



New Trends
in Psychology

Violence, The Effect of Cartoons on the Child's Emotional Development

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Abstract: Violence is generally defined as any intentional or accidental action that causes psychological or physical harm to oneself or another person, animals or objects. The child in front of the TV does not have the usual experience of language, the dialogic stimulation of thinking and reflection that parents, grandparents or the human environment in general offer. The visual and auditory stimuli perceived in front of the small screen are so aggressive, they follow one another so quickly that they exceed the brain's ability to control them. The animation has its origins in the old Asian shadow theater and returned in force around 1832. The principle on which it was based was to make drawings whose succession formed a moving image. Cartoons are not considered the only cause of violence in today's society, but they are a factor that leads to violent habits. In addition to the immediate effects that cartoons have on the child, psychological research has shown many long-term effects on the child's behavior. Exposure to TV violence followed by exposure to video game violence leads to higher levels of aggression than the two variables taken separately.

Keywords: child; violence; cartoon; games; television; psychological effects; aggression

1. Introduction

Cartoons are a category of media products often ignored in specialized studies. Despite their popularity and especially the vulnerability of the target audience to children, the subject seems to be avoided and not given the necessary attention. Numerous studies conducted in recent years show that watching TV and the computer is detrimental to the development of the normal functioning of the human

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brain. The child in front of the TV does not have the usual experience of language, the dialogic stimulation of thinking and reflection that parents, grandparents or the human environment in general offer. The visual and auditory stimuli perceived in front of the small screen are so aggressive, they follow one another so quickly that they exceed the brain's ability to control them. The inevitable effect will be the inhibition of important mental processes.

Violence is generally defined as any intentional or accidental action that causes psychological or physical harm to oneself or another person, animals or objects.

- **Cartoon - a film** consisting of a series of drawings, the successive projection of which gives the impression of movement, a film in which the characters and sets are drawn.

- **Impact** - Influence, rooting of an idea, a work, etc. on a person, on events, etc.

- **Visually** - which belongs to the sight, referring to the sense of sight; of sight. Visual memory = memory that retains mostly visual images; visual ray = imaginary straight line joining the observer's eye with the observed object

- **Effect** - consequence, action, influence, rooting, result

2. General Aspects of the Cartoon as a Product of Media Culture

Historically, the beginnings of cartoons are relatively ambiguous because of the many primitive variations of this practice. The animation has its origins in the old Asian shadow theater and returned in force around 1832. The principle on which it was based was to make drawings whose succession formed a moving image.

The advent of celluloid film with side perforations made it possible to create animated films, as we know them today. It was a process that evolved gradually, but we can consider J. Stuart Blackton the inventor of the cartoon.

Walt Disney is at its peak. He debuted in 1923 and was known as a character creator. The earliest surviving animated film to date is *The Adventures of Prince Ahmed*, from 1926, based on the narrative thread of the book *One Thousand and One Nights*.

3. Interpretation of the Cartoon

Violence is found all over the world: on the street, at school, in the media, in the family, the group of friends is also increasingly publicized in its various forms. Starting from the etymology of the word, we will see them immediately. effects on the person exposed to violence regardless of their type, the verb “rape” means “to desecrate”, “to transgress” that is, to exceed the limits imposed by law.

Numerous studies conducted by neuropsychologists have shown that during TV viewing the activity of the left hemisphere decreases extremely much, interhemispheric communication weakens significantly and higher mental processes are strongly inhibited i.e. enters a hypnotic state of sleep. When intensive viewing takes place at an early age, the brain does not develop normally, causing a lack of neural areas, i.e. they will be deprived of certain mental abilities that the healthy brain normally has.

4. Forms of Physical Violence:

- beatings, beatings, injuries (with objects), injuries (with weapons), murder, torture, hostage-taking, deprivation of liberty, robbery, explosion, accident, mass violence, destruction, etc. Forms of verbal violence:
- quarrels, insults, raising your voice, shouting, licentious, obscene language, slander, insults, ridicule, personal attacks, threats, slang, etc.

5. Violence, the basic Feature of the Cartoon

Violent behavior is a product of media culture, the causes of which can be identified in various aspects of daily life. Nicolae Mitrofan¹⁸ points out three categories of factors that influence aggression, so implicitly violence in behavior.

Cartoons are not considered the only cause of violence in today’s society, but they are a factor that leads to violent habits. The short-term effect is that the child who is the recipient repeatedly observes the use of violent behaviors in certain situations, which may lead him to believe that they are the normal way to operate, to overcome the problems encountered in everyday life.

With the advent of cable television, children in Romania were able to watch TV stations for them, the best known being Cartoon Network, Jetix and Minimax.

According to a survey conducted by the National Audiovisual Council earlier this year, more than 65% of cartoon scenes contain violence.

6. The Role of Models and Identification with Cartoon Heroes

Models play a very important role in our lives and especially of the child who has not yet firmly established a behavior or some moral values to be guided when choosing to do something. Cartoon heroes serve as role models for viewers at an early age, models that are not exactly good to follow such as: Ninja turtles fighting with their “enemies” or destroying everything in their path, resulting in hit faces, broken hands and feet, and disused buildings.

An important contribution to this population-growing effect that is common to cartoons are moving video images, such as the cartoon Tom and Jerry in which violence plays an important role. They suffer traumas they do not die but on the contrary they find even more aggressive ways to take revenge. In any case, someone ends up hit, and even bad, whether it’s a piano falling on his head, weapons, explosive, all these scenes send subliminal messages but also direct to the minds of children who come to accept violence as normal and who it’s really funny.

The child who is frequently exposed to violent content considers aggression as something normal, a solution at hand. Just as good heroes use aggression to achieve their goal, so he will believe that sometimes being violent is the best solution. Most of the time, the positive hero who uses aggression does not suffer any negative consequences for her. On the contrary, he is rewarded and appreciated by others. In this case, the child also considers that it is okay to be aggressive as long as he does it in the name of a good cause (perhaps hence the belief that, as long as he has a reason, it is justified to be aggressive with others).

Another very important element of the cartoon is that the children are scared of some scenes. They fail to tell the difference between reality and what they see on TV. They believe that the characters and scenes in the cartoons also exist in reality. The best cartoon example is Scooby-Doo, the ghosts and creatures in the cartoons can cause nightmares for many children, even if their parents explain that they don’t really exist.

Also, in the field of cartoons nowadays are cartoons that are difficult for children to understand, which present an incoherent, difficult message. They are the kind of cartoons that convey words such as portal, parallel universe, space monsters, the

world beyond, the unseen world, etc. The characters are weird, the backgrounds have nothing to do with reality, the action is jerky, the frames change too fast. These drawings induce a state of diffuse alert and do not in fact convey any coherent and educational message to the child. The best must be the strongest, but not in the sense that he is wise, that he uses his own physical and intellectual powers in battle, but that he must have powers that do not really exist: magic and the art of wielding magic swords. The distinction between good and evil becomes impossible, because the outcome no longer imposes the idea that good must always triumph, as the supreme value. The consequence of this is the confusion in the minds of children, the disappearance of landmarks in their lives. Basically, they no longer understand why they are scolded and punished when they do something bad, because they no longer have this notion (Brandura, 2017, p. 151). There are no more values for a child in the real world.

7. Long-Term Effects - Adoption of Violent Violence

In addition to the immediate effects that cartoons have on the child, psychological research has shown many long-term effects on the child's behavior. The human mind does not differentiate the fictional violence of the small screen from the real violence reflexive, involuntary.²⁵ The short-term effect identified is that the receiver repeatedly observes the use of violent behaviors in certain situations, which may lead him to believe that they are the normal way to operate, to overcome the problems encountered in everyday life.

The long-term effects are much more serious than one might think if we consider the neuronal development of the child, i.e. after frequent viewing of the TV activates the cortical area of long-term memory and post-traumatic memory, namely violent images from the cartoons will be inscribed in the memory of the individual in the same way as the acts that severely traumatize the human psyche.

For the child, television is not a source of information but a source of narration. The child grows up in tele culture, and the stories offered to him take the place of story books with a more appropriate, moralizing content or even games with other children because he is more willing to watch cartoons.

Various theoretical perspectives have examined these effects. Given the complexity of the influences of aggression and the multitude of theoretical explanations of the link between exposure to visual and language violence in cartoons, they require a

multifactorial approach. Classical theories of aggression have been used to explain the effects of cartoon violence.

Psychological research indicates that boys are more likely to be aggressive than girls because of a variety of causes, including gender stereotypes, which make them stronger.

Significant proportions in which violent scenes continue to be found in cartoons, despite repeated attempts by control bodies to reduce them, are a serious warning that must be taken seriously, as the invasion of violence in children's programs has become a phenomenon. accepted as such and which is not given sufficient importance if we consider the fact that it is addressed to a training audience. Exposure to TV violence followed by exposure to video game violence leads to higher levels of aggression than the two variables taken separately. Studies have shown that excessive viewing of TV programs contributes to desensitizing viewers to the suffering of others given the vision in which it is presented.

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