

# When Is Speech Violence?

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## **The New York Times:**

Imagine that a bully threatens to punch you in the face. A week later, he walks up to you and breaks your nose with his fist. Which is more harmful: the punch or the threat?

The answer might seem obvious: Physical violence is physically damaging; verbal statements aren't. "Sticks and stones can break my bones, but words will never hurt me."

But scientifically speaking, it's not that simple. Words can have a powerful effect on your nervous system. Certain types of adversity, even those involving no physical contact, can make you sick, alter your brain — even kill neurons — and shorten your life.

Read the whole story: [\*The New York Times\*](#)