New Study Finds That There Is No Connection Between Virtual and Real-Life Violence

Boris Djuric November 13, 2014

Data compared from 1996 to 2011 between ESRB and FBI’s youth crime data shows even decrease in youth violence

According to joint study conducted by researchers at Villanova University and Rutgers University, there is no connection of the violence in video-games with real life violence.

(Newswire.net -- November 13, 2014) -- Joint study, ‘Violent Video Games and Real-World Violence: Rhetoric Versus Data’, conducted by researchers at Villanova University and Rutgers University showed not only that there is no connection between video-games violence and the real-life violence, but there is actually less crime as video-games become more violent and realistic.

The results of the study, published in the Psychology of Popular Media Culture, showed that children who constantly played violent video games are now successful and responsible adults and parents.

Previous researches that linked virtual violence with real-life violence “are based on research that has not actually examined serious acts of violence—most previous studies either examined proxy assessments of aggression—giving a person spicy hot sauce, exposing a person to an irritating noise—or self-reports of hostility,” said to Gamespot Patrick Markey, an associate professor of psychology at Villanova in an interview.

“By far the most surprising statistic was that violent video games were negatively related to aggravated assault and homicides,” professor Markey said.

Follow-up study from Stetson University, published in the Journal of Communication, concludes the same. researcher Christopher Ferguson have reached the same general conclusion. Further more, this study showed that in the years as violent video games gained popularity and become more realistic, the youth violence in the same period decreases.

Comparing federal youth crime data from 1996 to 2011 with Entertainment Software Ratings Board (ESRB) data for games released in the same period, Ferguson found even decrease of youth crime.

“There is a risk that identifying the wrong problem, such as media violence, may distract society from more pressing concerns such as poverty, education, and vocational disparities and mental health,” Ferguson said in a statement. “This research may help society focus on issues that really matter and avoid devoting unnecessary resources to the pursuit of moral agendas with little practical value."

Earlier this year, Ohio St. professor Brad Bushman cited a study in which researchers found games like Grand Theft Auto actually encourage players to give no thought to self-control, which represent the link between playing violent games and aggressive behavior. New studies, however, shows that there is a wide gap between the possibility and actual loosing control in a real life.

As reported by Gavin Stern
