

Violent mediaassignment assignment



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Gerard Jones is quite a fan of The Hulk and Tarzan comic books. In his essay “Violent Media is Good for Kids” Jones argues that the violence in those and other comics teach valuable lessons that will help children understand difficult emotions. Jones states that in “try (ing) to protect our children from their own feelings and fantasies, we shelter them not against violence but against power and selfhood.” Throughout the essay Jones relies on personal anecdotes that reveal his opinions about violence in comics and other media instead of citing formal research.

Jones’ personal experience is that violent media is not generally harmful, and fills an important place in childhood imagination and play. It is true that as children we find ourselves in a confusing world of constant conflict, and every child takes a different road to self discovery. A child who is biting playmates or siblings at the age of 5 will not respond to media violence in the same way as a child who is still wetting the bed. Do all children need to play Halo and Assassin’s Creed to understand violence in a ‘safe’ manner?

Certainly not; however, these games affect the children who play them because they may create more confusion about if and when it is okay to kill, maim or steal in life outside the video world. Throughout Jones’ essay the facts of his personal life as a child and a father are presented as proof that the violence in comic books lead to moral growth and understanding, but his compelling stories constitute no more than one person’s opinion. There is no research that would provide a secure basis for creating social policy. Jones provides a consistent narrative rhythm throughout his essay, filled with personal anecdotes that support his thesis.

It is clear to the reader that, in Jones' case, violent fiction served a positive function; for many readers I would imagine this ?? brings back nostalgic memories of their own favorite comic book superhero. I think back to which Disney princesses I liked best as a kid and what books I fell madly in love with. As a child growing up as part of the " Harry Potter Generation" I was thrilled, excited and terrified by the violence almost as much as by the magic in the stories. I never thought of myself as someone who used media violence to strengthen my self image, but when Hermione punched Draco Malfoy I absorbed the lesson that, as a girl, it was okay to stand up for myself. Although the essay only shows one perspective I identify with the point of view Jones brings to the table. A common theme in all comic books is that every hero is born with a weakness that they must overcome. This feeling of needing to overcome a personal fault is a feeling that most kids I know can relate to, so that even if the comic is about people from Xandar and Strontia[1], we understand the source of the conflicts within the characters' psyches.

Jones focused on the violence, and how it helped him cope with his repressed anger. I think another lesson that Jones missed is how much pride can affect development, and how being able to fight back and win at the appropriate time affects your sense of justice in the world and your self-esteem. The concept of finding one's self and bringing about the best version of that self is Jones' focus throughout his essay. Jones finds a way to focus on the concept that rage is a normal human experience that we must explore so that we can understand all aspects of ourselves.

He quotes Dr. Melanie Moore who says “ Children need violent entertainment in order to explore the inescapable feelings that they’ve been taught to deny, and to reintegrate those feelings into a more whole, more complex, more resilient selfhood. “[2] The building of a resilient character is a goal that most parents set for their children. The complexities come from the uncertainty about whether the violent video games and The Hulk comic books of Jones’ youth are teaching lessons to achieve this development.

According to many scientists the violence in video games, movies and television is changing the way people see violence. Social psychologist Brad Bushman at Ohio State University showed students violent pictures as part of a study: one picture was of a man shoving a gun down another man’s throat; another was of a man holding a knife to a woman’s throat. “ What we found is for people who were exposed to a lot of violent video games, their brains did not respond to the violent images,” Bushman said. “ They were numb, if you will. “[3]

I believe that this numbness is what the concern about violence in the media is based on. It concerns society because of the potential threat to society posed by learned violence. Chris Ferguson, a psychologist at Texas A&M International University said “ Many of the games do have morally objectionable material and I think that is where a lot of the debate on this issue went off the rails, we kind of mistook our moral concerns about some of these video games, which are very valid ??? and then assumed that what is morally objectionable is harmful. [4] I personally find it hard to view the Tarzan comic books that got Jones’ son to climb a tree in the same category as Call of Duty. I think that the potential impact of much media has been

exaggerated. Towards the end of his essay Jones mentions that he cannot argue that violent media is completely harmless saying “ I think it [violent entertainment] has helped inspire some people to real-life violence. I am going to argue that it’s helped hundreds of of people for every one it’s hurt, and that it can help far more if we learn to use it well. “

If we choose to see violent media as a potential tool instead of as a weapon of societal destruction we may learn to harness it in ways that benefit children. Learning to use violent media in a beneficial manner may lead us to find new ways to help our children overcome their fears and release their feelings of rage and fear instead of holding them inside until they explode. In his childhood and as a father Jones has been using comic books as an outlet, giving himself and his son the ability to be someone else in order to overcome their fears and faults.

Violent media is not the only way to achieve this, and it will not work for every child but it may help some who are struggling. Repressing feelings of rage and fear will always be the wrong move, because humans need to release their feelings in order to maintain mental and emotional health. Many people will naturally find their balance as they get older, but sometimes a child cannot wait. The most important thing to come from this debate, and Jones’ article, is that sheltering children from their natural emotions will not be beneficial to themselves or to society.

We must learn how to use violent media in order to help them find their self-identity as well as to establish a secure moral compass. To that end, I would like to learn more about Power Play, the program Jones said that he

developed with Dr. Moore. I would like to know whether and how “ combative storytelling” is helping children “ improve their self-knowledge and sense of potency. ” ————— [1] Marvel Comic Books [2] Gerard Jones, “ Violent Media Is Good For Kids” [3] Shankar Vedantam, “ It’s A Duel: How Do Violent Video Games Affect Kids? ” [4] Shankar Vedantam, “ It’s A Duel: How Do Violent Video Games Affect Kids? “