

## Guest Editorial

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# Workplace Violence and Aggression

I am very pleased and grateful to present this special issue of Workplace Violence and Aggression for *Work: A Journal of Prevention, Assessment and Rehabilitation*. Due to the number of submissions I am excited for the opportunity to offer two full issues of literature on Workplace Violence and Aggression.

This first issue begins with a Foreword written by John Howard, Director of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health summarizing past efforts in this field and presenting new opportunities for focus. Denenberg and Denenberg provide us with a Sounding Board piece entitled ‘Workplace Violence and the Media: The Myth of the Disgruntled Employee’ that emphasizes an aggressor or aggressors in the workplace are generally only one factor during a tragic event that involves not just the work environment but challenges that likely include the non-work environment as well.

I am pleased to present a case study that describes an integrative approach to threat assessment and management as it relates to security and mental health responses to a threatening client. This case study by Farkas and Tsukayama describes a successful diversion of a potentially dangerous client using an interdisciplinary approach.

Dillon provides a comprehensive look at the impact, causes and prevention of workplace violence from the perspective of conflict resolution within a work organization. Gillespie et al. conducted a well-designed qualitative study that reports on emergency department workers’ views of security officers’ practices during actual events of aggression and violence.

I am fortunate to publish one article based on workplace aggression and healthcare in an international setting. Gimeno et al. examined whether safety factors related to safety climate were associated with a lower prevalence of verbal abuse in 10 public hospitals in Costa Rica using a cross-sectional survey administered to a random stratified sample of 1,000 employees.

Nachreiner et al. conducted the only case-control study examined in this issue. The risk of physical as-

sault against school educators with histories of occupational and other violence was evaluated. This compelling study drew its case population from educators who were physically assaulted at work and compared potential risk factors in the past 12-months with educators who had not been physically assaulted at work in the past 12 months (controls).

I am happy to publish another article in this issue focused on safety climate and violence. Lipscomb et al. examined the association between safety climate measures specific to violence prevention and self-reported violence toward staff in 13 state-run residential addiction treatment centers. This study is particularly unique because it employs both qualitative and quantitative research methods to tackle violence prevention.

Snyder et al. provide a much-needed perspective on how social organization and social ties affect sexual harassment victimization in the workplace. Their research builds on social disorganization theory and, thus, provides a perspective used in criminology and applies it to a public health problem. Survey responses to the Quality of Working Life module from the General Social Survey were evaluated.

I am excited to include the only article in this issue that analyzed workers’ compensation data related to workplace violence. Foley et al. focused on occupations and industries with an elevated risk of workplace violence using a decade of data specific to Washington State.

Our second article from an international setting presents findings from a cross-sectional study of the Swedish Police. Svedberg et al. explored associations between sickness absence and harassments, threats, violence or discrimination.

Selden et al. provide findings from a comprehensive study designed to define workplace hostility and development of a comprehensive scale for measurement. Two pilot studies provided the framework for creating the Workplace Hostility Inventory, subsequently evaluated with 393 study participants.

The second case study in our issue discusses a replicable and model workplace initiative designed and implemented by a team of labor, management and community anti-violence educators. Wagner et al. use these educational seminars to link issues of domestic violence to male bullying and workplace violence, challenge social stereotypes about gender, teach skills to engage ally behavior and seek assistance from union, workplace, and external resources.

I am pleased to present our only study focused on social workers, by Whitaker, that examines workplace bullying. A cross-sectional study evaluated social workers' perceptions of bullying work relationships and their ability to construct effective coping responses to perceived workplace bullying.

Finally, we are very fortunate in this issue to present results from two large national surveillance databases focused on workplace violence. In Hartley et al., data from follow back interviews of workplace violence victims identified from the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System were summarized. In Jenkins et

al., the Workplace Risk Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey Occupational Supplement (NEISS-Work) was administered to 55,158 respondents to elicit concerns and/or experiences regarding workplace violence and aggression.

I hope you enjoy the contents of this special issue as much as I enjoyed putting it together.

*Guest Editor*

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