

Date: Thu, 05 Aug 1999 14:55:30 -0400 (EDT)  
From: Michael Morgan <mmorgan@comm.umass.edu>  
Subject: "targets"  
To: ggerbner@nimbus.ocis.temple.edu (George Gerbner)  
MIME-version: 1.0  
Status:

> I have been asked to give "expert testimony." (See attached.) What do you  
> think? Brian, Michael - any content and/or cultivation data? George.

That editorial certainly makes compelling reading, but it reminds me of the old Zamora case (Kojak made me do it). Cultivation data don't have much to say about such extreme cases, but one relevant finding among adolescents you could point to is the tendency for heavy viewers to agree that "it's okay to hit someone if you're mad at them for a good reason." Again, that's a far cry from stimulating someone to start shooting people, but it suggests one additional factor contributing to environments in which such actions are possible. (Of course, as actual crime rates decline, the heavy news coverage of these tragedies functions to maintain fear and even encourage copycats.) - Michael

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Dave grossman:

>>You see, in a free market our ultimate safeguard is civil liability. If you  
>>intentionally, negligently market a harmful product (cars, tobacco), and  
>>especially if you market it to kids (cribs, toys), then you will pay. Pay so  
>>much that you and others like you can no longer make money. So why should  
>>the violence industry be the only industry that does not have to answer to  
>>product liability suits?

>>

>>Maybe the real radical extremists in North America are not the NRA. The NRA  
>>doesn't claim that the 2d Amendment gives them a right to market guns to  
>>kids. The tobacco, gun and alcohol industries all accept restraints on  
>>marketing their products to kids. No, maybe the real extremists in America  
>>are the people who will fight to the death, in the name of the 1st Amendment,  
>>to defend the right of nine-year-olds to practice blowing people's heads off  
>>in the local video arcade.

>>

>>(Kudos to the newspaper industry for helping to inform the public about the  
>>violence industry's guilt. After all, the TV, movies and video games have  
>>used a toxic, addictive substance (violence) to steal their market share away  
>>from the newspapers. Sadly, some newspapers think that if they don't defend  
>>the visual violence industry then they will be next. That is like the knife  
>>industry defending the machine gun industry's right to market to kids,  
>>because they think an infringement on a child's access to machine guns  
will >>threaten them.)

>>

>>The violence industry, and the video game industry in particular, claim: "If  
>>people don't buy it we wouldn't sell it." That is pimp logic. Drug dealer  
>>logic. (Except even pimps and drug dealers generally don't market to small  
>>children.) Surely this industry can and must be held to a higher moral  
>>standard.

>>

>>The really sad part is that the video game industry claims that violent video  
>>games are only a tiny fraction of their market, and kids are only a fraction  
>>of their market. If so, then why are they fighting, tooth and nail, all  
>>legislative initiatives to restrict kids access to these products? I  
>>testified before U.S. House and Senate Committees, and the Pennsylvania and  
>>Washington State legislatures, and I helped draft the legislation that passed  
>>in the Connecticut State Senate, but in all these cases the video game  
>>industry fought like demons to preserve a fraction of a fraction of their  
>>market, and to defend the right to market their product to kids. I submit to  
>>you that (as outlined above) this may be moral functioning below that of the  
>>NRA and Big Tobacco, beneath even pimps and drug dealers.

>>

>>The difference between a murder simulator and a flight simulator is that  
>>flying is not a crime. Would we tolerate kids playing rape simulators? Like  
>>guns (and drugs, pornography, alcohol, tobacco, sex, and cars), perhaps  
>>visual media violence, and in particular the violent, video game "murder  
>>simulators" are something that adults can have, but kids should not.  
>>Perhaps? Perhaps. One thing is for sure. You might want to avoid investing  
>>in any video game industry stocks, and (as Disney, Wards, and Wal-Mart have  
>>done) you might want to be sure you don't have any of these violent games  
>>available or sold in your place of business. Otherwise it might be you on  
>>the wrong side of a law suit.

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From: Jackpeace@aol.com  
Date: Mon, 16 Aug 1999 11:07:55 EDT  
Subject: Kentucky Shootings Case  
To: ggerbner@nimbus.ocis.temple.edu  
MIME-Version: 1.0  
Status:

Dear Dr. Gerbner:

I need to speak with you to firm up our retention of you as an expert. Please call me at your convenience at 305-666-4366 or better yet, tell me when and at what number I might call you, so that you incur no expense. Thanks.

Jack Thompson, Miami