

Computer games and violence

[Entertainment](#), [Games](#)



Have you ever been to the movies and denied a ticket because you were not old enough? Or, have you ever attempted to buy a game, and, of course, you got turned down, because, once again, you were not old enough? Although, you probably do know why you were denied or turned down, because of those great warning or rating systems on every form of media nowadays. Video games have been a part of American culture since the late 1970's and first emerged as a controversial social problem in late 1994 and has continued until the present.

Violence in video games is one of important issues that most countries are facing right now. The number of children exposed to violent video games is increasing dramatically and results in violent situations such as fighting at school. Even though this is not a new concern in the United States, it has reappeared at the top of many controversial social problems among the government, parents, educators, the Entertainment Software Rating Board (E. S. R. B), and game producers.

An example of the controversy is that some people claim that children are progressively becoming more aggressive because of video or computer games. Other people claim that the E. S. R. B should reform the rating system for video or computer games. Also, people claim that video games should be censored. According to the American Psychological Association, children who play violent video games are progressively becoming more aggressive and the violence in video games has a direct correlation to more prominent violence among adults.

So parents, educators, and the government are concerned about how much the damage of the violence in videogames inflicts on children, causing more

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crimes, creating more school problems, affecting children's physical and mental and even continuing into adulthood. If we can reduce the number of children who are exposed to violent video games, our society will have less violence, more peace, and healthier children. The thesis statement of my research paper will be that the E. S. R. B should be more restrictive in rating violent video games.

To understand the impact that video games have in our society today, we must first know a little bit about the history of video games. According to GameSpot, the physicist William Higinbotham has demonstrated the first video game at the Brookhaven National Laboratory in Upton, he also invented his own game called Tennis for two, that played on an oscilloscope in 1958. In the early 1960's, a student from MIT name Steve Russell invented SpaceWar, this was the first game intended for computer use. The idea of playing video game on television, it wasn't start until 1966 when television was just reaching mass market popularity.

In 1967, Ralph Baer has the idea of using televisions for playing video game than just watching them. In 1967, Baer and his team are successful in creating two interactive television games which are chase game and tennis game. In addition, they also develop a toy gun which it detects spots of light on television screen. First video games are created to give people some kind of entertainment and help people to release their stress rather than violence video games. Early 1970's the first computer space coin operated arcade video games is released by Nutting Associates.

About 1500 machines are made but the game is not popular with player because it too difficult to play. In 1972, the first commercial video game <https://assignbuster.com/computer-games-and-violence/>

console that could be played in the home was released by Magnavox known as Odyssey. This game console could play a little over a dozen games by switching out a cardstock template on the system. During the same year, the Atari carted Pong, which is adapted from tennis game on the Odyssey and Tennis for Two. This is the first successful of the coin operated arcade video game.

In mid 1970, Fairchild Channel F is the second world home video games system with the first full-color video games that introduced by Fairchild Camera and Instrument. In 1976, Death Race is the first violence video game that introduced to the arcade game. In the same year, the first controversy about violence in video games developed after the introduction of the game Death Race according to the GameSport the “ Death Race was so aggressively rejected by the public that shortly after its release, Exidy pulled the game off store shelves. In the mid 1970’s and late 1970’s most video games were nonviolence games. Early 1980, the crash of the many products on shelves from different publisher and many company go out of business because “ a glut of poorly designed home video games flooded the American market, causing Atari to lose close to \$600 million. The plunge, which began in 1983 and fell another 60 percent in 1984, bottomed out in 1985, when video games seemed totally dead” (Kinder 88).

It wasn’t until 1984, Nintendo created the Famicom, short for family computer, and in 1985 they released it as the Nintendo Entertainment system with arcade games like Donkey Kong (Burnham61-63). This release of Nintendo Entertainment system quickly rivals the market of the video games by “ spending \$30 million in advertising to convince retailer and

consumers that their games were different” (Kinder 89). Since 1985 the video game and the Nintendo Entertainment system finally hit to the market again.

In the late 1980’s the video games were improve more sophisticated graphics and the violence were introduce as well, and since then tons of huge advances have been made in the realm of video games such as Sony’s PlayStation and Microsoft’s Xbox (Glazer 950)Early 1990, the first person shooter or shooting games are violent games that have become very popular, and are teaching and training children to kill human opponents, using new technology with very realistic handguns and bloodier and bloodier graphics.

According to Anderson and Bushman Mortal Kombat, Street Fighter, Doom, Night Trap, and Wolfenstein 3D, have become notorious for their depiction of blood, gore, vulgarity, and sound (354). For example, Mortal Kombat is a realistic fighting game using digitalized versions of real people. It also contained more blood in it then any other game before it. Since video game Doom, Mortal Kombat, street Fighter, Wolfenstein 3D and Night Trap were introduce and release for the home version, this become one of the main concerns among parents and politicians over the violent of video games.

And later on it becomes a big controversy about the graphics, sound and language that present in the video games. Since out society have controversial about the video games, then we have controversial that playing violent video games can affecting children’s physical and mental illness, creating more school problems and causing aggressiveness to children. This becomes one of the main concerns of many educators,

parents, politicians, and the government. Soon after the controversy of the violent in video games," In June 1994, Congress held hearing on whether to force makers of video games to rat their games for levels of violence and sex.

Congress ultimately agreed not to intervene after the video game industry promised to develop its own voluntary ratings system. Since late 1994, however, two separate ratings systems have been adopted by the industry; the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) uses a system based on age to label video games, while the Recreational Software Advisory Council (RSAC) uses a system based on content to rate software-based video games that are played on computers" (Industry Split Over Video Games Ratings).

The rating system that Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) is independently applies and enforces ratings, advertising guidelines, and online privacy principles adopted by the industry (ESRB web site). So the ESRB come up the rating system as follows symbol: early childhood (EC), everyone (E), everyone 10 and older (E10+), teen (T), mature (M), and adults only (AO).

The explanation of each symbol EC, it means content that may be suitable for age three and older, E, it contains no material that parents would find inappropriate and may be suitable for ages six and older, E10+, it contains minimal cartoons, fantasy or mild violence and infrequent use of mild language and may be suitable for ages ten and older, T, it contains more cartoon, fantasy or mild violence, mild language, and minimal suggestive themes and may be suitable for ages 13 and older, M, it contains violence, suggestive themes crude humor, minimal blood and infrequent use of strong

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language and may be suitable for persons ages 17 and older, and the last symbol is AO, it contains intense violence, blood and gore, sexual content, and strong language and should be only be played by persons 18 years and older (ESRB. com).

This lead to the Columbine High school shooting in 1999, there were two students name Eric Haris 18 years old and Dylan Klebold, 17 years old who kill twelve students and one teacher people, and then killed themselves (Key Event). It was not for certain why these tow students committed this gruesome act but a police investigation showed that both students were a fan of violence video game, Doom.

As the result of Columbine High school shooting, it leads to the controversy of the violence can effect the children's behavior. It is evident that violence in video games is a cause for increased aggression; along those same lines is how our youth is becoming desensitized to real life violence with the exposure to violent video games. The reaction to this, in 2000" The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) releases a report on the marketing of violent entertainment to children that was ordered after the Columbine shootings. It offers evidence that the video games to children, even though its own ratings system recommends against selling to them.

In addition, the FTC reports that undercover teenage shoppers were able to purchase games rated for older players 85% of the time. (Issues and Controversies)Mid- 1990 and early 20th century, as the years come and go, technology becomes faster, cheaper, and more powerful which cause video game technology to become more visually impressive and easier to mass-produce for the public on a global scale. Today, videogames are <https://assignbuster.com/computer-games-and-violence/>

unbelievable: they have accomplished unprecedented realism with a presentation perfectly resembling real life. Mid 1990 the Sony Computer Entertainment created the video game name PlayStation. It wasn't until early 2000 the Sony Computer Entertainment has redesigned the old version of PlayStation to PlayStation one or know as PSOne which is smaller and better video game console.

In the same year, the Sony Computer Entertainment also release second edition know as PlayStation 2, the successful of PS2 lead them to create the better graphic, and sound quality and release the PlayStation 3 in 2006. While Sony Computer Entertainment created the PS3, in 2005 Microsoft also release the first video game knows as Xbox 360 which has almost the same quality as PS3. Since we have a good video game console, the video game industries also know who their customer is. So they try to create the video game that fulfill with the customers want, because they know the population who play violence video games are increase and they want to earn a lot of money from this kind of video games. For example, in 2002 Grand Theft Auto has make a lot of profit on this video game and it also becomes the most popular video game of the years.

This video game lead to the concern of many parent, politicians, and the government because it contain some kind of violence which is you play as a gangster who steal cars, takes job to transport drugs, or even kill certain people and much more.

According to the ESRB, this video game has been labeled as rate M customers but it is still highly controversial that this kind of video game leads to the negative influence on children. Today, violent video games has

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been a hot issue over the United State even though we have a ESRB rating system for the buyer to view before purchase it such as BMX XXX, Manhunt, Doom III and etc. But the current rating system is not doing enough to help protect minors from obtaining mature material. It is time for a change, a tougher rating system to reduce the number of children who are exposed to violent video games at an early age