

# **DOES MEDIA MATTER ?**

PARENTS! How many MURDER SIMULATORS does YOUR CHILD play with?

A "murder simulator" is any game in which the goal is for the player to kill a human figure, and receive points for each "kill." If your child were playing a rape simulator or a sex simulator, would you tolerate it?

Has YOUR CHILD learned to associate pleasure with human death and suffering?

It is most likely safe to say that parents are unaware of the extent to which interactive games reward their youngsters with points and congratulations for sadistically torturing and killing human figures. Three examples:

! One game gives the player options of asphyxiating their victims, impaling them on sticks to roast them over the flames till they explode, or plunging them into icy water till they beg for mercy, turn blue, and drown.

! Another game called "Postal" gives points for killing innocent citizens in a town.

! "Project Justice" is set in a High School. According to the review in the Toronto Star, the game pits bullies against geeks, "then it has you pummel each other until somebody dies. Then it assigns you some more enemies."

**In a very mild analogy, here's an interesting question:**

**Q:** "What if, every time I make the puppy cry, you give me a cookie?"

Does YOUR CHILD have AVIDS? (Acquired Violence Immune Deficiency Syndrome)

Repeated exposure to media violence "destroys your violence immune system and conditions you to derive pleasure from violence." (Dave Grossman, On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society, pg xviii)

DID YOU KNOW...??

**K** The data linking VIOLENCE IN THE MEDIA to VIOLENCE IN SOCIETY are superior to the data linking TOBACCO and CANCER! (in Stop Teaching Our Kids to Kill, Grossman and DeGaetano, pp.24-25)

**K** Media executive Ted Turner concedes, "Television violence is the single most significant factor contributing to violence in America" (CA Senate, Resolution on Media Violence, May, 1999)

**K** CBS Pres. Leslie Moonves was asked if he thought the media had anything to do with the Columbine High School shootings in Littleton. His answer: "Anyone who thinks the media has nothing to do with it is an idiot."

**K** A TV executive who knows all about the link between media and violence has this plan: "His own in-house people have advised him to protect his child from the poison his industry is bringing to America's children. He is not going to expose his child to TV until she's old enough to learn how to read. And then he will select very carefully what she sees. He and his wife plan to send her to a daycare center that has no television, and he plans to show her only age-appropriate videos." ([http://www.killology.com/art\\_trained\\_nonviolent.htm](http://www.killology.com/art_trained_nonviolent.htm))

**K** The 2001 Surgeon General's Report states, "Research to date justifies sustained efforts to curb the adverse effects of media violence on youth."

**K** Historically---over the centuries, until the Vietnam War---soldiers have shown a healthy reluctance to kill members of their same species.

**Q: What changed that?**

A: The military accomplished that by changing from "bulls eye targets" to "killing simulators" with pop-up, realistic targets in marksmanship training. In recent years they have begun using video game simulators, and the US Army even uses a modified version of the old Nintendo "Duck Hunt" game, exchanging a plastic M-16 for the plastic pistol, and having man-shaped targets instead of ducks on the screen. The army calls this the "Multipurpose Arcade COMBAT SIMULATOR," and it is no different from the games your kids play. The goals are to make killing a conditioned reflex, as well as to desensitize soldiers to the pain and suffering they inflict.

MORE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

**Q: Do all kids who play with murder simulators become murderers?**

A: No. But there is sufficient proof that violent interactive video games---and other forms of violent media, as well---have been the factor that pushed a number of at-risk youth over the edge. See real-life examples on the back of this sheet.

**Q: Does playing with murder simulators help the players become better, more humane, compassionate, caring, creative human beings?**

A: No! Think of it as "junk food for the mind," at best; when a child or youth spends time and emotional energy involved with these "empty calories," it's not only a question of what they're getting from that involvement---it's also a question of what they're NOT getting---that is, healthy connections and interactions with parents, peers, and others, which can cultivate creativity, teach new skills, and help youth learn to deal with people in positive ways!

**Q: Why are the above facts not common knowledge?**

**A:** Just think about how long it took the tobacco industry to admit their role in the shortened lives of smokers. The media industry has no monetary interest in sharing the news of how its products shorten the lives of victims of violence in our society, at the hands of repeated consumers of violent media.

IF YOU NEED REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES TO CONVINCE OTHERS THAT MEDIA DOES MATTER, here are some tragic examples of the direct link between media violence and violence in our society:

! The killers in the Columbine, CO school massacre programmed a model of their school into the video game Doom, and rehearsed their killing spree on that game. They were so powerfully inspired by the video game Doom, that they stated on their videotape (made just prior to the murders) "this is going to be just like ----ing Doom," and one of the shooters named his shotgun after one of the key characters in that game.

! An 11-year-old hanged himself in 1998 while trying to re-enact a scene from "South Park" in which one character, Kenny, dies by hanging. (Kenny is violently killed in every episode of the series.) During an interview on NBC's "Today," Bryce's mother said that "the day before my son's death, he was acting like the character, and [his friends] said, 'Well, if you're Kenny, then you have to die.' And he said, 'That's okay, I'll be back next week.'"

! The Associated Press reported that two teen cousins were obsessed with the horror movie "Scream" and spoke of "doing a 'Scream'" or "busting a 'Scream'" -- committing a murder. In 1998, they did so, brutally murdering the mother of one of the teens.

! The Albuquerque Journal reported that one morning in 1995, a teen listened to a CD by death-metal band Morbid Angel as he drove to his high school in Lynnville, Tenn. At the school, he shot and killed a teacher and a 14-year-old girl with a .22-caliber rifle and wounded a second teacher. The shooter said that death-metal music, with lyrics like "The Earth's left burning/I call death/Death is answering me/And a world betrayed is black forever" was a factor in the shooting.

! A column in the Sunday Times of London said that in Dallas, a 14-year-old boy decapitated a young girl after seeing "Natural Born Killers." The boy told friends he wanted to become famous like "the natural-born killers in the movie."

**WE HAVE A JOINT, CORPORATE, MORAL RESPONSIBILITY  
TO CHANGE THE DIRECTION THAT OUR CULTURE HAS TAKEN**

- e Use this info in your own parenting choices!
- e Share this info with other parents!
- e Check out the websites below and join in with the efforts already underway!

**ONE PARENT AT A TIME.... ONE CHILD AT A TIME.... WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**

We can help create a healthier, safer culture of peace to replace our current toxic culture which glorifies and glamorizes violence at the expense of the lives of many victims of violence!

**WEBSITES OF INTEREST:**

**For more information** about this topic, and to reach Grossman for presentations or to be put on an e-mail list to receive updates about upcoming legislation, more media/violence connections, please contact Grossman via his website:

[www.killology.com](http://www.killology.com) Also, recommended by Grossman:

- \* [www.bluecorncomics.com/grossman.htm](http://www.bluecorncomics.com/grossman.htm) and
- \* <http://cp.pdr.net/cp/public.htm?path=content/journals/k/data/2001/0501/videogames.html#a3>

**And even more active networks** to let you know you're not alone in your concern, and provide **resources**:

- \* CENTER FOR MEDIA LITERACY [www.medialit.org/Violence/indexviol.htm](http://www.medialit.org/Violence/indexviol.htm)
- \* THE GAMES PROJECT [www.gamesproject.org/](http://www.gamesproject.org/)
- \* THE LION & LAMB PROJECT [www.lionlamb.org](http://www.lionlamb.org)
- \* "WHAT GAMES DO YOUR CHILDREN PLAY? BECOME A VIDEO SMART PARENT." [www.mavia.org](http://www.mavia.org)
- \* NAT'L. COALITION ON TELEVISION VIOLENCE <http://www.nctv.org/NCTV%20Images/Contents.html>
- \* NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON MEDIA AND THE FAMILY [www.mediafamily.org](http://www.mediafamily.org)
- \* TRUCE [www.wheelock.edu/truce/truce.htm](http://www.wheelock.edu/truce/truce.htm)
- \* VIOLENCE IS NOT CHILD'S PLAY [www.prairienet.org/cpt/play.php](http://www.prairienet.org/cpt/play.php)
- \* YOUTHPEACE [www.warresisters.org/YP/wartoyoys.htm](http://www.warresisters.org/YP/wartoyoys.htm)

**PLS NOTE!!! SPANISH flier, annotated RESOURCE LIST, & MORE! [www.cob-net.org/docs/williams.htm](http://www.cob-net.org/docs/williams.htm)**

This flier was created for distribution to as many parents (and others) as possible! Please pass it on, leaving these credits at the bottom.  
Thank you! Linda K. Williams ([linkawms@sdcoe.k12.ca.us](mailto:linkawms@sdcoe.k12.ca.us)), with great appreciation to Dave Grossman for his invaluable help. (ed. 7-25-01)