Internationally, violence remains a pressing social, health and psychological concern. Compared to Northern Europe, countries in Central America and Southern Africa report high rates of men’s violence against women, children and other men. In South Africa the rates of homicidal and sexual violence are amongst the most elevated in the world, with high rates and horrific incidents of murder and rape documented in research and reflected in media reports. The recent high profile cases of Oscar Pistorius, the murder of Mozambican taxi driver Mido Macia by 8 policemen, and the rapes and murders of Franziska Blöchliger (16) and Sinoxolo Mafevuka (19) are just a few examples that highlight the endemic nature of violence in South Africa. Violent public protests, with men as principal actors, are also common. The Marikana massacre, where at least 34 men were killed, has demonstrated how the state is implicated in the reproduction of masculine violence.

Within this context understanding why men enact violence against others and how masculinities are inscribed with violence is central to violence prevention and nurturing peaceful masculinities. Although increased South African work has focused on men and constructions of masculinities, violence and aggressive forms of masculinity remain stubbornly pervasive. The immobility of violence can be understood not only in relation to historical and socially instituted gender inequality, but the complex enmeshment of this inequality within broader structures of contemporary racial, gender and class inequalities. Despite the promises of democracy and the establishment of constitutional equalities which have occurred since the dismantling of apartheid, multiple inequalities continue to shape masculinities in significant ways. An illuminating focus on men and masculinities, and their relation to violence, therefore cannot occur without interrogating the intersections between these various inequalities. The relationships between men, masculinities and violence remains complex, contradictory and fractured. Continuous, various and in-depth examinations are needed in order to further violence prevention initiatives in diverse settings.

This special issue is interested in scholarship which focuses on the relationship between men, masculinities and violence in any form within South Africa, and is intended to further open up a space to reflect on how we think about and work on men’s violence and violent masculinities, what has been done in this area, and what still needs to be done. Papers that speak to any of the following and related topics are welcomed:

- Empirical quantitative and qualitative studies on men’s violence and violent masculinities (including physical, sexual, political and emotional violence)
- Theoretical and conceptual work on men’s violence and violent masculinities
• Reflections on public and political responses to men’s violence and violent masculinities
• Critical examination of anti-violence work

Please submit your contributions to the Editor-in-Chief, African Safety Promotion: A Journal of Injury and Violence Prevention, at the Violence, Injury and Peace Research Unit, Medical Research Council, PO Box 19070, Tygerberg, 7505, South Africa, or email to Nancy Hornsby (nancy.hornsby@mrc.ac.za) by 15 November 2016. Journal guidelines can be found at: www.mrc.ac.za/crime/aspj.htm. For further enquiries please contact special issue co-editors Kopano Ratele (kopano.ratele@mrc.ac.za) or Rebecca Helman (rebecca.helman@mrc.ac.za).