

# **Do Violent Videogames Contribute to Youth Violence?**

Violent videogames having effects of violent behavior on teens and younger people has been a major controversy for a long time. People have always seemed to notice that when someone commits a violent crime that they were an avid videogame player and they blame it on that and that the games are what pushed them over the edge and made them so aggressive. From so many accusations of the effect of games to violent behavior many people have launched research and experiments on if playing these games really does contribute to youth violence.

## **From the Political Perspective**

Politics do not have many obvious relations with this topic but if you can see in some ways, they do relate also. If people in positions of higher power such as congress and things similar to that also would see this as a major problem in the country then they could possibly start a vote for banning or censoring these games. With a ban or censor on these violent games then many would be upset and possibly petition against this ban and take action to try to change it. The research that people undertake to see if the idea of video games affecting violence among youth shows some interesting facts that say that they do and that they do not. The facts that show that they do not contribute to youth violence are things like, the arrest rate of adolescence has decreased by 71.9 % between 1995 and 2008 (Procon.org, 2012). The research of the violence related to video games also shows ways that they do affect youth in a violent way. One example from this is that they say that about 60 % of middle school boys who play a mature rated game have hit or fought another person compared to the 39 % of boys who did not play a mature game (Procon.org, 2012). This shows that the effect of these games on the youth of today is both violence and has no effect. Different research and results can affect how people see the usefulness and purpose of an industry such as gaming if they view it as just something that makes the children of their nation more violent.

The political lens on the issue of violence from video games can also be seen on how politicians can affect things as a nation by changing, banning, or limiting certain industries and different things that can affect things on a national scale (Gardner, 2011). Ways this could occur is that political leaders could view research that is specifically biased against video games that only find ways in which they would negatively affect people such as inducing aggression. Seeing these could affect people in the way that was previously mentioned, that people in positions of power could see these industries as only harmful and make some sort of limits or bans against them which in turn could be harmful to the country's economy.

An example of a country with limits on its video game industry is Australia. They ban games that have a rating of MA15+ and R18+ (Akhavan, 2015). They view these games as too violent or offensive and do not allow them to be released in Australia. This shows an example of a way that the effects of video games could affect a country on the political front. The views of how offensive, violent and influential they are seen to be on the youth of the state will be the deciding factor on whether or not there is going to be a ban or censor on these violent games. Australia obviously viewed games with the higher age ratings such as 15 and older and 18 and older games to be too violent, offensive, or influential so they thought the best solution to this problem would be to ban any of these games from being sold there overall (Gardner, 2011). The companies that make and produce games like this are a large source of income for many people and they help the economy very much so, of not just America but many other countries as well. This source of income could be severely stunted if a ban was placed, similar to Australia.

The effect of a ban on video games could change many things. It could cause economic downfall because of how large the industries are and how much money they make. It could cause protests and petitions to retract the ban. It could cause many things and it would all be because of the information that these games affect children in a negative and violent way. From me, an avid video game player, I have never felt any aggression toward people while playing games. The aggression that I have felt was only emotions towards the game itself if it is difficult, or to characters in the game that are the evil ones that they just make you hate. This could be a possible fault in the research to brain activity while playing games. If the gamers feel aggression towards people in the game, that doesn't mean that they would want to cause others harm.

From my point of view, as a teen and a gamer, I would argue against the fact that video games cause violence among children. But as someone else, I might understand why they might think this way, that video games might be harmful and influential. To take the point of view as a parent of a teen gamer, I would want to protect that child from anything that would cause them harm or make them feel anger towards others. If there was something or someone to blame for the change of emotions that caused him or her to cause another harm. I would look for anything or anyone to blame for this and if they played violent games who says they would not be influenced by that violence?

From the point of view of someone with political power or a lawmaker, I would want to help prevent any activity that causes the youth of my country to be violent. But I would also want to be completely positive that it did in fact induce violence among the youth of the country so as not to take away a large economic boost from all these industries that make, advertise and support games.

The last point of view, that of an older individual such as the ages of 21 and older who do still play video games. This group of people would be highly upset and discontent with ban or censor on games that they are mature enough to handle. This would make a very upset user base be lost. The protests and complaints would most likely come from this group of people who would be unable to use a product that they were judged to be old enough and mature enough to handle and play.

## Reflection

In the beginning of our project, during the research section of the project, it was a little difficult to find research aiming towards our claim- that video games do not contribute to youth violence. This made it a little hard for the research to be found for the project. On the other side though, this made it easy to find research for the other side of the claim. When presented with this problem, I found a few good websites to help me get over this little predicament. They were websites that showed the pros and cons of a problem. This helped me find even more research for the counterclaim and to find the research for my side of the claim. The question that we asked about the contribution to violence from video games changed my view slightly about this problem. Through research I realized that there is a lot more evidence aimed toward proving that video games do contribute towards youth violence. Although the majority of the documents go towards proving the opposite of our claim, I found that the few sources that helped to prove my claim were much more helpful and had many viable, valid, and more variety of how they don't contribute to youth violence. This helped me to see that the different ways that people research how things impact people even to the fact where they can see how people feel about things even if the people cannot tell for themselves. The group aspect of this project did also make an impact on how I thought about everything. Usually I would just look at it in one way or how I wanted to look at the problem. The group helped me to see things in different ways and from different point of views and perspectives and that helps a lot to write about the different views on certain problems. The views from leaders and lawmakers, the views of the consumers of the games, the view of the parents and their concern for their children, and the views of anyone who worries on anything that can cause violence and endanger lives. None of these point of views would have been seen or been acknowledged in my part of the project if I wasn't in a group and I wasn't able to get the support from them. They really did help me improve my project and my thinking style that I will be able to apply to my future essays and projects. The research that I had to do was a much easier process after the past few practices that we had in the class for this. The projects that we did before helped me a lot in preparation for this one because we were able to practice working with a group and researching your topic and finding credible sources to use. The group members that I had to work with were very good workers and helpful. They contributed to the group and helped each other and myself. I found that this is the ideal group you would want for any kind of project.

Helpful, nice, hard-working and insightful. They were insightful by being able to provide me with questions, suggestions, and different thoughts about what I was doing and researching. They provided the questions to help improve my essay. If I had a certain point they would ask a question to help me see the same problem from the opposite point of view, helping me make a valid argument that shows both sides. This also helped me to better understand the topic. By knowing what the other side of the argument wants and how they see the problem, it helps me to see that they also have some very viable evidence to help prove their claim as well. This helped me to see that even though you have an opinion on something and there is evidence to support it that does not make it automatically right. There is a high chance that the other side of the argument also has some evidence to help support them as well. So this project has helped me to learn that while you may believe something, you should always learn about the other side to widen your understanding of the problem. My understanding of the problem also increased while the project continued. I realized that many people blame video games for certain violent acts when those acts occurred because of a mental disorder or another cause. I also realized that the most amount of games that are played by kids 15 and younger are Mature or Adult rated games. This does show that games that are rated for adults and older people, that are rated that way for a reason, are being played by a younger audience that is thought to be not mature enough to play such games. This altered my understanding by showing me that some problems might arise from immature children playing mature games.

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