

Is youtube to blame for teens doing dangerous stunts



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Every year, more than 14, 000 American children, under the age of nineteen die of accidental injury in the United State of America. Some point fingers at a certain website. Many believe that by hosting videos of people preforming hazardous stunts, YouTube is encouraging and promoting others to do the same. This website is YouTube, a website were many pursue the goal of becoming an Internet celebrity. Through the use of concise and clear evidence an individual can recognize that YouTube is not guilty of that accusation.

So the debate of whether YouTube is to blame comes up. However, to ignore any side of a quarrel would be unbecoming to both sides of the dispute. “ Many viewers, particularly teenagers are inspired by what they see and are eager to try it themselves, says family therapist Clair Mellenthin” (Page 11, “ YouDanger”). By hosting the dangerous videos YouTube can be to blame for the deaths of the youths, because that site is bringing one-upmanship to a new level and promoting other teens to try to out-do each other over the web.

In other words, by having the stunt videos on their website, YouTube is allowing teens a method of becoming notorious and revered for doing such a stunt, no matter what the cost. “ The peer pressure of doing something is greatly increased now that we can see what others are doing around the world” (Page 11, “ YouDanger”). To illustrate, a teen will ask themselves if they are “ cool” enough or if they are being as daring and adventurous as others around the world. They will ask themselves if they are really “ living”.

But soon those teens will come to one solution to their woes, performing a stunt that outdoes all the others and provides them fame and significance in their world. Nonetheless, the risk of doing aforementioned feats only prove to better the “ quality” of the video, the same way that an athlete is given reputation for performing their exceptional deeds. YouTube has also played a part in an outrageous and despicable thing. The “ Knockout game” (a “ game” is which the goal is to sneak up on and knock someone out) going viral on YouTube has resulted in others copying the acts in the video, thus resulting deaths of the innocent.

The affects of this “ game” can be linked to the fact that YouTube allowed the video to go viral (being circulated all over the internet quickly). YouTube claims to scour their website for “ illegal” and “ dangerous” activities. But to allow a video of teens viscously assaulting another, to gather over a million views? Even after the video was removed, the damage had been done, and a dangerous new trend had swept the nation. However, others say that it is not YouTube’s fault, but it is the teen’s brains that are to blame.

“ During adolescence, the area of your brain that seeks pleasure and reward is well developed. The area of your brain that controls judgment, the prefrontal cortex, is not explains Valerie Reyna, a psychology professor at Cornell University in New York” (Page 11, “ YouDanger”). So YouTube cannot be to blame for the underdeveloped brain of a teenager. “ Teens are simply more likely than adults to decide that a high-risk activity is worth it for the thrill Reyna continues.” (Page 11, “ YouDanger”)

She also explains that this and the hormones racing throughout a teen body and the natural desire for new experience, can lead to serious risk taking. To elaborate, the voice in ones head that says do it is louder than the one speaking of the dangers of what is about to happen. Surely, YouTube cannot be held liable for the decisions and growth problems that teens are undergoing? Furthermore, we cannot blindly assume that YouTube is the only video hosting website that houses the dangerous acts of underdeveloped teenagers.

For example, a popular video hosting application, " Vine" that despite the limitation of only a six second window, people have found a way to create thousands of deliberate self-endangering videos. One needs only to search on the Internet for " Vine stunts" and page after page of results will be revealed to the searcher. So say we get rid of YouTube, say that despite the evidence we erase all of YouTube, what is stopping the hundreds of thousands of other video hosting websites from stepping up and filling YouTube's shoes?

Truly to point fingers and lay blame to YouTube is to ignore the fact that YouTube is not the only website with stunt videos on it. Not to mention the fact that YouTube has only been around for nine years. To say that YouTube is to blame for teens performing dangerous stunts is to ignore all the hundreds of years people have been doing stupid stunts. In fact, " Some of the earliest Greek comedies featured characters being chased by wild animals, falling off stage, or smacking into walls" (Page 11, YouDanger).

Thus to accuse YouTube of teens performing those thoughtless and dangerous stunts is to disregard the history of the world in entertainment. At the end of the day, the conclusion one must reach is this, despite the shadow of doubt that YouTube has cast over them. The permitting of questionable videos on its website is unfortunate, but rather a website that has at least a method of signaling the staff (flagging a video) of a bad video, then a rouge site that is the metaphorical, wild west of the internet, to have YouTube's wide reach and influence.

So in the end we must not blame YouTube. We must not blame and accuse YouTube of these regrettable decisions made by the youth of our world. Rather, we must contemplate a method of preventing such accidents to happen, such as educating the teens before it is too late. In conclusion we must push not for blame on YouTube but for better understanding of what makes us commit the stunts and what can be done to stop ourselves and help others.