

Game Design

Issues with Video Games

- Increased Aggression Levels
- Seizures
- Addiction

Increased Aggression Levels

- "Violent video games provide a forum for learning and practicing aggressive solutions to conflict situations."
- This does not mean all violent video games make people violent, but it is a major factor for "at-risk" people,

U.S. Senate Commerce Committee hearing on "The Impact of Interactive Violence on Children" Testimony by Craig Anderson Professor of Psychology & Chair, Department of Psychology
Iowa State University of Science & Technology

- Fact 1. Exposure to violent TV and movies causes increases in aggression and violence.
- Fact 2. These effects are of two kinds: short term and long term. The short term effect is that aggression increases immediately after viewing a violent TV show or movie, and lasts for at least 20 minutes. The long term effect is that repeated exposure to violent TV and movies increases the violence-proneness of the person watching such shows. In essence, children who watch a lot of violent shows become more violent as adults than they would have become had they not been exposed to so much TV and movie violence.
- Fact 3. Both the long term and the short term effects occur to both boys and girls.
- Fact 4. The effects of TV and movie violence on aggression are not small. Indeed, the media violence effect on aggression is bigger than the effect of exposure to lead on IQ scores in children, the effect of calcium intake on bone mass, the effect of homework on academic achievement, or the effect of asbestos exposure on cancer.

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- Fact 1. Video games are consuming a larger amount of time every year. Virtually all children now play video games. The average 7th grader is playing electronic games at least 4 hours per week, and about half of those games are violent. Even though number of hours spent playing video games tends to decline in the high school and college years, a significant portion of students are playing quite a few video games. In 1998 3.3% of men entering public universities in the United States reported playing video games more than 15 hours per week in their senior year in high school. In 1999 that percentage jumped to a full 4%.
- Fact 2. Young people who play lots of violent video games behave more violently than those who do not. For example, in the most recent study of this type exposure to video game violence during late adolescence accounted for 13-22% of the variance in violent behaviors committed by this sample of people. By way of comparison, smoking accounts for about 14% of lung cancer variance.
- Fact 3. Experimental studies have shown that playing a violent video game causes an increase in aggressive thinking. For example, in one study young college students were randomly assigned the task of playing a violent video game (Marathon 2) or a nonviolent game (Glider Pro). Later, they were given a list of partially completed words, such as mu__er. They were asked to fill in the blanks as quickly as possible. Some of the partial words could form either an aggressive word (murder) or a nonaggressive word (mutter). Those who had played the violent game generated 43% more aggressive completions than those who had played a nonviolent game.
- Fact 4. Experimental studies have shown that playing a violent video game causes an increase in retaliatory aggression. For example, in one study participants were randomly assigned to play either a violent game (Wolfenstein 3D) or a nonviolent game (Myst). Shortly afterwards, they received a series of mild provocations and were given an opportunity to retaliate aggressively. Those who had played the violent game retaliated at a 17% higher rate than those who had played the nonviolent game.
- Fact 5. Experimental and correlational studies have shown that playing violent video games leads to a decrease in prosocial (helping) behaviors.

Seizures

- The fast paced nature of video games, along with the player constantly changing eye focus and position all over the viewing screen increases seizure probability.
- Nintendo's ill-fated Virtual Boy was known to trigger headaches and seizures after extended period of play, and therefore included an internal timer that would halt game play every 30 minutes to allow gamers to take a break.

Addiction

- To those with little or no social skills, or those that do not have a firm grasp on personal responsibilities, video game addiction is possible.

Hot off the PRESS

- Violent games make players comfortably numb to the suffering of others
- March 2009, Psychological Science
- [Finding](#)

ESRB

- Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) is a non-profit, **self-regulatory body** established in 1994 by the Entertainment Software Association (ESA), formerly known as the Interactive Digital Software Association (IDSA). ESRB assigns computer and video game content ratings, enforces industry-adopted advertising guidelines and helps ensure responsible online privacy practices for the interactive entertainment software industry.

- Of the 1,677 ratings assigned by ESRB in 2008:
 - **59% received an E (Everyone) rating**
 - **19% received a T (Teen) rating**
 - **16% received an E10+ (Everyone 10+) rating**
 - **6% received an M (Mature) rating**