Videogames: harmless fun or harmful technology?

Technology

In today's world, technology is ever becoming the main heartbeat of our everyday lives. From the alarms on our phones that wake us up in the morning, to the electronic GAPS in our cars that gets us to our destinations, to the televisions we watch to distress after a hard days work, we are surrounded by electronic devices that aid us in both work and recreation.

In my personal life, I am Just as dependent on modern technology as the next person, and I am quickly noticing the effects this genealogy Is having on my children. Rarely does a day go by when my children don't ask to play on the computer, the Palpitation, or my smartened. Video-gaming has become such an integral part of their play time that a night without electronics leads to them complaining of being bored or having nothing to do even though their rooms are stuffed full of every toy imaginable.

A majority of their disputes arise from determining who gets to play Palpitation first and what game they are going to play when they are told to play together. My children were once creative In their free time, reading huge worlds with Logos and Hot Wheels or drawing Imaginative and unique pictures with paper and crayons. However, since the invasion of the Palpitation in our lives, they have lost their drive to play imaginatively and creatively. This habitual game time that my children are currently experiencing has lead me to question what effects these videotapes are having on my children.

The topic of videotapes and the effects on children has been hotly debated since video-gaming became a mainstream source of entertainment. Analysts, psychiatrists, and behaviorist's have been debating the positives

and negatives of playing videotapes ND what the long term effects are from videotape exposure. This leads me to my question: What are the effects of modern videotapes on young children's emotional, mental, and behavioral development and does playing videotapes hinder their ability to think abstractly and critically?

As I started researching the literature on videotapes and how they affect children, I came across an article In the Journal of Adolescence, written In 2004, that Is the perfect strung point for my Investigation. Video-gaming has an overall negative connotation in the publics eye due to the violence commonly present in this arm of entertainment. " The Effects of Violent Video Game Habits on Adolescent Hostility, Aggressive Behaviors, and School Performance" by Douglas Gentile, Paul Lynch, Jennifer Linden, and David Walsh takes this common public perception of video-gaming and puts It to the test.

The article explores the effects of video-gaming on school performance and aggression based on the content of the videotapes and amount of videotape play time. By using data found in previous studies, the article determines that content of videotapes and length of time that the videotapes are Ewing played (when replacing other time consuming activities, such as social interaction and homework) are significant factors that need to be tested when exploring the effects of videotapes on children . In addition, the article explored the in aggressive behavior in the video gamer.

After researching the behaviors and tendencies of six hundred and seven 8th and 9th graders throughout the study, the article revealed that (according to

the average results) the correlation between violent videotape exposure and an increase in aggressive behaviors within the video gamer was strongly confirmed. Furthermore, the test results revealed that with an increase in time spent playing videotapes there is a concurrent decrease in school performance. The study results didn't surprise me at all.

I can see similar effects in my own children with school performance and aggression. I can see how, by displacing time to do more efficient activities such as reading or schoolwork, the time spent playing videotapes can negatively affect school performance. However, playing the doubter, I question how accurate children surveys can actually be. Without actually testing the content of each videotape played and the immediate effects of laying the videotape, how are the testers supposed to accurately measure a rise in aggressive tendencies?

While reviewing the Journal article I find myself wondering where the parents are in all of this. Where is the moderation and the limitation of videotape playing? Without guidance and restriction from a parent, the children are playing what they want when they want, which causes negative side effects throughout the child's whole life. Their mental development is being put on hold so they can waste their time and their minds playing a videotape. After dissecting the aforementioned study, I researched further into what additional effects videotapes could have on children.

This exploration lead me to find an article in the Research in Education, Number 90 Journal titled " Attitudes Towards and Effects of the Use of Video Games in Classroom Learning with Specific Reference to Literacy

Attainment" that explores using videotapes as teaching aids within the classroom. The basis for the article's research is the premise that students want to play videotapes rather than do traditional schoolwork or use computers for word processing . The literacy deed to play videotapes and the exposure to new ideas and concepts makes videotapes an ideal platform for learning.

The results of the study showed that 79. 1% of students and 77. 5% of teachers believe that learning can be achieved through the use of videotapes (Missus, Vela and Camille). Those who were exposed to videotapes as a learning tool throughout a school course showed a significant increase in proficiency in English as a Second Language compared to those who took the same course through a normal lesson plan . This study shows that videotapes can actually help children develop mentally as long as the ideograms are regulated and formatted to encourage learning with proper guidance.

After discovering how videotapes can be a viable option for schools to use as a learning tool, I moved on with my research to discover whether videotapes themselves (without school formatting) have an effect on children's ability to think critically and abstractly. My research lead me to two different sources that delved into the issue of technology and critical thinking. The first source was an editorial in the Journal of Advancing Technology written by Ronald T.

Floyd and titled " Are We Losing the Ability to Think Abstractly? Floyd writes that today's generation of teenagers and young adults are dependent on technology, causing them to become socially isolated, destroying their ability

to think critically and abstractly, and continues to examine the complex effects of videotapes and reasons that with the safe and contained environment that videotapes provide, there is no need to think or reason in any manner other than the " button-selection" line of reasoning that videotapes teach us .

Floyd writes that with the advancement of technology the thought process changes from one generation to the next, causing our elders to come electronically illiterate and our youth to lose their ability to think and reason abstractly . The second article I came across dealing with technology and critical thinking is titled, " Is Technology Producing A Decline In Critical Thinking And Analysis? The article goes into depth on how activities that build the minds ability to think critically and imaginatively, such as reading for pleasure, have declined over the years while other activities that build our visual skills, such as playing videotapes, have seen a significant rise over the same period of time . The article lids a case for visually based methods to test the knowledge of our students in order to discover what they truly know. This is due to the fact that our youth is so in tuned with technology that they are losing the ability to be proficient with the written word .

The data and opinions held within these two articles concerning the effects of technology on the critical thinking and abstract thought of today's youth makes me wary to let any of my children play videotapes. While videotapes are not solely to blame for our children's loss of the same critical and abstract thought processes that he generations before them had, it is frightening to see the correlation researched and confirmed. Through my

exploration of whether videotapes are a positive or negative power in the lives of children, I have seen both sides of an intensely complex issue.

There are so many variables that affect the studies and their data when testing the effects videotapes have on children. The involvement of parents and other authority figures greatly affects how children are effected by the videotapes they play. Even with parent involvement, what games children play, either educational or violent, can have many various effects on the way any child reacts physically or mentally. In addition, the loss of the ability to think critically and abstractly in today's youth is a frightening revelation.

In conclusion, my research has led me to believe that videotapes are detrimental to children as forms of entertainment, and should be closely monitored in order to reduce the negative effects videotapes can have on our children.