

don't know whether media violence really increases peoples attitude in that way that they are likely to act in a violent way

other factors important: education level, family attitude, character traits, raising of parents (control of media consumption)

censorship does not seem to be that important, as for example in Japan, people are not as aggressive as assumed as Japan has the most violent TV program (see study by Freedman)

My opinion: easy to blame media; further problems connected with amok shooting (schools, teacher-student relationship, lack of social paedagoges) would cost a lot of money and the political will to change the educational system

- Intro:

- both sides: not sure whether relation media violence leads to real life violence is true

- more problems involved, complex network of factors that contribute to

Essay: Would keeping children and young people from those influences, e.g. via censorship, be a good method of protecting society or would it be too big a violation of freedom of the press/the media?

Whenever media report on an amok shooting in schools, universities or other public buildings, a debate about violence represented in TV and computer games is stirred. It is often said that exposure to violence makes young people behave aggressively and changes peoples attitude towards it. In short, media violence is said to be an important factor influencing the amok shooters attitude in such a way, that he actually acts as he has just seen on the screen before. However, as it will be pointed out, the problem of amok shooting is a very complex one and cannot just be reduced to exposure to media violence alone. Various other factors also contribute to the decision of young people to kill others and mostly, afterwards, also themselves. The question whether media censorship seems necessary and reasonable to avoid amok shootings therefore is a highly controversial one.

As some studies suggest, for example by Huesmann, "exposure to media violence causes children to behave more aggressively and affects them as adults later". Further, the idea that children learn specific skills by imitating adults and people surrounding them, has always been an undeniable fact every observer or parent can see in young children. Thus, it seems to be reasonable that children being exposed to violence on the screen will act more aggressively than others. It is also argued that children built up mental scripts and problem solving strategies in their early years. These might be negatively affected when children experience that problems and conflicts are solved with the help of violence by action heroes, they might identify with.

However, regarding the connection between violence on TV and violence in real life, the later cannot be seen as a logical consequence of the former. As a Norwegian study points out, real life violence, for example by parents, in the wider family or peer group plus violence on TV creates an "overload" of violence and the boys in this study consequently saw violent behaviour as part of their identity as males. Thus, it was more likely that they reacted with aggression and violence when they had a conflict. Also, social factors like poverty, criminal surrounding, bad housing conditions, alcohol, unemployment, psychological problems, character traits and hopelessness might contribute to peoples' violent behaviour.

Based on these various facts, media censorship as a single conclusion drawn from amok shootings does not seem to make sense. As long as media influence on violent behaviour cannot clearly be identified, for politicians, talk masters and journalists and the public debate, it seems only the easiest solution to problems the individual shooter actually copes with. However, factors like school atmosphere, teacher-student and student-student relationship, the severe lack of social paedagogues in schools or parents' ability to raise a child also

have to be taken into account. Parents ability to raise children also includes control over media consumption of their offspring, interest in computer games the daughter/son might like, a conversation about the content and critical reflection about it. Only banning violent media will in my opinion neither decrease the likelihood of amok shooting nor make young children a competent and critical user of violent media. Therefore, I think media censorship cannot be seen as a constructive solution to the problem but just distracts public attention from the actual problem.s

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