

The effects of mass media on society

[Sociology](#), [Violence](#)



Living in a society which depends mostly upon technology for news, entertainment and education, the mass media is one of the greatest influential factors on the opinions and viewpoints of the younger generation. Some examples of media influences include magazines, internet, television, books and radio. All of these sources help shape the beliefs of what social life, culture, religion, or politics should be in the minds of younger people, sometimes at unrealistic standards. The mass media is a very helpful and relatively quick way to gain knowledge and insight as to what is going on in the world, but as with anything else, where there are positive effects, the negatives will soon follow. " Youths now have access to more violent images than at any other time in United States history, and these images are available in a diverse array of electronic sources: television, movies, video games, and music. " (Alexander and Hanson 384) The mass media is becoming very powerful, maybe even beyond the point of sole entertainment. When it comes to the younger generation, the power and influence of the media isn't necessarily a good thing. The violence that the younger generation is exposed to on a daily basis seems to have a direct correlation to the rise of violence in society today. " It must be remembered and realized that if we are hateful and violent, both children and adults, but especially the children, will become the same or at least copy those response patterns of life and they will lie dormant within their psyche until a situation in life similar to where they learned the response pattern calls it forth. " (" Making copy of another: A Releasing Your Unlimited Creativity discussion topic") The violence portrayed on television, movies and video games may make children feel as if this type of behavior is the right way to conduct

themselves and lead to them mimicking the actions they witness. According to Alexander and Hanson, " Exposure to violent portrayals in the media can lead to subsequent viewer aggression through disinhibition. " (29) However, the immediate effects of exposure to media violence may vary due to factors unique to each witness, such as demographics. Demographics such as age and gender play a big role when determining the immediate effects of exposure to media violence. For example, younger boys are more naturally inclined to pay attention to the action and violence being shown on television and video games as opposed to little girls. Considering that the younger generation doesn't fully process many of the violent encounters they witness, it could cause them to naturally be curious, and imitate what is shown in the media without considering factors such as motives or consequences. Wealth and ethnicity can also help determine the immediate effects of media violence. Children from lower class families and minority children tend to watch more television than those who are more fortunate than them or are not a part of a minority, increasing their chances of being both exposed and more vulnerable to effects of media violence. As a result of the short-term effects of the exposure to violent content, long-term effects will soon follow. Children who are violent and aggressive at a young age more than likely won't improve as they grow older, creating a more violent and dangerous society. The effects of media violence on a person can be influenced by many factors, majority of them being harmful to both the child and society itself.