



## Alltm.org - Transcendental Meditation

and Reviewed Links on the Knowledge of Maharishi  
Mahesh Yogi

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### Transcendental Meditation Experiment Arrests Crime Study Shows Dramatic Drop in Violent Crime During D.C. Project

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A study published in the peer-reviewed journal Social Indicators Research reports on one of the most dramatic sociological experiments ever undertaken. Researchers predicted in advance that the calming influence of group meditation practice could reduce violent crime by over 20 percent in Washington, D.C., during an 8-week period in the summer of 1993.

In fact, the findings later showed that the rate of violent crime--which included assaults, murders, and rapes--decreased by 23 percent during the June 7 to July 30 experimental period. The odds of this result occurring by chance are less than 2 in 1 billion. Rigorous statistical analyses ruled out an extensive list of alternative explanations, according to John Hagelin, lead author of the study and director of the Institute of Science, Technology and Public Policy at Maharishi University of Management in Fairfield, Iowa.

**"This work and theory that informs it deserve the most serious consideration by academics and policy makers alike." Dr. David Edwards, University of Texas- Austin**

The demonstration project involved assembling nearly 4,000 practitioners of the Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi programs from 81 countries. Participants were housed in hotels and college dormitories throughout the District of Columbia and at the University of Maryland.

Hagelin says previous research had shown that these meditation techniques "create a state of deep relaxation and coherence in the individual and simultaneously appear to produce an effect that spreads into the environment, influencing people who are not practicing the techniques and who have no knowledge of the experiments themselves."

### Results based on field effect of consciousness

Drawing on terminology from quantum field theories, Hagelin, an eminent physicist, refers to the findings as a field effect of consciousness.

"It's analogous to the way that a magnet creates an invisible field that causes iron filings to organize themselves into an orderly pattern. Similarly, these meditation techniques have been shown to create high levels of coherence in EEG brain wave patterns of individual practitioners. This increased coherence and orderliness in individual consciousness appears to spill over into society and can be measured indirectly via changes in social indices, such as reductions in the rate of violent crime. We call this phenomenon a field effect of consciousness," says Hagelin.

The admittedly novel experiment was rigorously analyzed by a 27- member project review board composed of independent scientists and civic leaders who approved the research protocol and monitored the research process.

**"What we are looking at here is a new paradigm of viewing crime and violence." Dr. Anne Hughes, University of the District of Columbia"**

### **A new paradigm for viewing crime and violence**

Anne Hughes, a professor of sociology and government at the University of the District of Columbia and a member of the project review board, feels that the findings of the study have significant implications for resolving inner city violence.

"What we are looking at here is a new paradigm of viewing crime and violence," says Hughes, a coauthor of the study. "I would like to recommend that this new model, which is supported by a number of exhaustive and very carefully controlled studies, be seriously considered, and that we think about ways that it might be implemented in the inner city."

According to the researchers, more than 42 studies conducted during the past 25 years have verified the field effects of consciousness. A study published in 1988 in the *Journal of Conflict Resolution* reported on an experiment conducted in Jerusalem where a group of Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi program experts had assembled during the war in Lebanon. As the number of TM group practitioners peaked on several occasions during the two-month experimental period, war deaths in nearby Lebanon were found to drop correspondingly.

The Washington, D.C., experiment was especially significant because it was a "prospective study," according to Maxwell Rainforth, a coauthor of the study and statistician at Maharishi University of Management (M.U.M.).

"The predictions were lodged in advance with a panel of prominent social scientists and civic leaders, including members of the District city council and metropolitan police force. Statistical analysis considered the effect of weather variables, daylight, police patrolling, historical crime trends and annual patterns in the District of Columbia, as well as trends in neighboring cities.

"Consistent with previous research, violent crime was correlated with weekly weather patterns. However, time series analysis of FBI crime data, controlling for temperature, showed that violent crime dropped significantly during the demonstration period," Rainforth says.

While the notion of using group meditation to lower crime may seem unusual at first, Rainforth says that this response is common with new approaches.

"Ordinarily, we think we can reduce violence through more police, gun control, stiffer penalties, etc. But everyone knows that these conventional approaches are inadequate because violence and crime continue to be a major problem in our society. On the other hand, however novel this Transcendental Meditation program approach may seem, evidence consistently shows that it can reduce violent crime," Rainforth says.

### **Violence caused by stress in collective consciousness**

David Orme-Johnson, lead investigator and former chair of the psychology department at M.U.M., says that the "violence in society is caused by the buildup of stress in collective consciousness," just as the buildup of stress in the individual is known to cause disease in the body.

"The conventional scientific model has assumed that individual consciousness is completely separate from that of others, and that there is no common field linking us together. But the most advanced understanding in physics has shown us in the past century that subtle energy fields are at the basis of everything in the universe. Why then shouldn't we expect that human consciousness also has field characteristics at more fundamental levels?" questions Orme- Johnson.

According to Hagelin, historical precedents shed light on understanding the field effects of consciousness. "Early scientists such as Edison and Marconi discovered technologies like the light bulb and radio wave transmission that began to tap the hidden potentialities of the electromagnetic field. The electromagnetic field had always existed before, but it took these and other discoveries of the past 150 years to demonstrate this invisible field's enormous practical value for society.

"Similarly, the field of consciousness has always been there, beyond the conscious thinking mind of everyone. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi rediscovered ancient techniques to access this field, and now scientists are beginning to validate its tremendous practical value for society.

"No one disputes the value of modern computers, televisions, cellular phones and countless other technologies utilizing the electromagnetic field. However, 100 years ago people would have thought we were crazy if we talked about these technologies," Hagelin says.

**Effects of Group Practice of the Transcendental Meditation Program on Preventing Violent Crime in Washington, D.C.: Results of the National Demonstration Project, June--July 93**

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