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Why Parents Say No To Movies

When you get home from school what is one of the first things that you do, heck if you’re like me you’re definitely not doing homework yet. After the shoes are off, its straight to the couch, flip on the tv, and choosing a show on Netflix. Cause be real, what else is there to do, unless you’ve got practice or something, but even then, right after practice you’ll probably end up on the couch anyway. So, let me know if any of these sounds familiar to you. You’re watching that one show you really like but you know your parents wouldn’t let you, so you either watch with headphones, or change it when your parents walk in. The other option is you’re watching that show and your parents walk in and ask what you’re watching, after that they say you “know” you can’t watch that and then some sort of punishment follows. It can be pretty annoying because parents should know that just because they do it in a movie doesn’t mean that we are going to do it too. So, if we’re not going to do it why do parents say that we shouldn’t watch it, where are they coming from?

 Well for starters, we can agree that

violence is probably not a good thing, but it’s

everywhere. If it’s everywhere why do parents

even care? Well for them violence wasn’t

everywhere it wasn’t, take a look at this graph.

This graph is from research by Brad Bushman,

he’s a doctor. What this graph is showing is that gun violence has doubled in movies since the 1950’s (1016). When our parents were growing up they did have movies as violent as ours our today, in fact most of our PG 13 movies contain way more violence then their R rated movies. So, if violence is bad, and our average movie is twice as bad as their worst was, it kinda makes a little more sense why parents don’t want their kids to watch certain movies.

I said that violence is bad, in real life it’s pretty bad, but it’s just a show so it’s not that bad. Well, sadly parents don’t think that way, and neither does Bushman. In fact, he talks about a study where they had sports gear or guns on the table to see if it would make people more violent, and he said that the people who saw guns were more violent, just the presence of a gun increased aggression (1015). So, if just seeing a gun on a table can make people more aggressive, do you think that watching a movie where people are killing each other might have a similar affect, or even worse? He also said just using the word “Gun” or other words that reference violence could make you more aggressive (1015). That one is a little hard for me to believe, but I guess it could be true. Seeing and hearing violence in a movie may not make you go on a rampage, but it might make you more likely to fight with your siblings. My parents always hated when we did that, and if they thought that a show could make me do that, well that could be a reason I couldn’t watch it.   
 Movies are getting more violent, and apparently that violence can increase aggression after seeing or hearing it, well how much do you actually watch movies. Nicoleta and Bratu are professors that did a survey and found that 82% of teenagers watch at least 3 hours of TV a day (23). Even though TV isn’t the same as a movie, you can watch movies that show on TV, in fact they said out of that 82% of teens that watch TV everyday 67% of them watch movies every day on TV (24). Just in case you wanted to know, that’s 54% that means, 54% of teens watch movies every day. That seems a little bit off, but still that’s a lot of people watching movies every day. If you compare with what Bushman was saying about violence increasing aggression, that’s about half of all teenagers that have a chance to be more violent every single day.

What’s interesting is that Bushman is not the only person who is saying that violence can increase aggression. Nicoleta and Bratu said about the same thing as Bushman did. They say they violence in TV has an effect on the way you act and even has the “potential” of causing violence in the relationships you have (30). They are not as extreme as Bushman because they just say “potential” (30) so it’s not a 100% chance that it will happen to you. Also, just a side note they added that boys were more likely to choose the violent options then girls were, just so you know. Now if multiple smart people are telling your parents that viewing violence, even if it’s only a chance, will make you more violent then that might be a reason why they don’t want you to watch them.

Movies now a days really are getting worse then they used to be. Another group of people, most of them teach psychology at different universities, say that they agree with Bushman that “there seems to be little doubt that films are displaying more blood, violence, guns, and gore than ever before” (Markey 169). Who doesn’t love that? Well, parents for one, they go on to say, “Parents might want to shield their children from such violence for various reasons, including preventing nightmares, to avoid negative affect, and to make them feel safe” (169). Looking at that, it may seem like they are telling your parents not to let you watch violent movies. Well look at the quote again, were any of the reasons they listed saying that movies violence will make you more violent? No, they didn’t say that. Interesting right? Well these people wanted to test and see if it was true that violent movies were the cause of major violent acts. Do you want to know what they found? Look that this graph here, if you look you can see that movie violence has pretty much tripled, but major violence has decreased by about 50% (163). So if movie violence has tripled and actual violence is half as much, what does that mean? Well that means that parents are wrong for thinking that you watching a violent move is going to make you go out and kill people. That’s definitely not going to happen.

If it’s true that violence in movies is increasing but real-life violence is decreasing, then why were all those other people saying that viewing and hearing violence can increase aggression? Well that’s it right there, aggression not violence. Those people with that last graph even said, “Although watching a violent film does not seem to be related to shifts in homicide or aggravated assault rates, such exposure may affect other types of less severe aggressive behaviors such as bullying, spreading gossip, minor fights at school, pushing and shoving, or hurling insults” (Markey 169). I don’t think I could have said that better. In conclusion, you seeing a violent movie, according to these people which is almost every day, won’t make you go kill people. You can tell that to your parents next time they tell you to turn off your show. But just remember that that’s not why they are telling you that. They don’t want you to be a jerk to the kids at school, that and that’s just the way parents are.

Works Cited

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Audience Assessment

So, if you couldn’t tell my audience was teenagers who have parents that won’t let them watch violent movies. I picked that because I thought it would be more fun to write that way, and it was. Also, I always try and write in a way that makes me sound more intelligent but writing to teenagers you and write how you speak. I also was able to include myself a lot, I’m not a teenager but I was not too long ago. Over all I feel like I addressed the audience pretty well for what I was trying to accomplish.