

Violence in society essay

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



Introduction

For many centuries, violence was part of life. Our ancestors achieved most of their goals through violence, ranging from the need for freedom, to protection of property, to self-defense. Gladiators used violence as entertainment. Spectators gathered in coliseums and enjoyed this violent form of entertainment. In ancient Rome, for example, people would be thrown to hungry wild animals while spectators watched as punishment for their crimes and as a lesson to others who may consider these crimes. Many people found this entertaining. They would gather to watch as the animals devoured the helpless victims, and even look forward to the sessions. Although many people in the modern society condemn these acts, not much has changed. Instead of watching these horrific acts in coliseums, people gather in front of their television sets to watch violent acts every day, ranging from boxing matches, MMA Cage Fighting, to very violent movies, and even cartoons; some of which seem very innocent. For example, the film “ I Saw the Devil” depicts extreme forms of violence meted on the people by a serial killer. The secret agent on a revenge mission also murders innocent people but the audience still sides with him. Although violence experienced in the society today is not as the result of the violence on screen or in pop music rather it is a symptom of deeper society decay, this not entirely true because the violence in the media affects people to a great extent.

People and violence

In her essay “ Exposing Ourselves in South Park,” Tessa Sproule says that her initial reaction to the cartoon South Pak was disgust. Their crude

animation, obnoxious characters and low punch lines did not impress her. The main characters in the cartoon are Cartman, Stan, Kenny and Kyle. These are ten-year-old children, attending the 4th grade. They smoke in order to be different. Cartman is obese and has a passionate hatred for blacks, foreigners, and Jews. Stan has attempted to murder Cartman, who happens to be his friend. Kyle is a Jew. This makes him feel like an outsider. Kenny is very poor and is often found in situations where he is dying or likely to die. He also commits serious crimes like prostitution. All these children have been arrested at some point in their lives. Sproule admits that the cartoon soon grew on her, although she was opposed to it initially. This shows how effective the media can be; it depicts small children in inappropriate acts, and this may influence the viewers' thinking and behavior.

Clothing and violence

Through television screens, society is exposed to violence every day. The media also influences what people wear. It influences fashion trends all over the world. Katha Pollitt notes in her essay on “ The Smurfette Principle”, how females are normally depicted with inequality in cartoons. The female in the cartoon is depicted as a little-sister type, or a bunny dressed in pink, which simply follows the adventurous badgers and bears. This shows the female as vulnerable and weak. Her clothes are simply decorative, with the pink dress making her look powerless and vulnerable. Females in cartoons are dresses in pink to make them look like princesses in need of a hero to save them. In movies, women tend to be portrayed as sexual objects. In the movie, “ Dead in Tombstone”, there is a scene women dressed in strapless corsets, with red

scarves on their necks. The red color has been used for a sexualizing effect in the media, to represent sensuality in women. The clothes worn by the women in this movie draw a lot of attention from the men in the movie. The corsets are meant to bustle the bust, making them more eye-catching. One man is often seen kissing and hugging two women, with both of them being skimpily dressed. These are disrespectful roles played by women in today's media, leaving the youths with the message that their physical attractiveness is dependent on sexy clothing. This has given young girls with the wrong ideas about sexuality. It also exposes them to danger as they appear vulnerable and are exposed by their skimpy outfits. This has contributed to an increase in rape cases and violence against women.

Language and violence

The media has created enmity between native English speakers and people from other nationalities. It has made the English language appear superior to other languages. By so doing, people have come to believe that our differences make other people from non-English speaking countries are our enemies, instead of learning from them. Our society is contributing to enforcing this sad reality. People come from other countries under different circumstances, and not all of them are our enemies. Leaving one's country to live in a foreign nation is very difficult. It is also very difficult to speak a foreign language as perfectly as the natives do, but much worse to receive negative treatment and considered ignorant for having difficulties in communicating perfectly with others. In Amy Tan's essay "Mother tongue," she explains that her mother had 'limited' English, and this limited her perception of her. She was very ashamed of her and her poor English. She

believed that the quality of her English was a reflection of the quality of what she was saying. The media has significantly contributed to this type of thinking. This message does not only come from violent movies, but also in many other forms and in some of the least expected scenarios. What may appear as satirical comedy for some may be seen as cruel and even soul-destroying for others. An example of this is seen in the movie “ Jack and Jill.” In this movie, there is only one Mexican, and he is a gardener; he has a very strong Mexican accent. He often repeats the phrase “ I’m kidding, I’m kidding”, and this makes him look quite ignorant. The manner in which he speaks also contributes to this. His words do not reflect much intelligence. This may not necessarily mean that he is not intelligent, but he could be limited by the lack of proficiency in the English language. The manner in which he is depicted is very offensive to people of this culture. From offending one culture, the movie goes on to attack another culture by saying, “ you don’t look homeless to me, you’re fat! You’re Al Qaida!” this movie shows the worst image of people of Arabic descent, creating animosity in the society. The language used by the media, unfortunately, is communicating a wrong message, thus preventing young people in this nation from developing to their full potential, and appreciating other cultures.

Props and Violence

American children are exposed to guns, knives, bombs, rifles, and other weapons of mass destruction. This is done through video games, music videos and movies. These images continue to ring in the minds of the audience, forming cruel memories. Paul Campos, in his essay, “ Modern Witch Hunts Fueled by Irrational Fear, Media,” stated that some of the fears

in society are based on imaginary things. One example of this is the violent movie by the name " You're next." In this movie, a gang invades a home. These masked murderers come upon the Davison family, and kill most of the members of the family with machetes, axes, bows and arrows. To their surprise, one of the guests of the family proves to be a more talented killer than they are. She is very violent, and goes as far as sticking a blender on the head of one of the gang members and killing him. From this message, a person who was not previously a killer can become one if forced by circumstances. This message does not leave room for rational thinking. This very same person advises the others to grab anything they can and make it a weapon. Movies like these give young people the impression that violence can be condoned and that it is even okay to be violent some of the time.

Conclusion

The media is a very powerful force. It is the messenger sent to communicate when new music videos arrive, when fashion trends change, when new games are out for sale, and when new movies are produced. Americans are letting the media shape their very lives. Various characters in these violent movies today give American lessons on values and morals. The media is responsible for how Americans dress, the type of music they listen to, and how they talk. The media has gone as far as influencing how some citizens of American think, and there is absolutely no doubt that the media is responsible for most of violence seen in our society.