

**Lisa Santos**

**Project report**

**MACS390, "Media, war and peace"**

**Autumn session, 2010**

**Media and Cultural Studies, University of Wollongong**

The project report assignment had two parts. For details of the assignment see [http://www.bmartin.cc/classes/MACS390\\_10outline.pdf](http://www.bmartin.cc/classes/MACS390_10outline.pdf)

1. An information pack for an organisation.

*Lisa Santos* prepared an information pack for a Parents and Teachers Association, in the form of a slide show. The slide show is a separate file.

2. A fictional dialogue on doing the project.

*Lisa Santos'* dialogue starts on the next page.

This document is located at [http://www.bmartin.cc/classes/MACS390\\_10tops/](http://www.bmartin.cc/classes/MACS390_10tops/).

### Dialogue

*This is a fictional account of the conversation I had with a P.T.A member of school in the greater Sydney area of which she is also a teacher with three teenage sons and a fellow member of the PTA who was also present. It is intended as a follow up from the actual interview I had with \*Deb for information on what parents needed to know on the topic of aggression and violent videogames.*

*\*All names have been changed for the process of anonymity.*

*In this dialogue I am Fallon, (F). The PTA Teacher is Deb, (D) as in the slide show example correlation and the third member present who is a fellow PTA mother is Katarina (K) who was present after I went back to speak to Deb about my slide show and my finding on the topic.*

.....

*Deb: Hi Fallon how's your assignment going?*

*Fallon: Deborah hi, thanks for the information.*

*D: That's no problem. I hope your assignment is turning out well.*

*F: Actually I changed my presentation from our last conversation. I was going to write on the effects that bullying played with aggression in teens but your examples and hints about what was more relevant within the schooling system made me change my mind.*

*D: That's great.*

*F: Your example of the boy who was suspended for excessive gaming was my main motivator.*

*D: Well it is quite relevant. He became addicted and aggressive after he started gaming to the point where he was acting totally out of character.*

*F: Its not surprising given the information out there and the studies and brain scans to analyse.*

*Katarina: How hard was it to access this information?*

*F: It was difficult at first, there were so many conflicting data spreads that I had to narrow them down by date appropriation.*

*D: What do you mean by date appropriation?*

*F: When I was reaching the one thing that critics and academics had in common is that games have evolved over the years and that as a result of the introduction of photorealism, games were progressively becoming more violent oriented and realistic. This meant that data was going to change as back with the introduction of Pong and Pac Man, games were highly pixalised and un-styled like the games of today which try to mirror real life. Because of this, the data showing the impact of videogames on aggression was relatively spread.*

*D: That's quite fascinating.*

*K: So there have been multiple studies that have examined this?*

*F: Numerous, it was as simple as typing in a word search into goggle for hundreds of research results to pop up, the difficulty lay in validating them and putting the in a context that I could work with.*

*D: At least there was data to support what we see everyday as teachers and as parents. The actual impacts on the game are so widespread that it is worrisome*

*F: Well there was one surprising thing that I learned through the researching of this assignment, it's that there is an anomaly on game distribution worldwide. This means that you can get any game you like from anywhere without restriction and because Australia does not have any R classifications for games, parents are often left in the dark and don't know that the content of MA15+ games have R rated content.<sup>1</sup>*

*K: I never knew that. When I purchase games for my children I always look at the classifications, I thought that was safe and that the R rated games were behind the counter.<sup>2</sup>*

*F: That's definitely not the case, and what is more disturbing is that this is not advertised so if you haven't done your research then you won't know.*

*D: That's true with a lot of information these days but it is generally expected that a parent would find out that information before buying the game but today that is just not possible with how busy some people are.*

*K: I know that the last thing I would think to do before buying my children a game is to do that much extensive research, I usually trust the labelling. In future I will have to do my homework.*

*D: It's a great idea. This can save you so much trouble later on.*

*F: Its true. All the data that I research was fascinating but also quite scary at the same time due to its negative impact on all aspects of life and to the individual.*

*K: In the material was there anything that you wanted to know but couldn't find out about?*

*F: There were a couple of factors like with the case study I did on a boy named Devin Moore, there wasn't a lot of information about his case because he was a minor under the laws of America, and the fact that he was sentenced to the death penalty makes it difficult to investigate the true impact that violent videogames had on him.*

*D: That's pretty scary. What did he do to earn him such a harsh sentence?*

---

<sup>1</sup>Commonwealth of Australia (2001-2009) Classification Markings on Film and Computer Games Accessed 30/5/10  
[http://www.classification.gov.au/www/cob/classification.nsf/Page/ClassificationMarkings\\_ClassificationMarkingsonFilmandComputerGames\\_ClassificationMarkingsonFilmandComputerGames](http://www.classification.gov.au/www/cob/classification.nsf/Page/ClassificationMarkings_ClassificationMarkingsonFilmandComputerGames_ClassificationMarkingsonFilmandComputerGames)

<sup>2</sup>(2008) Australia needs an R18+ Rating for video games Accessed 28/5/10  
<http://www.r18games.com.au/>

F: He was addicted to playing different version of Grand Theft Auto (GTA) which is R rated in America but only has a MA15+ rating in Australia and because of his fixation on a modelled life tried to simulate the game to escape the monotony and horror of his own life by acting out a game sequence that he frequently played. The only thing that went wrong was that this was real life and not a game. He killed three people as a result.<sup>3</sup>

D&K: Oh goodness!

F: Exactly, and all this is supported by evidence that shows the detrimental effects of videogames. If you look at any psychological review it's made incredibly evident.<sup>4</sup>

K: I just can't believe that there is a double standard system for videogames and movies. If anything videogames are worse because they actually make you do the work.

F: That's exactly the point I'm trying to make, but it was so hard to define all the concepts and put them together as everyone has a different definition for aggression and videogames as well as what causes it. But they all seem to agree that it's based on an idea of teaching.<sup>5</sup>

D: Well at least that is something.

F: True.

K: If defining it was difficult then how did your project come together?

F: I just had to research all the information and find information that was relevant to the topic and that fit the model of overall consensus.

D: so how did you gather your material then?

F: Well after I spoke to you Deb I went and looked at information of videogames and aggression using a simple bullion search in Google. From there I found some interesting organisations that were solely focused on aggressive links of videogames to the impact upon individual aggression like Killology<sup>6</sup> and Libertus.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup>Thompson, J (2005) *Games In The Court - GTA "Life Is A Video Game"* Accessed 11/5/10 [http://www.jackthompson.org/games\\_in\\_the\\_court/life\\_is\\_a\\_videogame.htm](http://www.jackthompson.org/games_in_the_court/life_is_a_videogame.htm)

<sup>4</sup> Anderson, C., "EFFECTS OF VIOLENT VIDEO GAMES ON AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR, AGGRESSIVE COGNITION, AGGRESSIVE AFFECT, PHYSIOLOGICAL AROUSAL, AND PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOR: A Meta-Analytic Review of the Scientific Literature", *Psychological Science*, Vol. 12, No. 5, September 2001

<sup>5</sup> Gentile, D., Saleem, M., & Anderson, C. (2007). Public Policy and the Effects of Media Violence on Children. *Social Issues and Policy Review*, 1(1), 15-61.

Image source: [http://cusecity.org/Video\\_Games.html](http://cusecity.org/Video_Games.html)

Anderson, C.A. "Video Games and Aggressive Thoughts, Feelings and Behaviour in the laboratory and in life," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.

<sup>6</sup> (2006) *Killology*, Accessed 18/5/10 <http://www.killology.com/publications.htm>

K: These must have helped you quite a lot.

F: They did, from here I was able to research different studies on brain functions and aggressive behaviour in children and teens that played videogames.<sup>8</sup>

D: That would have been unexpected wouldn't it?

F: Not really when you think about it, what I found most fascinating was the lack of official consensus in data and the lack of worldwide classification regulations.

K: What did your lecturer have to say?

F: He said it was an interesting topic choice and that there were a number of books on offer especially that of Grossman, who is an expert in the field of combat and the relationship of videogames on teaching the art of killing in actual combat.

K: That is frightening.

F: It is but what you don't know is that it happens, just like pilots learn to fly on flight simulators soldiers learn to kill using first person shooter games. This is an extension of that.<sup>9</sup>

D: So this is what you are going to argue about the media portrayal of violence and videogames when you outline your case study?

F: Yes. I think it's the main component and ties in all the facts of the assignment together.

K: From what you told me, I certainly agree.

D: If you had the chance to do this assignment over again what would you do differently?

F: Not all of it no. I would look more closely at the after effects of videogame violence and aggressive and how this manifests in real life over a long period of time, but I would most likely have partnered up for this assessment to lighten the burden of workload. On the whole I think I included all the relevant information that I needed.

---

<sup>7</sup> Graham, I. (2013/2010) *Studies and Research on Media Effects Portrayal of Violence* Accessed 23/5/10 <http://libertus.net/censor/resources/studies.html>

<sup>8</sup> Image source: Michigan State University (2005, October 12). Violent Video Games Lead To Brain Activity Characteristic Of Aggression. *ScienceDaily*. Retrieved June 7, 2010, from <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2005/10/051012082710.htm>.

<sup>9</sup> Grossman, D & DeGaetano, G. (1999) *Stop Teaching Our Kids To Kill*, Crown Publishers, New York.

*K: Do you think not having a partner disadvantaged you?*

*F: No if anything it made my research stronger as I had to research every part and write every part.*

*D: Was there anything about the theory and the case study that you didn't like?*

*F: Just the fact that there were contradicting elements but I managed to sort them out which I'm sure made the presentation flow better. The only real difficulty I had was not being able to convert my power point presentation to CD because my computer isn't a burner but when I spoke to my lecture she said that handing it in on a USB would be fine.*

*K: Well it looks like your almost done.*

*D: Would you mind presenting your slideshow to the next PTA meeting then?*

*F: I'd love to*

*D: I'll let everyone know.*

*F: Thankyou Deb. I'll see you at the next PTA meeting then, bye Katarina*

*K: bye.*

*FIN*

.....

*Work count: 1500+ bibliography*

**Bibliography**  
**(slide show and dialogue):**

Apple online dictionary- Aggression

Anderson, C.A. "Video Games and Aggressive Thoughts, Feelings and Behaviour in the laboratory and in life," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.

Anderson, C., "EFFECTS OF VIOLENT VIDEO GAMES ON AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR, AGGRESSIVE COGNITION, AGGRESSIVE AFFECT, PHYSIOLOGICAL AROUSAL, AND PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOR: A Meta-Analytic Review of the Scientific Literature", *Psychological Science*, Vol. 12, No. 5, September 2001

Brown, H.J. (2008) *Video Games and Education*, M.E Sharpe, London.

Blundell, K. (14/2/2010) *War Games and Aggression*, Accessed 1/6/10, <http://earthsciweb.org/MontessoriMuddle/2010/02/14/war-games-and-aggression/>

Cargo, T. (31/7/2009) *Banned: the absurdity of Australia's game rating regime* Accessed 17/5/10  
<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2008/07/31/2319787.htm>

Commonwealth of Australia (2001-2009) *Classification Markings on Film and Computer Games* Accessed 30/5/10  
[http://www.classification.gov.au/www/cob/classification.nsf/Page/ClassificationMarkings\\_ClassificationMarkingsonFilmandComputerGames\\_ClassificationMarkingsonFilmandComputerGames](http://www.classification.gov.au/www/cob/classification.nsf/Page/ClassificationMarkings_ClassificationMarkingsonFilmandComputerGames_ClassificationMarkingsonFilmandComputerGames)

Gentile, D., Saleem, M., & Anderson, C. (2007). *Public Policy and the Effects of Media Violence on Children. Social Issues and Policy Review*, 1(1), 15-61.

Graham, I. (20/3/2010) *Studies and Research on Media Effects Portrayal of Violence* Accessed 23/5/10  
<http://libertus.net/censor/resources/studies.html>

Grossman, D & Degaetano, G. (1999) *Stop Teaching Our Kids To Kill*, Crown Publishers, New York.

Grossman, D & Christensen, L.W. (2008) *On Combat: the Psychology and Physiology of Deadly Conflict in War and Peace*. Warrior science publications, China.

Michigan State University (2005, October 12). *Violent Video Games Lead To Brain Activity Characteristic Of Aggression*. *ScienceDaily*. Retrieved June

7, 2010, from <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2005/10/051012082710.htm>

Urbano, L.D., 2010. War games and aggression, Retrieved June 7th, 2010, from *Montessori Muddle*: <http://earthsciweb.org/MontessoriMuddle/>

Poole, S. (2000) *Trigger Happy: The Inner Life of Video Games*, Fourth Estate, London.

Radiological Society of North America (2006, November 29). Violent Video Games Leave Teenagers Emotionally Aroused. *ScienceDaily*. Retrieved June 7, 2010, from <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2006/11/061128140804.htm>

Sapountzis, A. (2007) *Can Video Games Lead to Murder?* Accessed 28/5/10 [www.gamedefender.com/news/20060306.html](http://www.gamedefender.com/news/20060306.html)

Serendip, 1994 *Brain Structures and their Functions*, Accessed <http://serendip.brynmawr.edu/bb/kinser/Structure1.html>

Thompson, J (2005) *Games In The Court - GTA "Life Is A Video Game"* Accessed 11/5/10 [http://www.jackthompson.org/games\\_in\\_the\\_court/life\\_is\\_a\\_videogame.htm](http://www.jackthompson.org/games_in_the_court/life_is_a_videogame.htm)

Wikipedia the free encyclopaedia. *Strickland v. Sony* Accessed 2/6/10 [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strickland\\_v.\\_Sony](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strickland_v._Sony)

(2008) *Australia needs an R18+ Rating for video games* Accessed 28/5/10 <http://www.r18games.com.au/>

(2008) *Rockstargames- vice city* Accessed 15/5/10 <http://www.rockstargames.com/vicecity/>

(2006) *Killology*, Accessed 18/5/10 <http://www.killology.com/publications.htm>

(28/9/09) *GTA Vice City*, Accessed 6/6/10 <http://megaupload.blog.friendster.com/uncategorized/gta-vice-city-fully-working-no-crack-needed.html>