Violent video game registered (replication) report

# Which study to most closely emulate?

Anderson and Dill (2000) has the most citations on Google Scholar.

Anderson et al. (2004) is pretty classic.

Bartholow & Anderson (2002) seems well-cited but has a small sample size and finds moderation by sex.

Saleem, Anderson, & Gentile (2012) appears to be the most recent experiment with a behavioral outcome from Anderson lab.

Volpato lab seems to find big effects (d = 0.7, d = 0.8, ps < .001) with Grand Theft Auto, CRTT outcome.

Krcmar lab tends to find big effects too – what do they do? A lot of Buss-Perry questionnaires and not much behavior. 2011 paper reports no effect on RA evaluation-style outcome, but 2009 reports huge effect on similar outcome.

Greietemeyer & McLatchie found a huge effect in their Study 2: Wolfenstein vs pinball; RA evaluation outcome; average of four likert items

# Which population?

College undergraduates of both sexes.

Child and adolescent samples would be nice but I doubt the machinery is in place…

# Which games?

I am willing to go for the biggest, broadest manipulation possible; test confounds later. So I might use two off-the-shelf games. Rapid startup time and quick to learn preferred.

Simplicity is preferred. Players should have instant action with a minimum of tutorials. Open-world is fine so long as they are engaged in action for the full 15 minutes.

Do we need to worry about teamwork?

It would be preferable that all games can be played on the same console.

It might be a good idea to avoid ROMs over legality issues.

* Violent games:
  + Grand Theft Auto, Sleeping Dogs, the Saboteur
  + Mortal Kombat
  + Final Fight
  + Call of Duty or Halo or Left 4 Dead or something
* Nonviolent games:
  + Portal?
  + Minecraft?
  + Tetris?
  + Gone Home?
  + Katamari Damacy?
  + Little Big Planet or a similar platformer? Esp. if levels can be kept non-violent
  + Some manner of city-builder or management game

# Which outcome?

CRTT: Face-valid, easy to administer. Difficult to select a particular quantification, however, and may be contaminated by tit-for-tat behaviors.

Hot sauce: Hot sauce recipe varies from study to study. Can be expensive for inventory and storage.

Coldpressor: Not as widely used as CRTT. Cover story may need work. Has been covered less in the news than the CRTT and hot sauce. Not sure how sensitive / reliable, and distribution can be non-normal.

## If CRTT, which outcome quantification?

Might be helpful to discard the duration scale & make it intensity alone.

First-trial-only may be appropriate insofar as it is unclear whether tit-for-tat responding is a problem.

Otherwise, standardize and sum seems most intuitively appropriate.

Gabbiadini et al. (2013) got a big effect by simple average of intensity and duration in 10-trial CRTT across all trials. Riva et al. (2016) get big effect by simple average of intensity and duration of just 1st trial.

# Should participants be provoked? Ambiguously or unambiguously? Should they aggress against the provoker or a 3rd party?

Gabbiadini et al. (2013) reports big effects in 10-trial CRTT with an opponent that set random intensity and duration.

Riva et al. (2016) report big effects on “unprovoked aggression” on the first trial in a 10-trial CRTT.

Anderson et al. (2004) report best results with “ambiguous provocation” – see experiment 3, which uses a one-phase CRTT with “the ambiguous win/loss and punishment patterns described in experiment 2”

# How to probe for, and deal with, failures of deception?

Does Anderson lab have a standard operating procedure for this?

“What do you think the purpose of this experiment was?” Anderson et al 2004 exp 2

We attempted a more thorough funneled debriefing but I failed to standardize it properly

Saleem, Anderson, and Gentile (2012) report that subjects “were probed for suspicion” but report no discards out of 330 participants.

Volpato lab does not report any screening or exclusions in their results.

Anderson et al. (2004) report “suspicion was unrelated to performance on the main dependent variables, so all were kept.”

# What improvements could be made?

RAs should be blinded such that the RA that collects the aggressive outcome does not know which game the subject has played.