
Symposium WP-2
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Belonging and Social Conflict

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Ostracism occurs in all social animals, and signals danger and potential long-term isolation or in some cases, death. In humans, it robs individuals a sense of belonging, recognition, and voice, and in some cases, can lead to aggression and violence. School shooters, for example, have often mentioned being ostracized in their diaries. Individuals are ostracized within close relationships (e.g., the silent treatment), which can lead to interpersonal violence. Individuals are ostracized by their peers in schools, the workplace, and even in religious organizations and communities, leading to possible retaliation in these settings. And larger groups who have religious or political views that isolate them from governments or nations may seek vengeance as a way to be heard and recognized as being worthy of attention. In this symposium, we explore research on factors that link social exclusion to aggression, at the affective and cognitive neuroscience level, developmentally, and in social psychology field and laboratory studies that employ a wide array of exclusion manipulations and aggression measures.