

Media violence essay example

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



Recent talks on media have continued to raise concerns about the content of mainstream broadcasting. The extent of violence has become an increasing concern for media critics and audience. In view of the perceived and documented evidence as to the effects of violent media, media content falls under rigorous scrutiny and intense analysis. A look at the debate between Senator John Jay and Joan E. Bertin reveals the kind of divergent views on this matter. Parents and the government have a key role in ensuring that children are not exposed to damaging media.

Scene one

Senator John asserts his continued concern about the increasing inclusion of violence and video programming in American media despite his questionings and appeals. His main concern has been the protection of American children from the negative effects of the violent content of media. He believes that the thousands of violent scenes the children see contribute negatively to their emotional and social health. Media have the power to inform, educate and entertain, however it is important to set limits. Further, Senator John expresses his fear for increased damaging effects of the violence in the face of advancing technology. For instance, mobile phones have continued to make access to violence faster and easier (Lyons).

Analysis of the argument

About the writer

Senator John is the chair of the senate Commerce committee and demonstrates conservative viewpoint on the subject of media violence. A strong proponent for collective responsibility of the society to protect,

preserve, promote fair media content, and to keep the children safe and healthy should be of primary focus (Lyons).

Implications of the argument

Key to note is that the government and all media practitioners have an imperative role in responding to media's violent contents. For instance, Senator John introduced a bill directing the National Academy of Sciences to conduct studies on the effects of violent programming and video games on the children. Media have crosscutting effects in the society, hence should be regulated to prevent its detrimental effects. Senator John bases most of his claims on his inherent beliefs, but he also admits to his lack of scientific evidence to the damage resulting from violent media (Lyons).

People affected by the topic

The topic of violent media content affects children, parents and the entire society. Hence, all major stakeholders need to take proper steps towards ensuring that the content of the media is censored (Lyons).

The writer's mode of appeal

In this article, Senator John appeals to the intellect, emotion, and collective consciousness of the audience to encourage them to make a critical observation of the question of media. The writer addresses his audience as having knowledge of the existing problem and seems to appeal mainly to the logic in order to establish common understanding.. As Senator John contends, it is crucial for everyone to have a keen eye on the content of media they expose themselves to. He vouches for increasing knowledge as a

means of developing better measures to contain the adverse impact of violent media on children (Lyons).

Second scene

On the other hand, Bertin argues in favor of violent content for the media. She seems to have a strong conviction on the potential of the media to express the reality. She supports her argument by appealing to literature and artwork on the topic, such as the Odyssey and works of Hansel and Gretel. She fails to reconcile how society responds harshly to the contemporary expressions of violence yet such expressions existed in ancient art and literature (Lyons).

Analysis of the second argument

What do you know about the writer?

Bertin is the executive director for the National Coalition against Censorship, hence a proponent of free media. Bertin certainly seems to have a liberalist inclination to the subject of media (Lyons).

Citations

Unlike Senator John, Bertin builds her argument with citations from various disciplines such as psychology. For instance, she quotes psychiatrist Fredric Wertham in supporting her claim for historical records of societal reprimands for emerging forms of expression. Additionally, she corroborates her school of thought using legal scenarios such as Supreme Court's view on studies of correlation between violent media and actual violence in society. She opposes any government efforts to reduce exposure of children to media violence. She claims that the idea of having a private industry group or

watchdog to dictate the taste for media industry is both chilling and implausible. Moreover, she considers the ratings as the major factors, which should influence the audience (Lyons).

How larger context affects understanding

I find Bertin's appeal to Federal courts somewhat outrageous. For instance, federal's courts description of pro-censorship sentiments demanding for control of children's media as quixotic and deforming (Lyons) are far-fetched. Federal courts have the authority in matters of jurisprudence, not in behavioral sciences. Hence, in my view, this citation is another fallacious orientation to the argument. In effect, Bertin uses appeal to Authority.

Implications

Bertin's argument implies that children should be allowed to interact with as much media violence as they want. However, this kind of argument grossly ignores scientific findings on the topic. For instance, a study conducted by Anderson and Brad on the effects of violent games on those who play them established that playing violent video games increases anti-social tendencies. Additionally, experimental and non-experimental field and laboratory studies in both females and males have linked violent video gaming with increased aggression (Anderson and Brad 355).

Mode of Appeal

Bertin's argument has a shade of appeal to vanity by claiming that novel forms of expressions have always caused arousals of bitter recriminations from society. I find this rather outrageous and absurd. She argues that the question of the kind of media to choose lies on the audience; hence, no one should impose any choice on another. This kind of thinking places me as a

reader in a villain's position and labels me as a helpless fellow who has no ability to cause constructive impact to society.

Conclusion

I believe that parents have a key role and responsibility of protecting their children and provide guidance on what is constructive for their children. Children need guidance and direction as they grow. Parenting involves choosing the right set of programming and media that applies to our children, failure to which we risk losing a generation to vices, crime, and violence. Media houses should be held responsible for the kind of programming they show, despite the need for freedom from interference. Government and those in authority should initiate minimum legal provisions, which safeguard and sanction all forms of negative media. In as much as people should have the freedom to choose what to watch, it is also prudent to consider that what we watch affects us and ultimately affects the entire society.

Works cited

Lyons, Christina. "Media Violence: Do children have too much access to violent content?". Should the entertainment industry be required to help reduce children's access to media violence?. 24. 7 (2014)

Anderson, Craig A., and Brad J. Bushman. "Effects of violent video games on aggressive behavior, aggressive cognition, aggressive affect, physiological arousal, and prosocial behavior: A meta-analytic review of the scientific literature." Psychological science 12. 5 (2001): 353-359.