

## **The Psychological, Sociological, and Economic Roots of Violence: A Multidisciplinary Approach**

**Roxanna Anderson**  
Palm Beach State College

**Lloyd Beckles**  
Seminole State College

**William Fleming**  
St. Petersburg State College

### **Abstract**

*Violence is often thought of as a unitary concept. Today we are met with images of violence across America affecting our youth, parents, family, and others. High rates of violence are not caused by just one issue, but several. For example, poverty, poor job skills, risky behaviors, socioemotional development, education, etc. Psychologists focus on issues of nature versus nurture, while economists are more likely to focus on scarce resources, and costs/benefit analyses. Sociologists direct their attention towards difficult life circumstances, cultural characteristics, and social conditions. Violence is a multi-faceted problem that deserves a multidisciplinary approach. The authors attempt to review these causes using biological, psychological, economical, and sociological explanations. Literatures from the aforementioned disciplines are reviewed seeking to explain violence from a variety of perspectives.*

### **Introduction**

Violence is often thought of as a unitary concept (only one explanation). Today we are met with images of violence across America affecting our youth, parents, family, and others. There is workplace violence, dating violence, domestic violence, child abuse, bullying, teen and elder abuse, suicide, injuries, and homicides. Homicide is the fourth leading cause of death in the United States (CDC, 2013). Economically, these various forms cost us billions of dollars. For example, alone, intimate partner violence is estimated to cost \$5.8 billion (CDC, 2003). The lifetime costs of child maltreatment, fatal and nonfatal, is \$124 billion (CDC, 2012). These costs include health care, court costs, welfare, funeral costs, and productivity loss in adulthood, mental health challenges, incarceration, and special education. Exploring the root causes of violence has been a primary objective of scholars for many years. A number of academic disciplines, economics, psychology, and sociology have developed specific theories to explain the reasons for violent behavior.

Psychologists approach the problem of violence from a perspective of nature and nurture. Nature focuses on genes or what we have inherited and nurture on how this inheritance interacts with experience. Negative outcomes, such as psychological disorders, health crises, and early death are associated with poor parenting and environment. The Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACE), as reported by the CDC (2015), list a variety of long-term health issues occurring due to unhealthy experiences and environments. However, some do thrive in spite of these negative circumstances--those who are resilient--an outcome needing more investigation. Understanding social problems rests heavily on the notion individual problems are often rooted in issues stemming from aspects of society itself. Sociologists are finally recognizing the deterioration of the American family and its connection to the roots of violence. Violence comes neither easily nor automatically (Collins, 2009). Compared to Japan, a nation of roughly comparable industrialization, with cities much more crowded than ours, the U.S. Homicide rate is over five times higher, the rape rate is 22 times higher, and the armed robbery rate is an astounding 114 times higher (Westerman & Burfiend, 1991). People who commit violence on the street are disproportionately poor and unemployed. Prior to their arrest, jail inmates had, on average, an annual income at the Federal Government's official "poverty level," and about one-half were unemployed at the time they committed a violent crime (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1998).

Violence is primarily committed by the young. People in their late teens and twenties are much more likely to be arrested for violence than younger or older people (Blumstein et al., 1986). Violent crime rates, as high as they are, drastically underestimate the actual rate of violence in America! Particularly, violence within the family (Weis, 1989). Economics points to issues related to scarce resources that have alternative uses. These alternative uses can easily result in competition between and within groups that often results in violence. The economic perspective can provide an almost universal framework for analysis of many situations where motivations and decisions of the actors are not immediately known. Basic economic analysis can provide incentives, justifications, benefits and costs of a whole range of parties that could be affected by the violent actions of the perpetrator. Sowell (2010) says that “An understanding of basic economics could have prevented many human tragedies...” (p. 1048). This paper attempts to review causes of violence using psychological, economical, and sociological explanations. Literature from the aforementioned disciplines will be reviewed seeking to explain violence from a variety of perspectives.

### ***Psychological Roots of Violence***

The Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACES) conducted between 1995 and 1997 used a population of 17,337 individuals (women=9,367, men=7,970) to discern later health. The results highlighted the percentage of individuals who experienced sexual, emotional, and physical abuse, emotional and physical neglect, as well as a number of household issues of dysfunction (e.g., substance abuse, mental illness, separation/divorce, incarceration, and violence toward mom). The intent was to relate early experiences to later mental and physical health outcomes, including early death. The investigators found a positive correlation between early adverse experiences and later health indices. For example, the more adverse childhood experiences, the higher the probability for later negative health outcomes, such as substance abuse, suicide, ischemic heart disease, COPD, depression, and risk for intimate partner violence, to name a few (CDC, 2015). Child maltreatment is defined as either acts of commission (physical, sexual, psychological abuse) or acts of omission (physical, emotional, medical, educational, inadequate supervision, and exposure to violent environments). Biologically, these early experiences intersect with heredity, which can result in mutations of genes causing later negative physical or emotional outcomes. An example of this is found in the formation of anxiety during adolescence.

Adolescents are in jeopardy for risky behavior according to Friedman (2014). During the teen years, while their brains are developing rapidly, they have difficulty managing fearfulness. It is how the brain develops which leads to this fear response. The amygdala is responsible for the fight or flight response. The ability to reason improves as a result of our prefrontal cortex growth. Unfortunately, the part of our brain that is more developed--the amygdala--occurs before the reasoning part of our brain, the prefrontal cortex. Positive parental mediation of feared situations is important to mitigating later more permanent responses towards negative situations. Poor parenting is not the only environmental precursor to violence.

Environment can also contribute to lower inhibitions in individuals. For example, the prevalence of certain metals, e.g., cadmium and lead, in poor environments could be the cause of increasing violence in a neighborhood. These metals have a deleterious effect on the developing brain, which is particularly susceptible from inception throughout the first seven years of life. Pollution, chemicals and metals introduced into the environment is only one possible source of violence. Calderon-Garciduenas, Mora Tiscareno, Franco-Lira, Torres-Jardon, Pedna-Cruz, et al. (2013), investigated high homicide rates in Latin America, specifically Mexico City. Though their sample was small, they found lower levels of Vitamin D in six-year-olds. “Bones are targets of inflammation . . . promoting bone reabsorption, which results in systemic bone loss” (p. 29). Vitamin D is essential and doctors recommend a minimum of 15 minutes daily exposure to the sun. Older generations spent more time in the sun as compared to the generation of today. Our youth spend more time indoors playing video games, and our environment is becoming less friendly resulting in parents reluctance to allow their children to play outdoors, unfettered.

Simon Baron-Cohen (2011) makes a case for the impact of psychosocial causes citing poor parenting as a cause affecting brain growth. During the child’s brain growth, zero through three, attachment to the caregiver impacts how the neurons connect to one another. Child maltreatment or sexual abuse can lead to learning disabilities or psychopathy. Temperament, known to last at least throughout childhood, affects the reciprocity caregivers have with their infants in terms of bonding.

It is inevitable that poor social circumstances are causes of impaired attachment, temperament, and reciprocal relations between children and their parents. Steinberg (2014) concurs but adds the newest zero to three is during 10-25, the period of adolescence.

The brain is mostly changeable during this period which includes many environmental situations. In a seminal commentary by Radford, Abbey, Sugarman, Rennison, and Cuevas (2014), the causes of violence from several articles in 2013 was reviewed. Radford et al. (2014) reviewed two articles; the first, by Sherman and Harris, focused on domestic violence in Milwaukee. There were 1,128 cases where individuals were either arrested or warned following the incident. Twenty-three years later they revisited these cases and found those who were arrested were “three times more likely to have died as a result of homicide (2.25% of suspects, 17 suspects) than those who had been warned (0.81% of suspects, 3 suspects)” (2013, p. 243). Dying can be explained by years of stress causing physiological harm; the propensity to take an alternate life pathway due to the arrest; and believing they are the victim, which may lead to more criminal activity (p. 243). The latter outcome is particularly pernicious when remembering the Trayvon Martin, Ferguson, and Garner cases.

Sperry and Spatz Widom (in Radford, et al., 2014) conducted their research on child abuse and psychopathology in adulthood. The authors looked at the long-term impact of child abuse and adulthood psychopathology. Children, from birth through middle adulthood whom reported being abused were compared to children not abused. The main mediator investigated was social support. The authors’ hypothesized social support would mediate adulthood psychopathology, but found that there were gender differences as well as different kinds of support. There are different kinds of social support, e.g., “support with appraisal/having someone to talk to, self-esteem, tangible social support, and social support that provides a sense of belonging” (p. 244). Males did not receive sufficient self-esteem support whereas females did. The question may be that it is more difficult for those who are mistreated to reach out to ask for support. The outcome highlights the importance of parental education in rearing at risk children.

Abbey (2014) reviewed two articles, one by Fulu, Jewkes, Roselli, and Garcia-Moreno (2013), and the second by Foshee, Benefield, Reyes, Ennett, Faris, Change, and Suchindran (2013). The first focused on a cross-sectional study of violence perpetrated by men from various countries. Total participants were 8006 males of whom 57.4% had participated in an act of violence against their partner. Abbey could not easily summarize the reasons but cited a few such as unequal gender status, little education, being a victim as a child and substance abuse as risk factors. Dating violence was the subject of the second article focusing on adolescents in two rural communities in the United States. The authors found that there was less dating violence when peers were more altruistic and higher when they felt self-important. Sugarman (2014) reviewed two articles focused on aggression among adolescents and the evolution of family violence. One was authored by Zwaan, Dijkstra, and Veenstra (2013) whom investigated bullying among those who felt they were of a higher social status than their peers. The authors used two variables: status hierarchy and attractiveness hierarchy as indicated by self-report. They found the usual outcome, boys were more physically aggressive and girls more relationally aggressive.

Brody and Hamilton (2013) conducted a meta-analytic analysis of violence against pregnant women using several databases including PubMed, MedLine, Social Sciences Abstracts, to name a few. Their review resulted in 115 studies. The highest rates of abuse were emotional (28.4%) with only 13.8% found to abuse physically. Not surprisingly, abuse is higher in low income nations where rates were 27.7% as compared to 13.3% in higher income countries. The authors also attempted to list the risk factors associated with abuse of pregnant women. They found (a) abuse before pregnancy, (b) lower educational level, (c) low socioeconomic status, (d) being single, (e) victim of alcohol abuse, (f) pregnancy unintended/unwanted, and (g) lifetime adversity/exposure to violence (p. 248). Domestic violence in Hispanic families was investigated by Cummings, Gonzalez-Guarda, and Sandoval (2013). They found 29 articles, in the literature, from 2000 worth citing. They found the usual risk factors for partner victimization: “history of physical and/or sexual abuse, marital status, unemployment, youthfulness, lack of educational attainment, impulsivity, and alcohol and/or drug use” (p. 249). An important finding is that being a Hispanic female is justification for being victimized, being dependent, “low self-esteem, and the number of children in the home” (p. 249). More complicated to explain is the finding the more traditional the family, the higher the incidence of violence perpetrated against the partner. Not all researchers found the same outcome, but did indicate Hispanics who had adopted their new American culture were more likely to be in abusive relationships. Tasdemir (2014) investigated the effects of poverty on mental health.

Several indices were cited as contributing to violence including unemployment, domestic violence, divorce rates, helplessness, and suicide. He stated the United Nations ranked poverty 12th overall amongst the problems affecting nations in the world. The statistics were staggering; thirty-nine percent of the 36 million people in the United States, under the age of six (6) lived in poverty.

Unfortunately, poverty also increased the probability of suffering from a mental health illness because they do not have the financial resources to seek proper medical treatment. Issues related to poverty will be covered more fully in the section on economic indicators. These articles are interesting in providing some background about violence, but are based on a few articles in the discipline. Given these findings, what are the associated economic and sociological indices?

### ***Economic Roots of Violence***

Violence is defined as an extreme form of aggression, such as assault, rape or murder (American Psychological Association, n.d.). Extensive media coverage of violent acts make our world seem extremely violent these days. . .because economics force news outlets to focus on more profitable stories--stories which will get readers attention. Stories about violence that hit closer to home can have that effect. This news focus can distort the average persons' viewpoint. A recent example is something that probably should have been a private affair between a couple turned into one of the most popular stories about domestic violence: Ray and Janey Rice. This story has actually received more attention than all the murders and rapes in Sudan, Somalia, or Central America. . .probably because this story was thought to get more attention by viewers/readers. This is one example, of how economic incentives can affect not only the violence itself, but what we learn about it. Mankiw (2015) defines economics as "the study of how society manages its scarce resources" (p. 4). The word "scarce" in this definition implies "competition" for those resources--and this competition often turns violent--whether the competition is within groups or between groups. Therefore, from the perspective of the economist, many instances of violence are actually economics in action. Here are some examples:

- The husband beats his wife is probably protecting some scarce resource (like his self-esteem, status, money, or power) that has been threatened.
- The drug addict beats up the elderly woman wants the scarce resource (her money or credit cards) in her purse.
- The nation declares war on its neighbor wants some scarce resource (land, gold, or even status) the neighbor has or threatens to claim.

In each of these cases, there is a scarce resource involved, a belief that the resource is valuable (or potentially valuable in the case of the drug addict), and some action that the perpetrator takes to obtain that scarce, valuable resource. Economics can contribute to the understanding of violence by providing some of the incentives, justifications, and perceived benefits of the perpetrator along with the long run costs of not only single violent acts but cumulative violent events over time. Economics may also suggest some effective strategies that can reduce or minimize violent behavior. The economic section of this article defines an incentive as an actual or perceived reward or penalty motivating an economic action. Analyzing incentives helps us look into the mind of the perpetrator of violence. One economic historian suggests, "One of the prime triggers of between-group violence is competition for scarce resources. There are rarely enough means to support all individuals in all groups. . . one of the prime triggers of between-group violence is competition for scarce resources. . .population abundance plus resource scarcity equals conflict" (Shermer, 2008, p. 952). Therefore, population size is one of the many factors contributing to scarcity, and provides some of the incentives for perpetrators of violence.

Biologically, some theorists say man became aggressive from many thousands of years of having to compete for resources, and some economists have picked up on this idea and taken it even further. Sowell (2005) argues this attitude/way of life was brought to America when the Irish and Scots arrived in the south (he refers to them as "crackers"). Past competition between the Irish and Scots was extraordinarily violent as resources were scarce. Wars often broke out between the two, which lasted many years. Aggression was a way of life and was an outgrowth of many years of fighting, which ultimately changes the genetic make-up. "Crackers" brought attitudes, values, and behavior patterns across the ocean, which were probably useful in the world they lived in for centuries, but were counter-productive and out of date for the modern world. Slaves picked up these attitudes, values, and behavior patterns in the new world, and descendants of these slaves continued the practices. This suggests aggression is both hereditary and learned. Traditional economics looks at decisions in terms of marginal costs and benefits.

The most effective analysis considers not only the obvious, immediate (but usually low value) benefits of a decision but also the hidden, gradual (but high value) costs. Given this framework of marginal costs and benefits, it may be helpful to look at the benefit side first.

The economic section of this article defines benefit as the actual or perceived advantage, profit, or gain from some activity. What are the perceived benefits of the perpetrator of interpersonal violence? Those that commit violent acts may consider the following has either direct or indirect benefits of violent behavior: power, status, freedom, release of frustration, attention, dispute resolution, or revenge. An interesting example of some of the benefits of violence can be found in the research of Yale business professor Rodrigo Canales (2013). He suggests spectacular acts of violence are actually part of a business strategy of some of the most successful Mexican Drug cartels. A particular amount or type of violence is associated with the “brand” of the gang. (Los Zetas is a spectacular example--they are so successful they franchise their model to other gangs.) One of the things concerning the authors is many of our gangs of color (Black, Hispanic, and Asian) operating in American cities could (or probably already do) aspire to be just like those Mexican cartels and have decided to ramp up the violence associated with their gangs “brand.”

Another interesting example of some of the benefits of violence is the idea violence achieves goals the perpetrator (or group the perpetrator belongs to) wants and may feel they cannot achieve any other way. An example of this is the belief system many Palestinians have about violence against Israelis: “A majority of the Palestinian population said the attacks against Israeli civilians helped achieve Palestinian rights in a way that negotiations could not have” (Francis, n.d., para. 7). Another example of perceived benefits of violence is dispute resolution. Many economists would suggest that one of the problems with free (unhindered) markets is the lack of necessary regulation. When they can avoid law enforcement, black markets are basically unhindered free markets. Violence is the only binding way to resolve conflict in illegal (black) markets. Miron (1999) suggests participants in black markets use violence to resolve commercial disputes; otherwise known by the violence as dispute resolution hypothesis. Sometimes those who benefit most from violence are not actually the direct perpetrators. For example, many organizations use what one author calls “humans as weapons.” Many young people grow up in households missing a male role model who provides enough love, protection, encouragement, and guidance who the young person (especially male) needs. Elsewhere in this article, researchers suggest the age ranges of some of the most violent deeds are committed in the teens and early twenties. Those needing manpower to achieve goals understand the missing role model dynamic have every incentive to use these young people as weapons (new recruits) to help them obtain money, power, and or influence. It is probably relatively easy to convince an inexperienced 18 year-old to kill your enemies than it is to 1. do it yourself, or 2. to build a drone or computer guided missile to do the job. If you give the person a sense of belonging, a code of honor or some religious teaching which makes him feel accepted, protected, and valued, and then add some social pressure. . .this person becomes one of your most dangerous (and relatively cheap) weapons against your opponents. The author suspects many groups are using young males this way.

Violence is obviously costly – it imposes costs on those who are victims of it, witness it, and those engaging in it. The costs extend to the communities and societies where it occurs. However, how costly is violence? This is another area that economics can contribute to the understanding of the overall effects of violence. Some studies have actually assigned monetary values to the costs of violence, which are shocking ... including values for direct and indirect costs. The World Health Organization quotes studies that estimate that the direct and indirect costs of violence in the United States are equal to 3.3 percent of the GDP (Waters et. al., 2004). The value of the U.S. GDP in 2013 was \$16,768,100,000,000 (\$16.7 trillion). The percentage of the U.S. population that is African-American is 13.2 (Census Bureau, 2013). A preliminary estimate extrapolating from these numbers suggests that the proportion of costs borne by the Black community in U.S. is \$73 billion ( $\$73,041,843,600 = 3.3\% * \$16,768,100,000,000 * 13.2$ ). These costs consist of sizable direct and indirect costs.

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**Table 1: Direct Cost Categories of Interpersonal Violence**

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Medical costs (e.g. hospital, doctor fees)
Legal costs (e.g. lawyer, court fees)
Law Enforcement costs (e.g. police salaries)
Private Security costs (e.g. guard salaries)

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**Table 2: Indirect Cost Categories of Interpersonal Violence**


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Psychological costs (e.g. pain and suffering)
Lost earnings and time (e.g. time off work for victims to recover)
Lost human capital (e.g. more burglars, less doctors)
Indirect protection costs (e.g. alarm systems)
Insurance costs (e.g. higher life insurance rates)
Lost Productivity (e.g. value loss from victims disability)
Lost Domestic Investment (e.g. lower housing values)
Lost External Investment (e.g. fewer businesses)
Lost Tourism (e.g. fewer community attractions)
Extra pay for risk (e.g. wage premiums for risky jobs)
Further Safety Measures (e.g. metal bars on windows)

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The direct costs of violence are recognizable to most people. Table 1 lists familiar direct cost categories such as medical, legal, law enforcement, and incarceration. While these costs are sizable, the indirect or opportunity cost is what makes up most of this shocking figure (see Table 2). A heart breaking example of indirect costs includes the opportunity costs of decreased human capital in legal productive activities (less bankers, doctors, lawyers, teachers, programmers, economists and other desperately needed skills and occupations in the black community), and increased human capital in criminal activities. Do we want our children to be experts at shooting each other (or burglary, drug dealing, or some other criminal activity) ... or do we want them to be experts at a productive economic activity? Currie and Tekin, (2006) found that "...starting to engage in criminal behavior early may increase illegal human capital by raising experience in criminal activities, and decrease human capital in legitimate activities, such as schooling or being in the labor market" (para. 6). When we lose a life to violence, society bears a heavy cost that is difficult to value. An early example of this idea is the famous quote by George Orwell who once wrote that the loss of a person equals the loss of an entire perspective: "One mind less, one world less." (Orwell, 1931). Another cost to society is the cultural behavior of men in general. When men are socialized into violent behavior, and that violent behavior continues from generation to generation, we could see greater violence toward other men and especially toward women. Porter (2014) suggests that:

Our boys and young men are faced with many challenges today as it relates to how we define what it means to be a man. While there are wonderful things about being a man, far too many of the characteristics hold our boys hostage while negatively impacting their ability to develop into healthy and respectful men. Far too many definitions of manhood tell our boys to deny feelings of pain and hurt, that anger is the only emotion they have permission to express. Notions of manhood that teach a lack of interest in the experience of young women and girls outside of sexual conquest, and that asking for help as a man is a sign of weakness. Our boys are challenged to not be soft, don't be a punk, a sucker, too nice, too friendly, too gentle, too kind or loving. These are all the ingredients found in what we call the man box (para. 1).

The man box influences not only violent behavior, but also the associated costs that accompany it. For example, a woman fleeing from her abusive husband, who may be entrenched in the man box, not only has to find somewhere else to stay, but also may not provide the best care for her children, and she and some of her children may not focus on developing a marketable skill. Indirect costs such as those connected to the man box, involves one of the first lessons that every economics teacher tries to get across to students: economic progress makes life better for society, and trade makes economic progress easier. Trade works better with trust, and violent acts destroy trust. Therefore, the greater amount of violent acts, the less trade happens. Extreme violence makes trade difficult or impossible. Violent acts are probably the classic example of the misalignment of the self-interest and the social interest economists try so hard to align. How do sociological theories explain violence?

### ***The Sociological Roots of Violence***

Most sociological theories, including theories of crime, employ both structural and cultural concepts (Nettler, 1978). High rates of criminal violence are apparently the price of racial and economic inequalities. In a society founded on the principle "that all men are created equal," economic inequalities rooted in ascribed positions violate the spirit of democracy and are likely to create alienation, despair, and conflict.

The hypothesis derived from this assumption, which is also deducible from a general sociological theory, is that racial socioeconomic inequalities are a major source of much criminal violence (Blau & Blau, 1982). Widespread violence in a society must have its origins in cultural characteristics, current societal conditions, or both. To explain the increase in youth violence, the presence of difficult life conditions in the United States is noted (due primarily to substantial social change). These effects of difficult life conditions, cultural characteristics, and social conditions such as poverty and discrimination against minority groups impact family life and parenting (Staub, 1996).

Nearly all mainstream or traditional explanations of violence begin as "ad hoc" explanations trying to account for the observed regularity of various forms of isolated and self-contained violent events in such singular entities as gender, class or ethnicity as these are, in turn related to differences in biology, psychology, sociology, culture, and mass communication. Accordingly, most conventional explanations of violence remain partial and incomplete as they separately emphasize different yet related phenomena of violence, without ever trying to provide for a comprehensive explanation or framework that encompasses the full range of interpersonal, institutional, and structural violence. In fact, most of these one-dimensional explanations of violence underscore the behavioral expressions of persons to the relative exclusion of the institutional and structural expressions (Barak, 2003).

Some researchers have turned to sociological aspects affecting the incidence of crime. DiIulio (1996) links the lack of 'social capital' (the value of contacts) to the rise of crime rates in U.S. cities. On the other hand, there is a correlation between lower crime in needy youth and participation in church (Freeman 1986). Demographic factors and social interactions have also been the subject of recent research. Demographic factors and social interactions has also been the subject of recent research. For example, when a group of peers get together they have a higher probability of committing a crime (Boston, Case & Katz, 1991). Peer influence is also cited in the psychological literature demonstrating some overlap in the two disciplines. In a related paper, Glaeser, Sacerdote, and Scheinkman (1996) emphasize the role of social interactions in explaining the continuous prevalence of high crime rates in certain places and the significant variance of crime rates across space.

According to Fagan (1994), a review of the empirical evidence in the professional literature of the social sciences gives policymakers an insight into the root causes of crime. The scholarly evidence, in short, suggests at the heart of the explosion of crime in America is the loss of the capacity of fathers and mothers to be responsible in caring for the children they bring into the world. This loss of love and guidance at the intimate levels of marriage and family has broad social consequences for children and for the wider community. The empirical evidence shows too many young men and women from broken families tend to have a much weaker sense of connection with their neighborhood and are prone to exploit its members to satisfy their unmet needs or desires. This contributes to a loss of a sense of community and to the disintegration of neighborhoods into social chaos and violent crime. If policymakers are to deal with the root causes of crime, therefore, they must deal with the rapid rise of illegitimacy. The professional literature of criminology is surprisingly consistent on the real root causes of violent crime: the breakdown of the family and community stability. The sequence has its deepest roots in the absence of stable marriage.

The authors attempted to review literature from psychology, sociology, and economics to explain the nature of violence. There is no single variable or disciplinary cause to violence, but some loom large. Poverty is certainly a major cause as it undermines the very existence of those it grips—this is economics. Education, or lack thereof is also a determinant of one's socioeconomic status. The latter two have an impact on parenting and temperament in low socioeconomic neighborhoods and parenting is both a psychological and sociological outcome. Continued review of the literature is needed, but if one could begin with eliminating poverty, health and education would improve, leading to a less violent society and improved parenting.

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