				
BIS	27.9 (7.3)	23.7 (6.5)	27.8 (7.7)	23.4 (7.1)
Planning				
Impulsivity				
BIS	74.0 (18.6)	63.4 (16.3)	72.7 (17.7)	61.1 (16.4)
Total Score				
AAQ	19.0 (4.9)	14.7 (4.9)	17.9 (4.6)	15.7 (4.2)
Impulsivity				
AAQ	5.6 (2.4)	7.0 (3.3)	6.0 (2.5)	6.5 (3.5)
Premeditation				
AAQ	14.6 (3.8)	13.4 (2.7)	15.3 (3.0)	13.5 (2.2)
Mood				
AAQ	15.1 (2.8)	14.3 (2.4)	15.1 (3.2)	14.1 (3.0)
Agitation				

A 2 x 2 ANOVA with two between-subjects factors of index offence (violent and non-violent) and gender was conducted. Violent and non-violent offenders differed on all of the scales and subscales ($p < .005$) with the exception of the EXPAGG expressive scale and the pre-meditation and agitation subscales of the AAQ. Violent offenders reporting elevated levels of instrumental aggression, physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger, hostility, motor impulsivity, cognitive impulsivity, planning impulsivity, impulsive aggression and mood disturbance. The only observed significant effect of gender was for the scores on the EXPAGG instrumental scale ($p < .05$), with females scoring lower than males. The only significant interaction between index offence and gender was found in respect of the EXPAGG expressive scores ($p < .05$), with violent females scoring lower than non-violent females.

Given the variety of type and security classifications of the prisons involved in the research a series of post hoc univariate ANOVA's were conducted to explore if there was any effect of establishment. There was a trend¹ evident in the EXPAGG instrumental ($F_{(2,245)} = 4.26, p < .05$) and expressive scores ($F_{(2,245)} = 5.47, p < .05$) with higher expressive scores at the two prisons (high security and closed female) housing females ($p < .05$) and higher instrumental scores at the high security prison ($p < .05$). In addition, there was a significant effect of establishment for the BIS-11 ($F_{(2,245)} = 5.19, p < .01$) and the attentional subscale ($F_{(2,245)} = 10.39, p < .001$) and a trend¹ for the non-planning subscale ($F_{(2,245)} = 4.22, p < .05$) Prisoners at the high security prison reported elevated levels of impulsivity. There were no significant differences for either the AQ or the AAQ (or any of their subscales).

Of the 248 prisoners who took part in the research, three groups ($n=102$) were identified on the basis of the number of respondents available to make meaningful statistical comparisons (groups $30 >$) within a more detailed analysis at the level of index offence: violent offenders (robbery $n = 40$), non-violent offenders (theft $n = 32$) and drug offenders (possession of with intent to supply drugs $n = 30$). There was a significant effect of group for the EXPAGG instrumental score ($F_{(2,99)} = 3.56, p < .05$) such that offenders convicted of robbery scored higher than those convicted of drug offences ($p < .05$). There was a significant main effect of group for AQ score ($F_{(2,99)} = 3.67, p < .05$) in that offenders convicted of robbery scored higher than offenders convicted of drug offences ($p < .05$) and also for the BIS ($F_{(2,99)} = 3.99, p < .05$) with robbery offenders scoring higher than drug offenders ($p < .05$). Violent (robbery) offenders also scored higher on the AAQ factors of agitation ($F_{(2,99)} = 5.09, p < .05$) and mood disturbance ($F_{(2,99)} = 4.42, p < .05$) than both the theft and drug offenders. Whilst there were no significant differences between offenders convicted of robbery and offenders convicted of theft, there was a consistent trend for those convicted of robbery to score higher across all of the scales than those convicted of theft, and for those offenders in turn to score higher across all of the scales than those convicted of drug offences.

Discussion

As expected, violent offenders in general scored higher on the instrumental EXPAGG scale. The questions reflect an acceptance of aggression as an appropriate strategy to control one's environment. The presence of a gender effect is consistent with the notion that females perceive and also use/express aggression substantively differently to males. The situation is less clear for the expressive scale. The presence of a gender by offence interaction reflects the higher scores of the non-violent females with violent males and violent females and non-violent males all producing similar scores. Offenders at the closed female prison scored lower on both the instrumental and expressive scales of EXPAGG compared to the offenders at the other prisons. As the EXPAGG was formulated to explore gender differences between social representations this finding is of course entirely consistent with that aim. Females in the general population are known to score lower than males on the instrumental scale and higher on the expressive scale (Archer and Haigh, 1999). These data suggest that this pattern extends to forensic samples, although violent females appear to score similarly to males on both instrumental and expressive scales.

As might be expected with a measure of aggression, violent offenders scored significantly higher across all of the subscales (physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger and hostility) of the AQ. Whilst males did score higher than females there was no significant gender effect. This can probably be attributed to that fact that in a forensic sample we are effectively examining the tail-end of a normal distribution and so differences become minimised (as evidenced by the increased levels of hostility reported by offenders irrespective of group or gender compared to normative scores).

There was a non-significant trend for offenders to score higher as a function of their establishment

¹Reported here as a trend since these were post-hoc analyses and thus a p value of .01 was accepted as the threshold for significance.

(i.e. offenders at the maximum secure establishment produced the highest scores, followed by the more medium secure establishments). This almost certainly reflects the nature of the offences committed and potential for aggression being greater in those offenders in the most secure establishments.

The AAQ focuses upon self-reported aggressive episodes that have occurred within the past six-month period and is normally administered as a semi-structured interview. The version given to the offenders was a self-report questionnaire that has to date only been used in clinical and student populations. As expected, violent offenders reported significantly higher levels of impulsivity in their actions; they also reported mood disturbance to be associated to a greater extent with their aggressive behaviour. Intriguingly, the violent males reported higher levels of impulsivity than the violent females and violent females reported greater mood disturbance on the day of the aggressive episode compared to violent males. There was a general trend for violent offenders to report higher scores across all of the factors, with the exception of the pre-meditation factor. The low alpha coefficient observed with this measure, however, and its similarity to that obtained with a student sample may indicate that in its self-report form it may be unsuitable for use with offenders.

Conclusions

These data suggest that the EXPAGG, AQ, BIS-11 and AAQ, measures frequently used in aggression research within the general population, are useful in identifying differences between offenders on the basis of offence type. The alpha values also suggest that the EXPAGG, AQ and BIS-11 appear to reliably differentiate between populations but the self-report version of the AAQ may not be suited for use with prisoners. As has been suggested gender differences in forensic samples appear to become minimised with these tests (Archer and Haigh, 1997,1999). These tests are widely acknowledged to be capable of discriminating between aggressive males and females yet current data clearly suggest that, with the exception of the EXPAGG, either 1) they are incapable of discriminating between male and female offenders or 2) that both male and female offenders share similar thoughts, beliefs and attitudes in respect of their own self-reports of aggressive behaviour. This inability to differentiate between genders in forensic populations may of course be an artefact of the measures themselves. One obvious explanation may also be that the scales themselves become less sensitive to gender influences as scores increase. These results do however considerably enhance the construct validity of these tests for research academics using them in the general population, and also offer forensic practitioners some normative scores that can be used to interpret the results of studies in the mainstream psychological press.

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A few pictures to end on.....

Here are just a small number of pictures capturing some elements of the conference. Thanks again to John Archer and Ed Donnerstein for providing these.



**The ISRA Council
hard at work...**



**Our president (until
January 2005),
Professor John Archer,
presenting the well-
deserved new
investigators award to
Eva Mikics for the best
oral presentation.**



**Last but not least, Ron
Baenninger finding
new activities to fill his
time after
relinquishing his role
as Archivist for the
society.**