Effects of Media Violence

The Copycat Phenomenon

Imitation of exact behaviors depicted in the media

> The Doomsday Flight (1966)
  Altitude bomb (5000 feet above sea level)

> The Burning Bed (1984)
  An estranged housewife murdering her husband while he slept

> Natural Born Killers
  Two you people on a killing spree to gain publicity

Eight myths about video games:

1. The availability of video games has led to an epidemic of youth violence.
2. Scientific evidence links violent game play with youth aggression.
3. Children are the primary market for video games.
4. Almost no girls play computer games.

A causal (cause-and-effect) relationship:

Some activity that has an effect on people

- cigarettes can cause cancer
- a steady diet of double-doubles, fries and shakes can cause obesity

Eight myths about video games:

5. Because games are used to train soldiers to kill, they have the same impact on the kids who play them.
6. Video games are not a meaningful form of expression.
7. Video game play is socially isolating.
8. Video game play is desensitizing.
Crime survey

Question #1
In any given week, what are the chances that a person will be involved some kind of violence?
A. Less than 1%  D. 7% to 10%
B. 1% to 3%  E. 11% to 15%
C. 4% to 6%  G. greater than 15%

A. Less than 1%

Question #2
What percentage of all working males in the U.S. are in law enforcement or some other kind of crime detection/prevention?
A. Less than 1%  D. 7% to 10%
B. 1% to 3%  E. 11% to 15%
C. 4% to 6%  F. greater than 15%

A. 1%

Question #3
Of all the crimes that occur in the U.S. in any year, what proportion are violent crimes such as murder, rape, robbery and assault?
A. Less than 1%  D. 7% to 10%
B. 1% to 3%  E. 11% to 15%
C. 4% to 6%  F. greater than 15%

D. 10%

Why do most American say crime is a major problem in the country today?

TV programs

Question #1
In any given week, what are the chances that a person will be involved some kind of violence?

Less than 1%

61% of the people we see on TV are involved in some kind of violence.
**Question #2**  
What percentage of all working males in the U.S. are in law enforcement or some other kind of crime detection/prevention?  

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12% of the people we see on TV work in law enforcement or related fields.

**Question #3**  
Of all the crimes that occur in the U.S. in any year, what proportion are violent crimes such as murder, rape, robbery and assault?  

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

77% of the crimes we see committed on TV are violent crimes.

---

**Cultivation Ratification**  

- the effects of TV on viewers  
  > heavy viewers are affected by what they see  
  > they see the world more dangerous than it really is

**Albert Bandura's social learning theory**  

- Emphasized the importance of rewards and punishments  
- 2 groups of children watched 2 different videos  
  Video 1: Aggressive action was rewarded  
  Video 2: Aggressive action was not rewarded  

Findings:  
Children who saw aggressive behavior rewarded were more likely to imitate the aggression

---

**Leonard Eron and Rowell Huesmann's long-term studies**  

- Tracked over 800 children from around the age of 10 for 20 years  
  Tendency for children who watched higher levels of TV violence to have higher scores on the ratings of aggressive behavior and more trouble with the law later in life  
  But not every adult who watched large amounts of TV violence later became involved in crimes  

Research potentially linked media violence to real-life violence
Brandon Centerwall’s research
In 1945, just before TV was introduced in U.S., the homicide rate was 3 killings per 100,000 people.
In 1974, after 25 years of TV, the rate was 6 killings per 100,000 people.

Conclusion: TV was the major culprit in the rise of homicides.

Seymour Feshbach’s Catharsis Hypothesis
Viewing TV violence could be therapeutic for a person filled with anger.
Catharsis – To cleanse or purge; to get rid of.
Media violence was actually a positive thing.

Leonard Berkowitz and associates’ priming analysis
Angry people and media violence make for volatile mix.
Offered the explanation of the facilitating / priming effect of media violence.
Understood in terms of association.
Process whereby one thing you think about reminds you of other things in your mind that you associate with the first thing.

Three conclusions about priming:
1. Violence can prime thoughts that are related to hostility.
2. Media violence might prime thoughts that lead some people to believe that aggressive behavior might be warranted in certain situations and might bring about certain benefits.
3. Media violence might prime tendencies to take action that cause people to be more inclined to act violently.

Desensitization
Violence in the mass media make us numb to violence in real life.

Evidence of desensitization:
> Anecdotal – movie sequels have more violence than original movie.
> Research – observe children’s reactions after they watched either violent or non-violent programming.
> Research – observe adults’ reactions after they watched either violent or non-violent programming.
Action movies have international popularity
> They’re simple and universally understood
> “Short-on-dialogue, high-on-testosterone” makes their dubbing or translation relatively inexpensive
> They don’t require complex plots or characters
> They rely on fights, killings, special effects and explosions to hold their audiences

Factors that make people susceptible to negative effects of TV violence:
► The perpetrator is an attractive role model
► Violence seems justified.
► Violence that goes unpunished
► Minimum consequences to the victim
► Violence that seems real to the viewer

1. Inception
2. How to Train Your Dragon
3. Toy Story 3
4. The Social Network
5. Tangled
6. Kick-Ass
7. Shutter Island
8. Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1
9. Scott Pilgrim vs. the World
10. The Town