

Is violent media good for kids



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Gerard Jones, in “ Violent Media is Good for Kids,” expresses personal experiences about how violent comic books can often help children break through their shells of self-isolation. Because Jones largely discusses his own opinions, I feel the essay should provide more statistical evidence to support his thoughts. Although I agree with his point that children do need to have an outlet to express their underlying rage, I think a boundary of how extreme we can allow children to stretch this idea needs to be set.

Jones’s essay does a good job of connecting himself to the audience, even in his first example, where he uses his own personal experience of how The Hulk saved him in his childhood to introduce his point. The violence of the comic books helped him both get over his fears and find an identity for himself, as seen when Gerard states that he later wrote comic books and action movies in his thirties. In the essay, Gerard has many real life examples of how comics, rich in combat and killings, have helped children become stronger individuals.

I think his use of real life examples really captures the audience’s attention and heart. Although his essay is mostly his opinion, Jones used Melanie Moore, who has a PhD in psychology, to support him. Moore claims that children need violence in the media to express the feelings that they are taught to ignore. Jones and Moore came up with a program called Power Play that “ helps young people improve their self-knowledge and sense of potency through heroic, combative storytelling” (197).

I think this imaginary setting inside a comic book young people create is an effective way to children can channel their anger or rage into a world they

can create. Although Jones's essay had plenty of real life examples, he lacked instances of scholarly research with statistical truth that violence in the media helps children grow into normal adults rather than violent adults. He argues that for every one person a violent comic book hurt, the violent comic book helped one hundred people, yet he does not provide any statistical evidence to back that up, which makes his claim seem as if he is just stating numbers to make his point seem valid (198).

Because Jones mainly focused on his personal experiences, he did not do a good job of representing the other side of the story. The essay would have been more complete and less biased had Jones talked more in depth about the arguments of other side of the issue and refuted their claims to support his reasoning.

With all the amount of school shootings and gang fights that are happening in the world today, why these children grow up to become so disruptive and where they learned to act out with that sort of aggression should be issues society needs to consider, yet Jones's essay lacked these answers to these important questions. An excerpt from the "Seal of Approval: The history of the Comics Code" by Amy Kiste Nyberg, shows the undesired outcome from reading violent comic books. This passage has examples of kids committing acts of violence much like they saw and read in their favorite comic book.

This example illustrated a significant issue because a group of New York boys attacked another boy, twisting his arm and breaking it in two places (Nyberg). This is an extreme example of children taking what they read into a comic book and imitating it in their lives. Since they are children, it is hard

for them to understand what is fiction, which simply serves as entertainment, and what should be real. Examples like the one provided “Seal of Approval” are issues that Jones did not include in his essay.

Although Jones states that he does not believe all violent entertainment is harmless, stating that “ it has helped inspire some people to real-life violence” he does not support this claim in his essay (198). Instead, Jones concentrates on only the good outcomes from reading violet comic books. Jones claims that parents are confusing their children about their natural aggression, however I disagree, since I believe parents are trying to do their best raising their children in a world that is full of crime.

With violence all around the youth in the real world, violence in comic books can create a connection with children on a more personal level and send a bad message to a young, naive mind. I believe that comic books such as Superman, the Hulk, and Spiderman are good models to motivate a growing child to achieve great things. However, comics in which the bad guy wins is detrimental to children and their outlook on situations that they can relate to, so I think Jones needed to be more specific in the type of comics he believes children should read.

Overall, Jones does a good job connecting his personal experiences with his belief that comics help children avoid violence and achieve great things. Since comics have a varying range of violence, we need to determine what provides a good example of how not to act and what simply exposes them to too much. Because comics have many instances of crime and violent acts, I

think they can show children what is acceptable if they are read under parental supervision and if they portray the crime as bad.