Title:
Do Violent Video Games Increase Aggression?

Word Count:
543

Summary:
There are several age-appropriate video games that provide hours of fun while at
the same time providing practice in logic and strategizing as well as problem
solving. However the growth and rising popularity of video games has been
riddled with controversy as younger and younger children get exposed to the
subset of video games that feature antisocial behavior, violence and gore. There
is rising concern on the effects of violent video games on children. The
increasingly real...

Keywords:

Article Body:
There are several age-appropriate video games that provide hours of fun while at
the same time providing practice in logic and strategizing as well as problem
solving. However the growth and rising popularity of video games has been
riddled with controversy as younger and younger children get exposed to the
subset of video games that feature antisocial behavior, violence and gore. There
is rising concern on the effects of violent video games on children. The
increasingly realistic nature of these games makes them extremely popular among
children of all ages, but it is this very same realistic nature that is the
cause of great anxiety.

Apprehension about violent video games is based on the assumption that they
promote violence and aggression amongst young players. Extensive research has
proven beyond a doubt that television violence increases aggression and violence
among the children who watch it. Concern regarding violent games was originally
based on these studies. However later studies show that violent video games may
be more damaging than violent television primarily because of the interactive
nature of video games.

Studies show that playing violent video games tend to foster aggressive
behavior, thoughts and feelings in young people in laboratory settings as well
as in actual life. Moreover, violent games are riveting and extremely
interactive. They compel the player to identify with the aggressor, making them

more vulnerable to the aggression-enhancing effects exposure to violent games. It is not only the habitual players that are affected; even those who are briefly exposed to violent video games are inclined to display aggressive behavior, even if the increased aggression was only temporary.

Extensive studies on the cause-effect of playing video games showed that junior and high school students who reported played more violent video games tended to display more aggressive behaviors and were generally more violent. The amount of time that they spent playing video games had a direct impact on their academic grades in college. Those who spent long hours playing video games almost always had lower grades.

Not only did violent video games provide a conducive environment for learning aggressive solutions to conflict situations, they also offered ample opportunity to practice and hone this particular trait. Playing violent video games for a short period augmented aggression by priming aggressive thoughts. Long-term playing had longer lasting effects as long-term players were inclined to learn and rehearse new scripts related to violence. The active learning environment of violent video games makes them potentially more damaging than exposure to violent television and movies.

Social scientists hypothesize that there are four main reasons why video games have such a profound impact on children.

Children are more likely to mimic the behavior of any individual or character that they identify with. Most violent video games require the player to take the point of view of and enact the role of the perpetrator.

As opposed to passive observation; the active participation that is required in violent video games fosters aggression as second nature.

The repetitive nature of the interaction, which provides ample opportunity for learning violent ways of thinking and acting. Violent games are in effect a rehearsal for violent behavior and actions in real life.

Exposure to violent video games increases aggressive thoughts and emotions as well as aggressive actions.