

## Professional Summary

The latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was marked by increased scientific scrutiny of the relationship between violent crime and violence in the media. Despite decades of research, the issue remains one that is hotly debated, both within the scientific community and in the public arena. It has been difficult to assess the impact of trends in violent media on rates of violent crime in the United States because no database tracking trends in media violence currently exists. Thus, whether societal media violence is predictive of violent crime trends remains largely speculative. The proposed study is designed to address this gap in the literature. Specifically a database of media violence rates will be compiled for all the years for which Uniform Crime Reports are available (1930-2000) across the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Movies, as a stable and widely available media source across this time frame, will provide an estimate of violent crime trends. Trained and independent research assistants will conduct a content analysis for violent content in a random sample of ten movies released during every third year of the study time frame (1930-2000). Trends in media violence frequency and graphicness will be examined for their predictive power in understanding trends in violent crime across the same period. Data on per-capita economic conditions as well as per-capita law enforcement employment will be controlled during the same period in order to better examine the unique predictive value of societal media violence on violent crime rates.