

Tekst 10

Misstep on video violence*Today's debate: Minors and video games*

In the booming world of video games, there are more than a few dark corners: Murder and chaos. Blood and slaughter. Explicit sex and abuse of women.

Small wonder some parents are concerned over what game-crazed teens may be up to. And small wonder, too, that legislators in several states are playing to these concerns by trying to outlaw the sale of violent and sexually explicit games to minors.

But to what useful end? This is the latest chapter in a very old story. When teenage entertainment offends adult sensibilities — think Elvis Presley's pulsating hips — the first response is to see the new phenomenon as a threat to social order. The second is to attempt to ban it. Parents — former teenagers all — seem to forget history's lesson: The bans never work.

And they're probably not constitutional, anyway. Courts have ruled that today's sophisticated video games are protected as creative expression. 38 if communities want to limit access, they must show overriding evidence that the games pose a public threat. That evidence does not exist.

Lawmakers and activist groups claim that the thrill of engaging in virtual criminal activity will spur teens to try the real thing. But the violent crime rate has gone down

40 nearly 30% since the first bloody shoot-'em-up games debuted in the early 1990s. Youth crime rates have dropped even more. And a Federal Trade Commission survey found parents already involved in 45 83% of video-game purchases and rentals for minors.

Judges have repeatedly rejected the studies that, according to advocates, show a link between 50 fantasy violence and anti-social behavior.

To the extent there is a threat, it is mainly to the individual, 55 vulnerable teenager, and it can be addressed only by parents. And they're getting some help. The game industry's rating system classifies games in six categories 60 from "early childhood" to "adults only". Also, newer models of popular games include parental controls that can block their use for age-inappropriate games. And 65 major retailers are tightening their restrictions on sales to minors.

There will always be a market for the dark, tasteless, even the outrageous, and parents ought to 70 keep kids away from it. But even with the best intentions of legislators, the problem is beyond their reach.

New laws are likely to give 75 parents only the false impression that someone else is solving that problem for them.

USA Today

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- 1p **36** What does the writer wish to make clear with respect to video games in the first two paragraphs?
It is understandable
A that many video games are terribly addictive.
B that politicians try to win votes by stating that they want certain video games to be banned.
C why people worry about the effects that some video games may have on youngsters.
D why playing video games is popular with young people.
- 1p **37** What is the main point made in the third paragraph (lines 14-24)?
A Adults forget that their youthful pastimes also used to shock others.
B It is only natural that parents should try to protect their children.
C Making laws to restrict the sale of certain video games is pointless.
- 1p **38** Which word fits the gap in line 30?
A But
B For
C So
- 1p **39** What is the point made in lines 35-52 ("Lawmakers ... behavior.")?
A A considerable number of children become anti-social because of video games.
B Parents do not take enough responsibility for their children's moral development.
C Playing video games keeps children too occupied to commit crimes in the streets.
D The idea that video games stimulate aggressive behaviour is not supported by objective facts.
- "And they're getting some help." (regel 57)
- 1p **40** Hoeveel vormen van hulp worden genoemd?
- 2p **41** Geef voor de volgende personen of groepen aan of zij het wel of niet eens zouden zijn met wettelijke beperkingen op de verkoop van computerspelletjes.
1 "legislators" (regel 9)
2 "activist groups" (regel 35)
3 "advocates" (regel 50)
4 de schrijver van dit artikel
Noteer elk nummer, gevolgd door "wel" of "niet".