Indoctrination against Violence Orientation

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ABSTRACT: The saying “no victim - no crime” suggests police intervention is victim dependent. Policing that relies solely on identifying a victim elevates the status of the perpetrator. When suspicion of illegality (victimization) – whether against individuals or government statutes – must occur to justify police involvement, the intervention is victim-dependent. A consequence of this practice is that by the time legal thresholds are achieved to arrest would-be perpetrators it is often too late. Opportunities to affect behaviors of would-be perpetrators may not be influenced within the victim-dependent response to crime fighting. Alternatively, teaching laws to school-aged youth has been used to dissuade perpetrator behavior and violence. Educating youth, to curtail perpetrator behavior, may be the future of crime fighting.

Keywords: Violence, Crime, Victimization

1. INTRODUCTION

As we are faced with the consequences of a worldwide pandemic coupled with potential violence and vigilantism as a reaction to the "Black Lives Matter Movement," the effectiveness of the intervention will promote more favorable outcomes. We need to come together to solve problems which keep us from going forward. Some decisions of others create such an unrest in society, prompting the need for strategic mitigation to de-escalate the situation. We find ourselves at a crossroads and almost at an impasse. Action is required now with the need for a policing paradigm shift. Our lives have changed overnight because of the recent events that have happened in the news and with police forces everywhere. There are even civilians taking matters into their own hands in the effort to turn the tide on justice. Situations involving the police where wrong decisions were made appear to have ignited the tearing down of monuments and killing of fellow men and women. This has occurred at a time of political division that has caused a terrible tide and one that is very broken and severe. All police forces have been called on to change and to become more humanistic, empathetic, and community-based in their decision making. Some indoctrination is necessary to prevent anarchy and to communicate its positive aspects to the world.

The term indoctrination may bring to mind notions of religious extremism – the practice by which religion, whether Christian, Islamic, Hindu, Buddhist, or any other is used to condone violence. Considering the high level of attention garnered by radical Islamic extremism, radical Islamic extremists have developed a brand synonymous with terror. Nevertheless, additional forms of terror continue to jeopardize our safety – each as deadly as the other.

Available to any individual, organization, or government willing to harness its power, indoctrination is a proven and effective tool. As evidenced by groups such as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), the Ku Klux Klan (KKK), and the Boko Haram (BH), indoctrination can be a deadly instrument. On the other hand, if so tailored, indoctrination can provide resistance to radical ideology. It has been said, “Control the mind and the body will follow.” The fight against terror is not only tactical – it is a mind game.

Sears and Hughes [1] portray “indoctrination” as a pejorative
term of which the pushing of dogma is universally accepted regardless of evidence to the contrary or of evidence at all. The unassailable, systemic acceptance of institutionalized ideas, opinions, and beliefs is described as a form of teaching, while education composes the opposite [1]. Although radicalized political views, practices, and policies of extreme change can be associated with indoctrination, teaching is a core component of indoctrination. Despite causing someone to learn, by showing them how it is done, is considered a form of teaching. Sears and Hughes [1] paint indoctrination as a process that narrows and limits possibilities and education as a process that broadens and opens up possibilities.

Taught the virtues of martyrdom from childhood, Iran’s use of children in the Iran-Iraq War offered a chilling illustration of the power of indoctrination. During the Iran-Iraq War, approximately 450,000 children comprised mostly of boys between the ages of 12 to 17 and men over 45 were used to clear minefields – making the path safer for Revolutionary Guard troops [2]. Known as the Basiji, “mobilization of the oppressed,” they were formed by the Ayatollah Khomeini in 1979 to complement his struggling army. Taught to cross minefields in straight lines, in the summer of 1982 an Iraqi officer complained of the disregard for human life – wanting to throw away his weapon after shooting down wave upon wave of the Basiji and witnessing the piles upon piles of corpses [2]. When the unsightliness of body parts being strewn across minefields became a distraction, the children were instructed to wrap themselves in blankets and roll on the ground to keep their bodies intact. Their brief military training consisted less about weapons and tactics and more about theology. Roughly, 100,000 boys and men died during Basiji operations [2].

Coming mostly from the countryside and often illiterate, the promise of eternal paradise, propaganda films and state sponsored veneration of martyrdom played a role, inspiring millions to become Basiji [2]. Even against the will of their families, Iranian law allowed children to serve. Parents who lost a child on the battlefield could receive interest-free credit, generous benefits, and social advancement [2]. Since the Iran-Iraq War, Basiji youth have been encouraged to enroll into technical and scientific disciplines. The combination of Basiji’s history of self-destruction and Iran’s nuclear ambitions raises concerns about their shift from child martyrdom to technical know-how.

Combining the teacher with the radical does not take much effort. Devices like smartphones, tablets and computers provide access to seemingly infinite sources of information. We are inundated with impressions of learning about how things are done. Regarding radical ideology, in a sense, information abundance is like a double-edged sword – granting know-how to offend, while offering know-how to counter the offense. The teacher does not have to work hard to find the radical and the radical does not have to look far to find the teacher. Both are readily connected by way of the Internet.

However, solutions to stopping radical ideology are not as simple as cutting off Internet access. Although access to medical records, classified information and employee records are restricted, the Internet offers unfettered access to violent, radical ideological propaganda and technical know-how. As it stands, a cornerstone of democracy is freedom of expression – freedom of the press – the right to obtain information and form opinion from a variety of sources. Within freedom of expression also lies opportunities to convey messages which foster understanding and wellbeing.

2. PROBLEM

The problem is that beyond the intelligence community much of the nation’s resilience to terror and violence relies on deterrence and efforts at seeking justice against suspected perpetrators. Too often, by the time legal thresholds are achieved to arrest suspected terrorists and would-be violent attackers, it is too late. Studies suggest that deterrents such as arrest, jail and civil penalties are most effective on people who are less likely to commit crimes in the first place. Criminals and terrorists are less influenced by deterrence [3].

3. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Antecedent behavior – describes the correlation between stimuli and resulting behaviors which follow stimuli. For example, children who were treated kindly treated others kindly, and children who were treated badly behaved badly [4].

Diminutive escalation – occurs when a person is ostracized, belittled, emotionally diminished, or de-escalated and, in comparison, the de-escalation artificially escalates or elevates status of the individual, individuals, or group who intentionally or unintentionally sponsor the de-escalation. It is the act of putting someone or something down emotionally, regarding character, in a derisive fashion in order to elevate one’s own self-esteem and status. The phenomenon pinpoints a social dynamic contributing to humiliation which can manifest emotionally, physically, or behaviorally.

Sociostasis – according to Cozolino [5], sociostasis is how individuals influence each other’s biology, psychology, and states of mind in social settings. Gleaned from Bowen’s [6] description of emotional homeostasis, sociostasis advocates
4. SOLUTION

Beyond intelligence gathering and threats of legal sanctions, the present approach to crime fighting and anti-terrorism, for the sake of simplicity, is two-dimensional, and the two dimensions are cause-and-effect or action and reaction. Local and federal governmental resources tasked with protecting us, like the police and the courts, typically trigger when there is a perpetrator and a victim. Victimization is the prevenient and dependent variable – some level of harm is required for the system to work, to react.

Chronologically, action precedes reaction and comes before reacting to whatever caused the reaction – giving the side initiating the action an advantage. Essentially, in the two-dimensional approach to crime fighting and public safety, the perpetrator has the advantage. First, the perpetrator has to perpetrate before police can, secondarily, respond, for example. Reliance on the two-dimensional approach provides deterrence to those who would be deterred. The perpetrator is not labeled a perpetrator until he or she victimizes. Accordingly, the police respond to incidents of perpetrators who have victimized or are in the act of victimizing. The two-dimensional approach to public safety requires a legal threshold. It is necessary to prevent acts of deadly violence, like school shootings, spree shootings, gang violence, and murder-suicides, not dependent upon stimulus-response of victimization.

Legal behavior skills are essentially absent from the content and learning standards which list what students should know at each level of K-12 learning [9]. The dearth of guidance regarding legal behavior skills is like “kicking the can down the road” for law enforcement and the criminal justice system to handle later. Expecting citizens to practice legal behaviors which are not taught suggests legal conduct is an inherent, natural-born aprioristic skill, refined vicariously. The idea of people growing up innately knowing legal-right from legal-wrong, and acting accordingly, supports a haphazard, unsystematic approach to preventing crime & victimization. Much of public safety is predicated upon criminalization and penology – where the threat of punishment is entrusted to deter victimization. However, criminalization relies on victimization.

The fact of the matter is that the police cannot be everywhere, always, to save us. Yet, the values, education, and skills we impart in our children become a part of them. The propagation of good conduct skills, over time, among new generations of youth become omnipresent in relation to the teaching of such skills. Skills which dissuade perpetrator behavior and advance conflict resolution techniques and solutions are available. Regrettably, considering the two-dimensional approach to conflict resolution, which mimics the two-dimensional approach to public safety, too often these techniques and solutions are not applied until there is a victim.
Unless the actions of perpetrators are controlled by other actors, e.g., a suicide-bomber’s handler or subversive mind control, the actions of violent perpetrators like school shooters and perpetrators who commit murder-suicide and violence involves conscious choice [10]. Because these acts involve conscious-choice, intervention strategies which enhance decision making and coping skills can be applied in the classroom. The two-dimensional approach to public safety and conflict resolution is victim dependent. Teaching and applying violence prevention strategies which are not victim-dependent is paramount.

While perpetrators of violence make a conscious choice to commit violence, just as deadly can be the actions of those who practice bullying & teasing, diminutive escalation, or a sense of status and emotional escalation at the expense of others. Bullying & teasing has been identified with contributing to school violence [11], signifying the victim can sometimes play a role in inciting the perpetrator. Identifying components contributing to violence can grant opportunities to preventing violence. Research suggests that curtailing inciteful practices like bullying & teasing [11] and diminutive escalation can offer significantly positive impacts on behavior.

Nevertheless, victims do not always say things or do things which contribute to their victimization, as in cases of murder-suicide, often there are no known indications of victims doing anything to precipitate their murders [12]. Like property ownership, perpetrators of murder-suicide can treat victims like property they own and control. Feeling an overwhelming sense of helplessness and powerlessness without control, rather than leaving the property (person) intact for the future, they discard it (kill), in their final act of control. According to Kulbarsh [12], most perpetrators are male and most victims are spouses or intimate partners. Murder-suicide is more prevalent among older adults, while men tend to kill their children and intimate partner, women tend to kill their children but spare their partner. In America, more than 1,300 people died in murder-suicides in 2017 and approximately 96% were females killed by their intimate partners [13]. Most murder-suicides occur in the home – occurring in the bedroom more than in any other room, with victims most often being shot or killed in their sleep [12].

Highlighting research conducted by psychology professor Thomas Joiner [14], McLemee [15] delved into the professor’s four-part topology of rationale perpetrators use to commit murder-suicide. Research by Joiner [14] purports that the perpetrator’s decision to commit suicide is the leading factor – driven by a distorted interpretation of these four virtues:

Examples:
1) Mercy – killing family members to spare them from future harm
2) Justice – killing a cheating spouse
3) Duty – killing a severely ill loved one
4) Glory – killing more victims, compared to a previous perpetrator

Whether committed in the home, school, or other venue, like other forms of violence, murder-suicide is not beyond the scope of study and intervention, whereby the phenomenon is insulated from countermeasures. Presenting new generations of youth with alternatives, training, and skills to satisfy emotional needs for control, and mercy, justice, duty, and glory is sorely needed.

It is important to recognize the two-dimensional approach to public safety is designed for victim-response but less for the prevention of crimes like murder-suicide, mass killings, gang violence, and violent extremism. Distinct from legal thresholds required to substantiate probable cause, arrest, and criminal justice intervention, restrictions to using education to promote public safety, school safety, civility, and non-violent outcomes are not so prevalent. What is common among nearly all perpetrators and victims of violence is their matriculation through some form of K-12 schooling and learning.

Considering chiefs of police and public safety leaders, who aspire to be among some of the best people-managers, having political savvy and social-emotional intelligence – pursuing the highest levels of integrity, they symbolize our nation’s finest. Nonetheless, as if one police chief can manage victim-dependent justice better than another, we need to give them more. You see, statistically – regarding public safety, it does not matter so much the makeup of political office holders or public safety leaders – whether they are great people-managers, having political savvy and social-emotional intelligence [16]. Waiting to prevent crime based on a criminal justice system that relies on crime is woefully misleading. It is not the individual leader who prevents crime, per se; it is the leader’s adaptation of modalities which disrupt the behaviors of would-be perpetrators, in that approaches to public safety are predominated less by victim-dependent intervention.

This is not to suggest public safety leaders sit around waiting for bad things to happen before taking steps to enhance public safety. On the contrary, Maron [16] furnished statistical relevance, comparing New York City’s fewer than 300 murders and population of approximately 8.5 million people to Baltimore and Chicago. In 2017, although Baltimore had less than a 10th of New York City’s population, Baltimore experienced more murders, at 303 murders. Similarly, in the same year, Chicago with about a 3rd of New York City’s population experienced nearly twice as many murders, with over 580 murders. Maron [16] attributed successes to going beyond responding to calls and investigating crime, and mentioned a National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine report which supported proactive policies aimed at preventing crime before it happens. Attributed with identifying strategies which work well, Maron [16] credited the director of the center for evidenced-based crime policy at George Mason University, David Weisburg. Some of the strategies which worked well included “hot-spotting,” which is disproportionately stationing police in high crime areas, third-party policing using businesses and community to identify concerns, focusing on repeat offenders, and even supporting stop-and-frisk in high crime areas.
Intentions to prevent crime may arguably come in the form of deterrents like arrest, civil penalties, and incarceration – having value to deter or prevent further victimization. However, these deterrents, which are aimed at preventing further violations, are dependent upon a victim-response. They represent secondary and tertiary forms of prevention, where victimization is not repeated, or the impact of victimization is lessened. While secondary and tertiary forms of prevention are used and valued for their roles in enhancing public safety, primary prevention is not victim dependent.

The United States Secret Service (USSS) practices, possibly, the highest level of primary prevention. Their crucial focus is the protection and prevention of physical harm to high-level government officials and dignitaries. A successful attack against a protected subject equates to failure. Advance teams and pre-planning are analogous to a wellness-response – like preventative medical care, the emphasis is on prevention, as opposed to an illness-response. However, the inordinate amount of manpower and resources necessary to protect high-level government officials and dignitaries makes this level of protection improbable for the general public.

In a nutshell, the USSS takes control – control of physical environments, people-access and of any potential threat. While police intervention characteristically requires legal thresholds of reasonable suspicion and probable cause, the USSS’s role is to restrict access to levels of threat amounting to reasonable suspicion and probable cause. In an open society such restrictions are not consistently possible. However, the need to enhance public safety is ever present. Adapting to changing public safety challenges in an open and free society invites new solutions, tactics, and strategies.

Like the USSS’s implementation of proactive intervention to affect behavior of one’s ability to inflict physical harm, behaviors learned in the classroom can affect one’s inclination to inflict physical harm. Speaking from experience, establishing a set of rules is fundamental. Our laws, especially those which are contextually germane to provocations to violence, like assault, disorderly conduct, theft, and threatening behavior, offer precise guidelines for acceptable, legal behavior. However, and whether taught as school rules in age-appropriate role-play exercises or in some other fashion, before desired behavior can be established, students must learn and know acceptable behaviors (laws).

Serving as a member of the Pocomoke City Police Department and as a school resource officer (SRO) at Pocomoke High School from 2003-2005, promoting students’ knowledge, skill, and emotional ability to abstain from violence was something I incorporated in my day-to-day activities. The results were astonishing. Upon being invited into classrooms – listening to students and answering their questions – they were receptive to me and eager to learn tricks about staying out of trouble. I taught them how violations commonly associated with provocations to violence, e.g., hitting, theft, disorderly conduct and making threats play a part. To my amazement, fights at my high school drastically reduced. Compared to when I first arrived, the fights that took place on a weekly basis and sometimes during consecutive days – like schools across America – became very rare. Before leaving the area to assist in the care of my ailing mother, and joining the Prince George’s County Police Department, there were no reported fights at my school for over six months.

Given that Pocomoke City is a picturesque town on the Eastern Shore of Maryland with great schools and great people, there was a small amount of skepticism encountered regarding variables which may have contributed toward the drastic reduction in fights. Someone suggested the outcome was attributable to the rural and cultural demographic of Maryland’s eastern shore – doubting a more populated urban area would experience similar results. Nonetheless, working with children you learn that all demographics, whether as picturesque as Pocomoke City or historically prodigious, have greatness and great people – made even greater by the innocence and potential of their children. About two years later, as I recall, in a high school classroom of approximately 40 students mixed with males and females in an urban, densely populated high crime area near the District of Columbia, I passed out a questionnaire. The questionnaire asked, “If given the choice to fight or not to fight, what would you choose?” I was not in uniform and students were instructed not to put their names on their papers and then to turn their papers over so others could not see their answer. I collected the papers and, of the approximately 40 students, as I recall, 37 answered they would choose not to fight. Approximately 93% of students in the classroom who were attending this high school located in an urban, densely populated, high crime area responded they did not want to fight.

Numerous studies suggest we are born with a moral compass. According to one such study by Music [17], we come into this world hardwired with a sense of altruism, fair play, and innate empathy supportive of sociostasis. Teaching legal behaviors is purported to help maintain innate desires of altruism, fair play, and sociostasis. Left unattended, we can become susceptible to the rationalized views of gangs, hate groups, and other negative influences which skew moral and ethical potentials attributed at birth. However, more research is needed to investigate possible relationships between the lack of moral and ethics training in our schools, perpetrator behavior, and prison populations in the United States.

Later, while volunteer-mentoring around 100 students, from ages 5-12, at a daycare/after care center in Prince George’s County, Maryland – teaching rules of behavior based on laws – the results were similar. This time recognizing and gifting children for not fighting, the outcomes were significant and astonishing, so-much-so that parents supported and complimented the intervention. There were numerous comments and feedback from parents about their child’s improved behavior. Dubbed the “Ten List” (visit www.10List.us) because the instruction involved ten rules, the center even advertised the intervention to distinguish them from other childcare centers. This volunteerism lasted approximately two years – impacted, in part, by my changing
skills that come with experience. The same is true regarding traffic laws, the driver who drives every day will have gained Although both drivers are equally responsible for obeying drives 365 days a year will have more practice and experience. having knowledge of traffic laws. If one driver drives 1 day a another to have the practice and skill to put that knowledge into action. For example, consider two licensed drivers, both Related to this phenomenon is the gap between rules of behavior our youth learn in school and the legal behaviors they will be responsible to practice in adulthood, starting at 18 years of age. Fundamental is knowing legal-right from legal-wrong, especially when it comes to matters which can lead to violence. Gaining knowledge of rules and laws is fundamental, but practical exercises involving rules and laws are also beneficial. Too often, our youth are ill prepared to apply behavior skills they have not practiced or developed over time. It is one thing to have knowledge of rules and laws, and another to have the practice and skill to put that knowledge into action. For example, consider two licensed drivers, both having knowledge of traffic laws. If one driver drives 1 day a year and the other drivers 365 days a year, the driver who drives 365 days a year will have more practice and experience. Although both drivers are equally responsible for obeying traffic laws, the driver who drives every day will have gained skills that come with experience. The same is true regarding legal behavior. Students who are taught and who also practice legal behavior exercises will have a level of ability and skill which comes with practice. This is particularly valuable in instances where instinct can override ability. One’s ability to abstain from violence may depend on knowledge and skill. Considering the homicide rates of jurisdictions like Baltimore, Chicago, and other affected areas, many jurisdictions can benefit by using child-friendly approaches to educating students about legal behavior, while impeding the “pipeline to prison.” Bearing in mind the millions of dollars spent on law enforcement, special police units and multi-jurisdictional task forces to combat the problem, ironically, these valuable resources do not address the root of the problem – antecedent behavior. Creating attrition among perpetrators who are already in the criminal justice system, while reducing numbers of new perpetrators coming into the system, frees up resources needed to reduce homicides and enhance public safety. Consider an intangible force so powerful that when used for evil its compelled thousands of Basiji to knowingly walk to their deaths, but when used for good, can inspire safety unobtainable by the police. Used to compel students to stop fighting, kindergarteners to check each other’s behavior and adolescents to revel undisclosed desires for peace, also, like the wind it is invisible and just as powerful. This powerful force is the teaching of laws to guide behavior. The Holy Bible even speaks of this power – Proverbs 22:6 KJV, “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” Metaphysically, the phenomenon can be explained using antecedent behavior models. Referring to the two-dimensional approach illustrated in Fig. 1, the antecedent to police response is victimization. However, children ought not be required to satisfy a level of victimization in order to achieve prevention against victimization. Keeping in mind that primary prevention avoids victimization while secondary and tertiary forms of prevention are intended to avoid further victimization, all claims of “prevention” are not created equally. Therefore, it is essential to identify the chronological order and sequence which occurs during antecedent behavior regarding law enforcement’s approach to crime prevention. Principally, law enforcement’s approach to crime prevention can be divided into three parts – 1) Victimization, 2) Police Response, and 3) Adjudication. Supplanting the three parts into a behavior model, the ABC Model of Behavior [18] of Fig. 3 includes the A-antecedent, B-behavior, and C-consequence. This model depicts dynamics contributing to crime and violence, and conventional means to stopping additional victimization.
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Visualized in Fig. 3, B and C are dependent on A, and C-consequence is dependent on B-behavior. Some form of victimization must occur before C-consequence is applied. Subsequently, C-consequence is intended to affect A-antecedent, when in actuality A-antecedent controls C-consequence because of B-behavior.

Seeing in Fig. 3 how A-antecedent controls B-behavior of the perpetrator, law enforcement and the criminal justice system and everything that follows B, Fig. 4 & 5 offer a more streamlined illustration of A’s control over the perpetrator, law enforcement and the criminal justice system. Categorizing A-antecedent behavior as stimuli and B-behavior as response to stimuli shows a clearer picture of processes controlling law enforcement’s and the criminal justice system’s response to perpetrator behavior.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A-antecedent</th>
<th>B-behavior</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perpetrator Stimuli</td>
<td>Perpetrator’s response to A-antecedent stimuli, followed by Police Response and Criminal Justice System Sanctions to prevent further victimization</td>
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</tbody>
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Table 1: AB Model of Behavior.

Figure 4: Condensed behavior model.

Event A is causality and Event B is effect. Event B is determined by Event A. B cannot eliminate A because A has already initiated in order for B’s response to exist. With respect to B-police and criminal justice system response, B can be presented to affect the recurrence of A (secondary and tertiary forms of prevention), while the initial Event A caused B and subsequent events to occur.

In view of the present paradigm used to combat perpetrator behavior and enhance public safety, law enforcement concentrates on the B-response to perpetrator behavior. Refining better ways to respond to victimization may provide benefits in favor of apprehending and reducing secondary and tertiary forms of victimization but leaves the A-antecedent-stimuli in control of the response.

Considering that Event A is causality of all events subsequent to A, increased attention to A is key. A, as an independent, manipulatable variable affecting the dependent variable of B-behavior, provides the greatest opportunity to control impressions affecting B and all subsequent events which occur because of A. This is why teaching laws to K-12 students, such as the “Ten List,” which are contextually germane to containing provocations to violence are so important. It allows law enforcement to become a part of the antecedent to behavior. In a K-12 environment, these laws (rules) establish the pretext for behavior and good conduct skills.

Figure 5: Causality.

In the surprisingly effective intervention used to reduce fights and violence in the K-12 environment, I replaced the undesired antecedent stimuli (street rules) with legal rules, role-play, and rewards. While nefarious organizations like the KKK, ISIS, and BH use antecedent stimuli to spread hate, and the phenomenon facilitates willing governments to sacrifice their children, it is no less mighty. I pray our great nation will harness its good potential to safeguard children and enhance public safety.

5. CONCLUSION

SROs assigned to the schools can impact good conduct skills and legal behaviors of entire school populations, far more than
police officers assigned to the street. Using simple tools like the “Ten List,” SROs and educators can play an active role in unveiling age-appropriate legal rules to guide behaviors of students. They can help instill standards passed on to future generations.

Visit http://www.10List.us

REFERENCES