
The Effects of Video Games

December 11, 2017 American Lit. The Effects of Video Games Today we see video games as a fun way to spend your time or a complete waste of time. Video games are sold and played worldwide. Video games were first used by scientist. In 1952 British professor A.S. Douglas created OXO, also known as tic-tac-toe, as part of his doctoral dissertation, which is a long essay on a particular subject, at the University of Cambridge.

The first commercial arcade video game, Computer Space by Nutting Associates, was introduced in 1971. In 1972, Atari introduced Pong to the arcades. An interesting item to note is that Atari was formed by Nolan Bushnell, the man who developed Computer Space. He left Nutting Associates to found Atari, which then produced Pong, the first truly successful commercial arcade video game. Pong was a great hit when it came out.

Move your cursor to get the slides to bounce back the moving square -- it will speed up as you progress. That same year, Magnavox offered the first home video game system. Dubbed the Odyssey. The Odyssey was very limited -- it could only produce very simple graphics, and required that custom plastic overlays be taped over the television screen. In 1975, Atari introduced a home version of its popular arcade game, Pong. The original home version of Pong was sold exclusively through Sears, and even carried the Sears logo.

Pong was a phenomenal success, opening the door to the future of home video games. Although the Fairchild Channel F, released in 1976, was the first true removable game system, Atari once again had the first such system to be a commercial success. Introduced in 1977 as the Atari Video Computer System, the 2600 used removable cartridges, allowing a multitude of games to be played using the same hardware.

Systems like the Atari 2600, its descendant, the 5200, Coleco's ColecoVision and Mattel's IntelliVision helped to generate interest in home video games for a few years. But interest began to wane because the quality of the home product lagged far behind arcade standards. But in 1985, Nintendo introduced the Nintendo Entertainment System (NES), and everything changed. The NES introduced three very important concepts to the video game system industry: Using a pad controller instead of a joystick.

Creating authentic reproductions of arcade video games for the home system. Using the hardware as a loss leader by aggressively pricing it, then making a profit on the games themselves. Nintendo's strategy paid off, and the NES sparked a revival in the home video game market that continues to thrive and expand even now. Video game systems were no

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longer looked upon as inferior imitations of arcade machines.

New games that would have been impractical to create for commercial systems, such as Legend of Zelda, were developed for the home markets. These games attracted many people to purchase the Nintendo Entertainment System. Nintendo kept of improving and creating new systems. Other companies, such as Sega and Sony, followed with the trend and created their own home video game systems.

The link between violent media, such as violent movies and video games, and real-life aggression and violence, has been discussed and analyzed since these types of media have existed. Some of this has taken the form of tabloid hysteria, but this question has also been addressed by numerous scientific studies. Previous studies have shown that people who play violent video games can be desensitized towards emotional stimulant, and show decreased empathy, and increased aggression. However, the overwhelming majority of these studies investigated only the short-term effects of playing violent video games, where participants played the games immediately before or even during the experiment. There have been very few studies that have examined the long-term effects of playing violent video games. In a recent study published in Frontiers in Psychology, Dr. Gregor Szyck of the Hannover Medical School, and colleagues, investigated the long-term effects of playing violent video games. "The research question arises first from the fact that the popularity and the quality of video games are increasing, and second, we were confronted in our clinical work with more and more patients with problematic and compulsive video game consumption,"(Szyck).

The participants in the study were all male, as playing violent video games and aggressive behavior are more prevalent in men. All the gamers had played first-person shooter video games, such as Call of Duty or Counterstrike, at least two hours daily for the previous four years, although the average gaming participant played for an average of four hours daily. The gamers were compared with control subjects who had no experience with violent video games and did not play video games regularly. To avoid the short-term effects of playing violent video games, the gamers avoided playing for a minimum of three hours before the experiment started, although the majority avoided for much longer than this. This regulated the study towards finding the long-term effects of playing violent games.

To figure out their capacity for empathy and aggression, the participants answered psychological quiz. Then the participants were shown a series of images designed to provoke an emotional and empathetic response while being scanned in an MRI machine. As the images appeared, they were asked to imagine how they would feel in the shown situations.

Using the MRI scanner, the researchers measured the activation of specific brain regions, to compare the neural response of gamers and non-gamers. The psychological quiz showed no

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differences in amount of aggression and empathy between gamers and non-gamers. This discovery was backed up by the fMRI data, which shows that both gamers and non-gamers had similar neural responses to the emotionally provocative images. These results surprised the researchers, as their initial hypothesis was proven to be wrong, and suggest that any negative effects of violent video games on perception or behavior may be short-lived.

The team acknowledge that further research is required. "We hope that the study will encourage other research groups to focus their attention on the possible long-term effects of video games on human behavior," (Szycik). "This study used emotionally-provocative images. The next step for us will be to analyze data collected under more valid stimulation, such as using videos to provoke an emotional response. Work Cited: 1. Szycik, Gregor R.. "Lack of Evidence That Neural Empathic Responses Are Blunted in Excessive Users of Violent Video Games: An fMRI Study." *Frontiers*. 8 Mar. 2017. Web. 11 Dec. 2017. 2. ScienceDaily. "Violent video games found not to affect empathy: Study finds no link between long-term playing of violent video games and changes in empathetic neural responses." *ScienceDaily*. 17 Mar. 2017. Web. 11 Dec. 2017. 3. Leonard, Andrew. "Video Game Culture Does Not Promote Antisocial Behaviors." *Violent Video Games*, edited by Roman Espejo, Greenhaven Press, 2015. 4.

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