

Acts is the period
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fundamental



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Acts of violence among young persons have been making headlines for some time now. While many associate boys to the acts, shocking statistics reveal that girls are increasingly committing violent acts. The purpose of this essay is to give an overview of Dr.

Garbarino's *See Jane Hit: Why Girls are Growing more Violent and what We can Do About it*. It also seeks to address the book's reaction on gender and how violence and aggression affects society. It seeks to answer the following questions; Is it a good thing that girls are more violent and does that mean we have achieved same level of fairness in the difference between boys and girls? In what ways does American society glorify or reward people for aggression? Is girls; aggression something American society should take seriously? The author takes a captivating look at girls becoming aggressive - from the physical attributes of self assurance visible in healthy girls to criminal aggression in distressed girls. In a society which increasingly believes in equality among all, girls are putting aside their ladylike nature in pursuit for freedom. He exposes an alarmingly escalating trend of violence in America's girl child. According to Dr.

Garbarino, there is an increasingly narrowing gap between criminal violence perpetrated by young boys and young girls as opposed to some years back. The New more physical American Girl has emerged with the capability to assert herself that surpasses unlawful attack. Girls are making headway in sports, their display of passion, their obvious love for conventional or 'acceptable' aggression and the assurance that comes with accomplishments and sense of possession.

While he applauds the positive aggression portrayed by the liberal New American girl, his main concern lies with the rising breed of violent girls. He reckons that the overall towering figures of violence in the girl child is an inadvertent result of the conventional rise in ordinary girls becoming physical and growing more opinionated. The so called "empowerment" is the root of this aggression.

Through different research perspectives, he finds answers to the problem. Research indicates that a big majority of children do not go through these dramatic character transformations during adolescence. They simply become bigger, more mature translations of what they were as children. Childhood is the period during which the fundamental behavioral tendencies come out. What happens in childhood presents a basis for future behavior. Children who have problems with attachment face difficulties in handling relationships as adolescents. It follows then that violent youth were destructive children. The encounters with transformations that come with puberty increase the anxiety about individual appearance and this affect self esteem.

Teenagers also contend with peer issues. When children enter adolescence stage, the inclination to give in to peer influence increases, making them susceptible to exaggerated responses. Adolescence brings with it changes in loyalties in that focus moves from devotion to parents to peers. The cultural components of peer behavior become important. Research shows that notable aspects of peer behavior like antagonism and self harm can be carried from childhood to adolescence. This state of affairs can explain the increasing use of violence in the New American Girl. In particular, the escalating predicament of violent female adolescents is largely not because

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non-violent girls have learnt to be more domineering when they become adolescents. The extent of violence and assertiveness may change during adolescence but the foundation for aggression lie in childhood, not in the progressive changes associated with adolescence.

The foundation for female violence was put in place years ago; conflict, poverty, bias, segregation, poor grades at school as a result of child abuse, negligence and crime serve to promote aggression. Girls are merely catching up with the boys. Garbarino also analyzes the role of mass media in perpetrating violence among young people. The American society clearly approves of violence while today's girls are keenly listening and watching.

He scrutinizes the conventional origin of the way girls should be like and their increasing dissatisfaction with depending on others for acknowledgement. He settles the argument by proposing that girls be positively aggressive and society ought to regard them favorably in a positive and conventional way like they do boys. Girls require an explicit personality, a feeling of firmness, spirituality and beneficial adult influence in their lives. He concludes that no matter how aggressive the girls are, this violent trend can be stopped. He calls for universal support and intervention from the whole community before the situation gets worse.

My opinion

To a large extent I concur with Dr. Garbarino that there is indeed more aggression among girls of today; verbally and physically. Our children are losing their simplicity and naivete.

American culture has many selfish, manipulative and harmful ingredients to the young ones. Violence is being disseminated at an alarming rate among children. The sad part though is that this violence is not only directed towards others but to themselves as well. Violence experienced in home, schools and recreational facilities coupled by the one perpetrated through the media is having far more reaching outcomes in our children. Nearly all homes in America access TVs. The kind of programs and shows aired centre largely on sexual orientations, stereotype roles of men and women and commercials. Most of these programs portray violent images that exalt killings, abuse and violent sex for instance ' The X-files', ' X-men', ' The Simpsons', and the whole sci-fi ' action' shows and the ' show of might' portrayed in their content. TV violence is thus eroding values in our children, substituting them with the worst things imaginable.

Our children are not only watching them all but they are learning as well. They learn and absorb violence as a normal part of ' surviving' in our morally decaying world. Children feel " unaffected" with violence and slowly by slowly accept violence as a normal way or getting things done in society. They begin to see themselves in TV characters and ape them. Compared to other generations, young girls are expecting less in relationships. Majority have grown resentful.

The girl child is getting the information that she can be physically powerful outside the sexual context. This transformation is due to the freedom from the conventional feminine restrictions. Girls are now adopting survival strategies in our society that upholds and exalts the application of violence in almost everyway. Our society is getting more permissive by the day.

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Extreme feminists' ideologies that tell girls that sexism undermines them alongside the culture that they are entitled to equal rights combine to wreck havoc on the already weakened moral fabric.

Our society inclines to let girls go scot free and makes them believe they are victims of violence. This gives them the leeway to commit more crimes as they feel entitled to vent their frustration with the ' unjust' world. The fact that they are not held responsible for their actions prompts them to act in extreme ways like in the instances discussed by the author. Women are increasing their accomplishments in various spheres of life by use of physical aggression since it works for men too Adults are now presented with the challenge of guiding and bringing up these girls. They are not ready to make the young girls understand the parameters of violence. Men fear of this being construed as sexual harassment while women look on and appreciate the " freedom". Consequently, girls lack the supervision and the sense of direction that is required to grow up and manage their feelings. They end up destroying their lives and those of others.

While men are by nature more violent than women, women are more so capable of being equally violent today. I also concur with his premises pertaining to girls oral and relation aggressive abilities. This has always been the conventional female means of getting what they want or where they want to go. This type of aggression happens to be increasing too. Men have overtime devised ways to exercise control and take responsibility of their actions. Our society is yet to successfully adapt itself to the immense power it has bestowed on women and ask women to the responsibility of the power they possess. That ought to change. Just as boys are taught the gentlemanly

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way of never laying a hand on a woman regardless of the offense, girls should also be taught so.

They should not just be taught defense mechanisms. They should learn that there is no justification for violence and that crime has a price. Justified aggression harms just like the other. We can all express ourselves freely but the means we choose to use matter and we should not expect someone to always defend our actions. The issue of female violence should be taken seriously though it should not be blown out of proportion.

Remedial action should be taken now before it becomes unmanageable in the near future. Girls should be given support by the community and our religions. They should not be left to their own demise as it will not just affect them but the society at large. Role models ought to be there for our girls to emulate. To some, the issue of violence in the American girl may seem overstated but there is some truth in it nevertheless.

Violent crime has been escalating since 1960s and though there may have been notable decreases in the 1980s, the crimes have since changed in their constitution. Teenagers are increasingly engaging in violence and the past ten years has been but a succession of armed gangs and drug dealing. Juvenile crime poses a great danger to public safety our society today.

Thousands of children from fatherless homes and declining localities are hitting our streets every year. I can attest to this as I live in a populous section of one of the largest metropolitans and I can say that there are girl gangs in our town. Our city's juvenile arrest records indicate that while girls appear less violent than boys, they are nevertheless involved. Most of the

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men arrested for violence claim to be involved with aggressive women. However, I don't think I share his supposition that female involvement in sports has facilitated the aggression to spread to other areas outside the field.

Positive aggression should be encouraged as long as the channels are creative, helpful and productive. He provides no real linking figures to ascertain this assumption. His evidence looks unreliable and cannot therefore be used as a basis for generalization.

All is not lost though as Dr. Garbarino advances helpful ideas through which aggressive dispositions can be directed for the better. Protective factors can be taken to remedy the problem as the author discussed. They are worth trying. Similarly, our society should provide role models that our children can look up to for mentorship.

Parents need involve themselves more in their children's upbringing and this brings into focus the issue of family strengthening and the role of good parenting. The family unit ought to be preserved as it is the beginning of most of the problem we encounter in society today. While the debate on whether or not girls' crime is on the increases rages on, what we should be asking ourselves is; what is happening with our children? Dr.

Garbarino offers a very intriguing perspective into female violence, something which was never openly acknowledged. He presents an eye-opening discourse about the alarming issue progression of criminal aggression among girls. Garbarino illustrates this really well.

The book goes a long way in informing our society on the changing times and offers solutions to make it a better place for all of us