

Media Violence is Not the Problem - The Problem is in Our Homes, our Schools, and our Communities

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There are many examples that Americans commonly associate with growing up and coming of age; getting a driver's license, seeing an R-rated movie, registering for the draft or to vote, buying guns, killing classmates... Indeed, the dramatic increase in school shootings during the 1990s, in conjunction with the technology boom, drew much attention to mass media violence. Does media violence perpetuate aggressive behavior in its viewers? If so, to what extent? Do viewers retain models of behavior from their exposure to media violence? Do these models resurface later on during their coming of age? These are hard questions that may not have definite answers; however, a clear analysis on many studies reveals that we've only begun to scratch the surface.

On Wednesday, October 22, 2003, America revisited a national tragedy that occurred in Littleton, Colorado four years ago. When authorities released the video Rampant Range, the public for the first time got to see Columbine High School shooters Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold at a practice shooting range six weeks before they carried out the real thing. The future-shooters "can be heard laughing, joking and making cavalier comments about what it would be like if the bowling pins [they were shooting] were human heads or bodies"

(Fox News).

These disturbing images are only precipitated with a huge question, why did they do it? What possessed these two young men, who were eighteen-year-old seniors with their whole lives in front of them, to murder twelve classmates, a teacher, and themselves? Is there anything we can learn from them that would explain pervasive aggression in American youth during their coming of age? In the wake of the 1999 shooting and other shootings, America experience...

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... we ignore the real problem and turn our backs on them. The real problem exists in our [homes](#), our [schools](#), our [communities](#), and a segment of society who internalize pain until, like balloons, they burst.

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