Violence has been a part of entertainment since the dawn of Western civilization. But it was not until the 20th century, with the advent of movies and television, that “the masses” were exposed to entertainment violence on a regular basis. Given fundamental principles in several scholarly disciplines (e.g., social psychology, communications), not to mention advertising, which posit that the content of situational/environmental stimuli importantly determines people’s perceptions and emotions and drives their social interactions, social scientists have long been concerned about the potential effects of media violence exposure. This talk presents an overview of scientific research on this issue, focusing on experimental studies of video game effects on brain and behavioral responses, as well as addressing recent controversies related to this area of research.

Bartholow’s research investigates the ways in which various contextual factors, including alcohol use and the presence of social group cues such as race and media exposure influence the regulation of emotion, cognition, and behavior. He has written more than 70 scholarly articles and book chapters. His work has been supported by the National Science Foundation, the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, and ABMRF/The Foundation for Alcohol Research. The excellence of his research has been recognized with an award for Distinguished Early Career Contributions to Psychophysiology from the Society for Psychophysiological Research among others. He was elected to the Society of Experimental Social Psychology and served as an officer of the Society for Psychophysiological Research.

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