



Intelligence

state of the art threat assessment

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Upcoming Events

Foundational Violence Risk Assessment and Management Workshop
 Vancouver, BC, Canada
 April 30 - May 4, 2018

AETAP Conference
 Helsinki, Finland
 April 24 - 26, 2018

ATAP Conference
 Anaheim, CA, USA
 August 14-17, 2018

CONCEPT Summer Institute
 Palo Alto University, CA, USA
 August 20-24, 2018

Editor's Note



Welcome to first issue of the new version of Intelligence

This Newsletter is now being disseminated by Protect International Risk and Safety Services. Thank you so much to everyone for your ongoing support during the restructuring of our company.

As always, *Intelligence* will keep you up to date with recent advances in threat assessment from around the globe through knowledge and experiences shared by world-leading experts.

In this issue, we hear from Dr. James Cawood about the first research study of violence risk assessment tools in common workplace environments. Dr.

Stephen Hart also reviews "*Weapons of Math Destruction*", an excellent book about how using mathematical models for decision making threatens to undermine democracy and widen inequality.

In addition, I will update you about the recent expansion of the Special Interest Group for Post Secondary Institutions within the Canadian Association of Threat Assessment Professionals (CATAP) and Mr. Totti Karpela welcomes us to join the Association of European Threat Assessment Professionals (AETAP) at their upcoming Conference in spectacular Helsinki, Finland.

We hope *Intelligence* will continue to provide a forum for you to share and develop your expertise in threat assessment.

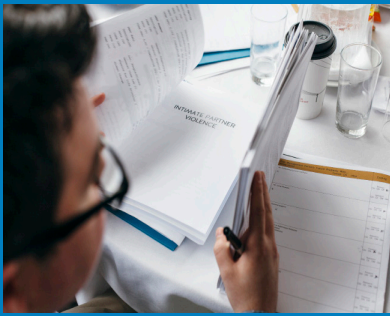
We encourage you to contribute and provide feedback.

Sincerely,

Kelly A. Watt, PhD

Director and Threat Assessment Specialist

Protect International Risk and Safety Services



Upcoming Webinars

ConCEpt and Protect International “Wednesday Webinar” Series

Diversity Issues in Violence Risk Assessment: **Culture**
May 9, 2018

Diversity Issues in Violence Risk Assessment: **Gender and Sexuality**
May 30, 2018

Workplace Violence Prevention and Intervention Programs: **Critical Elements (FREE)**
September 19, 2018

Workplace Violence Prevention and Intervention Programs: **Policies**
October 17, 2018

Workplace Violence Prevention and Intervention Programs: **Teams**
November 14, 2018

[Learn more...](#)

The Interrater Reliability and Predictive Validity of the HCR-20 V3 in Common Workplace Environments

Update by Dr. James Cawood

An important study by Dr. James Cawood, recently published in the *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, was among the first to look at the use of violence risk assessment tools in workplace environments. Specifically, this study was designed to test the level of interrater reliability and predictive validity of the HCR-20 V3, a Structured Professional Judgment Tool for assessing and managing risk for general violence, for cases involving potential physical violence in common workplace environments. These workplace environments will be of interest to many of the readers of this Newsletter given they included private businesses, post-secondary institutions, and public agencies, and involving aggressors who were not drawn from mental health or correctional populations. A sample of 40 adult known-outcome (i.e., violent and non-violent) case summaries were coded by three clinical psychology doctoral student/candidates level coders, who were blind to the outcomes of the cases, and who had been trained in the HCR-20 V3 in a standard two-day workshop by Dr. Stephen Hart, an author of the HCR-20 V3.

The analysis of the summary risk ratings showed a “good” level of interrater reliability and a “moderate” level of predictive validity, similar to levels of the HCR-20 V2 and the HCR-20 V3, with other

samples from more restrictive environments. These findings provide unique empirical evidence that the HCR-20 V3 can provide appropriate and defensible levels of interrater reliability and predictive validity for cases in more mainstream adult workplace environments. This study has value to the threat assessment field because while threat assessment professionals have been encouraging the use of Structured Professional Judgment Tools for assessing and managing violence risk in a wide variety of environments to improve the quality of assessments, empirical support for the use of Structured Professional Judgment tools has not kept pace with their practical application, especially for use in common workplace environments. So, if you are not using a tool to anchor and enhance your assessments in common workplace environments, this study should provide more even more encouragement to do so.

Cawood, J. S. (2017, March). The interrater reliability and predictive validity of the HCR-20 V3 in common workplace environments. *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, 4(1), 1-11. doi:10.1037/tam0000071

Weapons of Math Destruction: How Big Data Increases Inequality and Threatens Democracy

by Cathy O'Neil

Review by Dr. Stephen Hart

This book is an insider's warning. The insider is Cathy O'Neil. She has both academic credentials and street cred: She graduated from Harvard with a PhD in mathematics and, after a brief stint as a college professor, worked as a data scientist in the private sector. The warning is that the misapplication of statistics by governmental and private sector organizations has the potential to do great harm.

O'Neil has developed and used mathematical models in her own work. But she has grave concerns about models characterized by Opacity, Scale, and Damage—what she calls Weapons of Math Destruction (WMDs). Opacity means the inner workings of WMDs are not transparent to those affected by them, and perhaps not even to those who use them. Scale means that WMDs are or can be applied widely, across diverse groups. Damage means that WMDs may be used to deny people important opportunities,

benefits, or even freedoms. On the surface, WMDs appear to be objective and fair; ironically, they increase the very inequities that motivated their development.

O'Neil's argument is easy to grasp, and she makes it easily in the first two chapters. But the rest of the book is worth reading, especially the chapters that discuss WMDs in the contexts of college admission, online advertising, criminal justice, employment, credit, insurance, and voting. Each illustrates exactly what she is worried about using real-life examples. Threat assessment professionals will be particularly interested in the Introduction, which discusses offender risk assessment, and in Chapter 5, which discusses crime prediction software for identifying high-risk neighborhoods and people.

The current availability of information and information technology makes possible the

rapid proliferation of WMDs. Think of risk assessment tools based on proprietary (“trade secret”) algorithms. There are many such tools currently in use, and every day we hear about new ones designed to recognize the faces of known offenders, detect extremist postings on social media, analyze potentially threatening emails, or identify students at high risk for campus violence. Which tools will help us do our jobs better, and which are WMDs? How do we identify and decommission WMDs already in use? How do we prevent the proliferation of WMDs? This book does not—and never claims to—provide easy answers to such questions. But it does draw our attention to a problem hiding in plain sight, one that all threat assessment professionals would be wise to take seriously.

Hardcover edition published 2016 by Crown Publishers, New York
ISBN: 978-0-553-41881-1

Special Announcements

CONCEPT: Official launch of the SVR-20 V2

The second version of the Sexual Violence Risk-20 (SVR-20) will be officially launched at the CONCEPT Summer Institute during August 20-22, 2018 in Palo Alto, California.

During the Summer Institute, Dr. Stephen Hart will be facilitating a workshop on the Assessment of Risk for Sexual Violence, and participants will be trained on both the Sexual Violence Risk-20 Version 2 (SVR-20 V2) and the Risk for Sexual Violence Protocol (RSVP).

Both the SVR-20 V2 and RSVP are Structured Professional Judgment guidelines for assessing and managing risk for sexual violence, and these tools have been informed by and are complimentary to each other. The SVR-20 V2 is intended for simplified and brief assessments, and the RSVP is intended for complex and sophisticated assessments.

