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Trends. The Effects of Televised Violence: Anecdotal Data from Lebanon

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Psychological research suggests that certain types of people are more likely to commit violence after being exposed to televised violence and violence in movies, video cassettes, and other visual media. This research has been employed in the service of advancing social policy advocacy--especially the prevention or reduction of depicting violence through these media.

If Sheik Nabil Qaouk, a Hezbollah commander is to be believed, the violence-related consequences of television and other visual media have been further demonstrated and, perhaps, new ground has been broken in the service of seeking the withdrawal of the Israeli Defense Forces from Lebanon. According to Sheik Qaouk, visual media exposure to successful Hezbollah attacks against Israeli personnel (1) increased Hezbollah morale to continue engaging in political violence, (2) facilitated recruitment of individuals to engage in political violence and support those who do, (3) decreased the morale of Israeli fighting forces, (4) changed Israeli strategy and tactics of violence to the benefit of Hezbollah, and (5) precipitated the withdrawal from Lebanon of Israelis involved in violence.

The Hezbollah example merits close analysis by psychologists and political authorities seeking to influence social policy related to violence and political policy related to mass movements of self-determination and communal and ethnic violence. Although not an example of controlled experimentation, Sheik Qaouk may have set an example for the "real world" vistas that political psychologists and other social scientists need to explore. (See Gunter, B. (1998). Ethnicity and involvement in violence on television: Nature and context of on-screen portrayals. *Journal of Black Studies*, 28, 683-703; Huesmann, L. R., Eron, L. D., Lefkowitz, M. M., & Walder, L. O. (1973). Television violence and aggression: The causal effect remains. *American Psychologist*, 28, 617-620; Kifner, J. (July 19, 2000). In long fight with Israel, Hezbollah tactics evolved. *The New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com>; Krucmar, M., & Greene, K. (1999). Predicting exposure to and uses of television violence. *Journal of Communication*, 49, 24-45; Marks, J., & Fraenkel, E. (1997). Working to prevent conflict in the new nation of Macedonia. *Negotiation Journal*, 13, 243-252; Moschis, G. P., & Moore, R. L. (1982). A longitudinal study of television advertising effects. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 9, 279-286.) (Keywords: Lebanon, Qaouk, Television, Violence.)