

# RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

## Young Men and Violence

**Professor Stephen Tomsen from the Institute for Culture and Society is conducting an innovative project examining male violence, non-violence and masculine identity. Professor David Gadd of the University of Manchester and an institute adjunct professor is an international partner investigator. This project is funded by the Australian Research Council through the Discovery Projects grant scheme.**

'Extensive male violence is a problematic but still poorly understood social and cultural phenomenon', explains Professor Tomsen. 'Male aggression and violence are increasingly being recognised as a social burden and there are higher related levels of criminal conviction and incarceration of men in both juvenile and adult prisons. So we must ask why do some men engage in violence and develop violent masculine identities while others don't? Previous research has treated different forms of male violence as separate and related to specific psychological problems. The reality is that these forms of violence overlap and their widespread occurrence indicates broader social issues. The degree to which men internalise and actually reproduce this public and private behaviour depends on the socioeconomic, cultural and personal conditions within their lives. This research will examine the interconnected nature of forms of male violence, as well as illuminating in detail what effect these conditions have and under what circumstances they are active.'

Using focus groups and deep analytic interviews as a methodology not previously used in Australian studies of crime and violence, the project will detail the experience and understandings of violence among young men in NSW and the ACT. Results will be used to integrate a new theoretical model of why men get involved in or reject masculine violence individually and in groups.



There is a compelling criminological and practical need to explain why some men do not participate in conflict and violence. Confrontational violence in locations of night-time public drinking and illicit drug use is a phenomenon known internationally and results in substantial health and social costs. The results of this project will inform policies and social and welfare programs aimed at the prevention of violence, helping to make a night-out safer for everyone.

**Project Title:** Violence and disengagement from violence in young men's lives  
**Funding has been set at:** \$140,000  
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**August 2012**