

# Research paper on should video games be censored

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



We live in a time where people can socialise/argue/fight online they can visit casinos and virtual strip clubs, they can shop and take tours of places online so what would be the point of restricting video games in terms of their sexual and violent content when films and television use that sort of content frequently and the internet can never be regulated?

My hypothesis is that sex and violence has been around since the dawn of time and censoring its influence in video games will do nothing but blind people to what real life and real expression is. The idea that someone can determine what can and cannot be seen is laughable considering adults should in theory decide that for themselves; it is paternalist for a governing body to protect us from what it is our right as free thinking individuals to see.

There are some entities that cannot be actors. These include taxonomic collectives such as 'men', 'women', 'white people', 'black people', etc; social classes; 'society' and 'the state'; and objects such as money, or written materials, natural disasters, diseases and so on.

### **Tim Owen (Social Theory and Human Biotechnology 2009)**

A game is not a person; it doesn't think, it doesn't make choices, it doesn't necessarily pose arguments. Any arguments it might pose or are injected in by the designers are subjective and open to interpretation. It's not an actor, it doesn't vote, it doesn't get drunk and it doesn't kill people or commit crimes.

A lot of controversy was raised around Grand Theft Auto 4 because you could hire prostitutes and then kill them after the virtual sex and get your money back. Obviously if this happened in real life this would be a heinous crime but

in a game it's purely logical; you paid money for a 'virtual' service that didn't really benefit you, the point of the game and being a criminal is money so why shouldn't you kill to get your money back? It seems nonsensical to play a criminal and then find yourself repulsed when they commit a crime. Does the life of one virtual prostitute have more meaning than the virtual money in a video game? I don't know about you but when I play GTA I don't feel the need to follow the speed limit, because it's a waste of time, so why should I obey any other laws in a virtual world centred on crime?

The police in the game don't chase you if you drive on the pavement as long as you don't run too many grannies over and even then you can just keep driving and even if you get caught you just get fined and get your guns taken away and if you die you go to hospital and have to pay a bill. This is something I'm doing in private; it doesn't hurt anyone, because it's not real. If I want to run over virtual grannies in the comfort of my own home, that's my business and if John Stuart Mill were alive he would agree with me.

“ The only freedom which deserves the name is that of pursuing our own good in our own way, so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs, or impede their efforts to obtain it. Each is the proper guardian of his own health, whether bodily, or mental or spiritual. Mankind are greater gainers by suffering each other to live as seems good to themselves, than by compelling each to live as seems good to the rest.”

— John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (1859)

GTA isn't bad, it's the devil that doesn't make you do anything, you chose to buy the game, you chose to play it, you could have put down the controller at any time but you didn't. GTA didn't make you do anything it just gives the

freedom to do everything, the game isn't necessarily immoral, it's just amoral or misanthropic, simply put; it just doesn't care. It doesn't make you kill prostitutes after 'employing their services' that idea was one born of the capitalist ideal of having something for nothing, which you brought into the game with you. Her virtual life meant less to you than the price of her service, which no one can fault you for because she wasn't real.

### **“ Games don't pose arguments, they present systems with which to interact”**

Chris Dahlen (video game critic)

GTA isn't the bible, it isn't telling you how to live, in fact it's doing the opposite and that's why it's controversial, because it lets you do whatever you want. It only failed in my opinion because it tried to imitate real life by splicing other mediums into it. I don't play games to watch TV, I watch TV to watch TV. It lost sight of the point of games to pastiche life rather than mimic life, because if we liked life that much we would just live it rather than play a game, so I think it got lost a little up its own arse and forgot that games are about fun and realism is just the canvas which we paint red.

We may not necessarily enjoy watching people suffer but still the subject of sex and violence fascinates us as most taboo subjects do and films allow us a neutral non-judgmental environment to play with these ideas of murder, crime and revenge (Brink 2013).

In that respect film lovers are more like sense explorers. Unfortunately people are savage in nature, the most popular forms of media are always those that glorify violence, but what's wrong with that? Every art form has savage origins before the television we had public executions and the

coliseum. If mindless violence is not entertainment, then what is? (Poole 2001)

The obvious worry is that people will learn or develop violent behaviour from watching a violent film or TV show but it's just information erections don't rape people, people rape people (Trickster, Brainscan 1994). The bottom line is that actually it makes no difference because it's just a fantasy, the people aren't real, their lives and deaths had no permanence because you can just watch the film again (Brink 2013).

**“ Movies don't create psychos. Movies make psychos more creative!”**

- Billy Loomis (Scream 1996)

Although the columbine shooters may have based their rampage loosely on the Matrix by wearing black trench coats and the classic pc game Doom was found to be one they played frequently that doesn't mean if neither the Matrix nor Doom existed the shooting wouldn't have happened. Films and games influence people but they don't decide people's actions. If not the matrix then another action movie, the idea of living in a dream world, tricked by a malevolent entity is by no means new, it originates from the sixteenth century French philosopher Rene Descartes and his ideas of the devil, but that is entirely beside the point.

To try and fasten any responsibility on art as the cause of life seems to me to put the case the wrong way around. Art consists of reshaping life but it does not create life, nor cause life. Furthermore, to attribute powerful suggestive qualities to a film is at odds with the scientifically accepted view that, even after deep hypnosis, in a posthypnotic state, people cannot be made to do

things which are at odds with their natures. (Stanley Kubrick 1972)

This quote, from Kubrick is regarding the spree of copy cat violence that occurred upon the release and subsequent ban of A Clockwork Orange.

Essentially what happened was criminals 'themed' crimes around the film or mimicked some of the crimes that happened in the film. The point is this is purely aesthetic; you don't watch a film one day and go live the life of a rapist gang member out of the blue, if you did do that it would have to have been something that you wanted to do regardless.

Films don't manufacture behaviour they don't alter people the only impact they have is on the aesthetic, so the film isn't the 'why' it's just the 'how'.

The only impact The Matrix had on the columbine killers was their choice of clothes, which seems like a moot point when the cause of their actions was their parents and their school ignoring the fact they were obviously being bullied not to mention the fact they were collecting guns. Not that I believe gun collecting precipitates shooting but what other uses do guns have?

On the surface the ban is understandable but what it boils down to is again, purely aesthetic. Yes they may have copied the clothes and the words but when a killer kills we shouldn't focus on the clothes he wears or the films he watches to explain why. Those things are only the window dressing of a disturbed mind. Films and other media can't actually implant murderous thoughts into people's heads.

Those are already there, films may if they do anything fan the flames, give them ideas but ideas are just ideas and to give up these ideas would be worse than just living with them. Would you really want to give up films like Clockwork Orange just to stop people copying them? Would it be worth just

destroying all films and all books and all plays and erase all history to do with any violence and sex just to destroy the slightest possibility that anyone might copy any of it. Violence and sex were around a long time before the invention of the television. People just want something to blame rather than accept that we're no better than animals really. Animals don't need any other reason for killing other than having nothing better to do or just wanting to.

In conclusion placing tougher restriction on Video games will not stop people becoming violent or stop children learning about sex because that's human nature and if they don't experience this sort of behaviour on television or films or on games, they'll read it in books in comics on the internet or see it around them. We can't put blinkers on children and we certainly can't put them on adults, sex and violence are real and by shielding people from it we just retard them socially. We side step these issues because they're inconvenient to talk about but really education and discussion is the only way to resolve tension around these subjects.

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