

# Summaries of two articles

Law



Article Summaries number 25 March Summary of “ Community Violence Exposure in Young Adults” In the article “ Community Violence Exposure in Young Adults,” Scarpa (2003) aimed to understand the frequency and effects of exposure to community violence among young adults. Community violence is studied, which refers to violence that people experience as victims or witnesses, in or near their homes, schools, and neighborhoods (Scarpa, 2003, p. 211). The focus is on young adults because Scarpa (2003) noted the gap in literature on this specific cohort’s exposure to community violence, specifically those in low-risk environments (p. 213). Scarpa (2003) used past studies that she and her colleagues have conducted, as well as other studies on the victimization of college students, to support her findings and conclusions. According to the first study reviewed, which came from Scarpa’s (2001) study of 476 students from a rural university, Scarpa (2003) learned that low-risk groups were exposed to high levels of community violence. In particular, 95. 6% of the participants witnessed violence, while 82% attested as victims of some kind of violence in their lifetime (as cited in Scarpa, 2003, p. 213). Lifetime exposures were high too, where 90. 2% reported witnessing at least three violent crimes in their lifetimes, while 63. 6% reported being victimized at least three times (Scarpa, 2003, p. 213). In the second study of Scarpa in 2002, the same high rates of exposure to community violence were reported (Scarpa, 2003, p. 214). The three highest rates of witnessed violence involved seeing someone being hit by non-family members, seeing someone being threatened, and seeing a gun or knife used as a weapon on others (Scarpa, 2003, p. 214). The three highest victimization experiences were being hit by anyone, being threatened, and being chased (Scarpa, 2003, p. 214). Furthermore, most of the violence

occurred near the home and from non-family members, suggesting that there were less domestic violence experiences, but violence remained visible in the public domain (Scarpa, 2003, p. 215). Scarpa (2003) reported the same findings from the survey research of Eitle and Turner (2002), but the severity of violence was much higher with the latter's sample of young urban adults (p. 216). Scarpa (2003) also found gender differences, where physical assault was more prevalent for young men, while sexual assault was more common for young women (p. 216). Aside from studying exposure levels, Scarpa (2003) determined the effects of community violence on young adults. After reviewing several articles, she noted that some of the predominant effects are depression, anxiety, and aggression, although not all adults exposed to violence experience physiological and psychological issues (Scarpa, 2003, p. 217). As for the cycle of violence, Scarpa (2003) offered biosocial explanations, wherein poststressor cortisol, when combined with anxiety and learning violence from aggressive environments, can instigate the psychological shift from victim status to perpetrator of violence (p. 219). Scarpa (2003) concluded that there are similarities in exposure to community violence between young adults in high and low-risk areas. These findings are logical because even low-risk groups experience violence, if violence becomes the norm of dealing with problems for some young adults and adults. In addition, low-risk people can be exposed to violence, when they are at high-risk activities, such as off-campus parties. Furthermore, the effects of exposure to community violence can vary for individuals, due to biological and social differences. Indeed, not all people who become victims of violence turn into perpetrators themselves. Finally, the author made sound conclusions because the result of the studies reflected the same

<https://assignbuster.com/summaries-of-two-articles/>

prevalence as high-risk groups. Apparently, violence is not limited to high-risk groups, but is likely embedded in the cultural and social conditions of American society. Summary of “ Self-reported Copycat Crime among a Population of Serious and Violent Juvenile Offenders” Surette (2002) wanted to understand the criminogenic role of the media in affecting the kinds of crime that juveniles, serious and violent juvenile offenders (SVJOs) conducted in “ Self-reported Copycat Crime among a Population of Serious and Violent Juvenile Offenders.” Copycat crimes refer to replicating crimes from different media products, such as movies, music, and TV shows. Surette (2002) underscored that little research had been done on the correlates of copycat crimes among juvenile youth offenders, as well as its prevalence. For this study, sixty-eight young male offenders completed survey questionnaires. Findings showed that 20% to 40% of the participants confirmed copycat crime histories. One-third attested that they have considered conducting a copycat crime, and one fourth noted that they have tried copying crimes from the media (Surette, 2002, p. 62). Furthermore, juveniles, who valued the media as a beneficial and reliable source of information, showed greater chances of conducting copycat crime (Surette, 2002, p. 62). Aside from seeing the media as a useful source of information, juveniles, who think that the media is more criminogenically powerful, reported greater probability of doing copycat crime. Surette (2002) found no connection between media consumption and copycat crime conduct and attitudes, and academic performance and copycat crime. Demographic variables were also not related to copycat crime. Surette (2002) concluded that a small sample of youth see the media as an importance personal and criminogenic influence for copycat crime. The findings are logical but mostly weakly correlational.

On the one hand, some serious and violent juvenile offenders perceive the media as a source of role models as criminals. On the other hand, the author must take into account the possibility that violent children are attracted to violent media products already. It does not matter what they listen to, read, or watch, because they might be heavily attracted to violent themes or objects already. Violent media might be reinforcing their violent attitudes and behaviors, or it may be seen as an antecedent to criminal behaviors, but it is not always the cause of violent actions. As for the conclusion, Surette (2002) understood the limitations of his findings, where a relationship between the media and violent juvenile behaviors was found. However, the conclusion is not entirely persuasive because other factors and conditions should be considered, such as the interplay between biological and family/neighborhood factors. References Scarpa, A. (2003). Community violence exposure in young adults. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 4(3), 210-227. Surette, R. (2002). Self-reported copycat crime among a population of serious and violent juvenile offenders. *Crime & Delinquency*, 48(1), 46-69.