

University of Missouri researchers find that violent video games do not cause aggression in adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder

April 16, 2015 - GamePolitics Staff



A new University of Missouri study may be the beginning of disproving the idea that people with autism spectrum disorders who play violent video games are more likely to commit acts of real-world violence. This assertion gained some traction in the media after the December 2012 mass shooting in Newtown, Connecticut. In the aftermath of the December 2012 shooting at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, the national media focused on shooter Adam Lanza's emotional issues related to suffering from Autism and his exposure to violent video games.

The study, "[Effects of Violent Video Game Exposure on Aggressive Behavior, Aggressive Thought Accessibility, and Aggressive Affect among Adults with and without Autism Spectrum Disorder](#)" (PDF), tested the effects of violent video games on aggression in adults with autism spectrum disorder to test levels of aggression in a laboratory setting.

Researchers had study subjects play one of two violent video games (with different levels of violent content) and then asked them to complete a task to test aggression levels. Participants were told by researchers that they were competing against each other; if they "won" they were given the choice of blasting their opponent with a loud noise - with the length and volume of the noise at the control of the "winner." More than 100 adults between the ages of 17 and 25 (half with autism spectrum disorder and half typically developing) participated in the study.

"If violent video games caused adults with autism spectrum disorder to behave aggressively, we should have seen some evidence of this in our study, but we did not," said lead author Christopher Engelhardt, a postdoctoral fellow in the MU School of Health Professions and the MU Thompson Center for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders.

Researchers also concluded that violent video games do not affect adults with autism spectrum disorder differently than "typically developing adults."

Engelhardt does note some caveats with the research:

"There are some caveats to our findings," Engelhardt said. "For example, we only exposed participants to violent or nonviolent games for 15 minutes before measuring their willingness to behave aggressively. This study, therefore, cannot speak to the potential long-term effects of violent-video-game exposure."

You can read more about the study [here](#).

Posted in

Like Tweet

3

[Forgot your password?](#)

Username:
Password:

 Log In

Poll

What do you think about Bill Paxton taking on the film role of Jack Thompson?:

- ☐ I think he'll do a bang up job!
- ☐ I'd have gone with someone else.
- ☐ Jack Thompson should play himself!
- ☐ Cut the role from the film. Thompson should be forgotten.

Shout box

You're not permitted to post shouts.

james_fudge: me 04/17/2015 - 8:37am

Ryan Rardin: Who else would like to see The Misadventures of Tron Bonne on PlayStation Classics? 04/17/2015 - 2:21am

ZippyDSMlee: so I can save my bookmarks and nuke it with a ree install put my bookmarks back reget all my plugins and I am good to go 04/17/2015 - 2:15am

ZippyDSMlee: MechaTama31: I run 70 tabs and use a suspend plugin to suspend them. i have a folder in my bookmarks that have all my pluingis in it 04/17/2015 - 2:14am

E. Zachary Knight: Only one question: Why? 04/16/2015 - 10:16pm

MechaTama31: Most of which I could probably delete the bookmark for too, if I had the inclination to wade through them. 04/16/2015 - 9:16pm

MechaTama31: So I've been keeping my set of tabs in firefox for years now. I finally got tired of the sluggish performance and eventual memory bloat and decided to archive them all to bookmarks and start fresh. 792 tabs. >.> 04/16/2015 - 9:15pm

Matthew Wilson: http://www.vg247.com/2015/04/17/marc-h-2015-npd-battlefield-hardline-ps4-bloodborne/sadly expected. I only own pc, but I did want bloodborne to beat hardline. 04/16/2015 - 6:44pm

mwiland: if you want secure email go checkout protonmail.ch 04/16/2015 - 9:10am

Mattsworkname: Zippy, don't know it's price on PSN, but best of luck. 04/16/2015 - 8:56am

ZippyDSMlee: Mattsworkname: I'm current on most anime ^_~! I'll try and get it but I refuse to spend more than 30 >> 04/16/2015 - 8:50am

Sora-Chan: @Matthew Wilson Eh, email has been working pretty well, especially with email services that do mobile authentication like gmail. 04/16/2015 - 3:11am

Matthew Wilson: about time steam http://www.vg247.com/2015/04/16/steam-guard-mobile-authenticator-now-in-beta-testing/ 04/15/2015 - 9:57pm

prh99: MW: Oh I agree. It just doesn't sound like they did a particularly good job with it in this case. 04/15/2015 - 9:14pm

Matthew Wilson: @PH tech can be used well, but it requires people that can use it well. a good example of tech making education better is khan academy/ 04/15/2015 - 8:58pm

prh99: Teachers don't embrace it, the district takes no responsibility for maintaining their expensive toys then wonder why it was a failure. They better hope their agreement has an opt out, or they'll be on the hook for the rest of it. 04/15/2015 - 8:23pm

Matthew Wilson: http://arstechnica.com/apple/2015/04/lo-s-angeles-school-district-demands-multi-million-dollar-refund-from-apple/ apple owns them nothing. I believe tech in the class can work, but until we get people he know how to use it effectively, it wont happen. 04/15/2015 - 7:30pm

E. Zachary Knight: Extra Credits on humane design. We need to stop trying to capture as much time as possible from our players but make sure that the time they spend is quality. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GArkyxP8-n0 04/15/2015 - 10:17am

PHX Corp: Just got my Club nintendo DLC Codes for Mewtwo, I'm just waiting for the Wii U version of mewtwo to be distributed 04/15/2015 - 7:48am

Mattsworkname: Zippy, not sure how much one picce you have seen, but lets say that Pirate warriors 1 has my favorite version of the CP1 fight ever. 04/15/2015 - 7:33am

[All shouts](#)

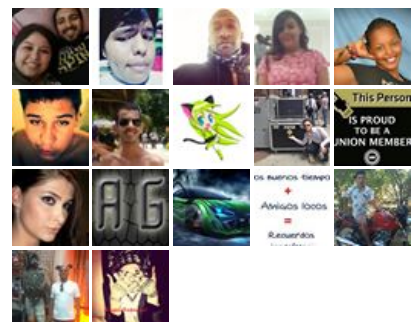
Find us on Facebook



Entertainment Consumers Association

Like

43,541 people like Entertainment Consumers Association.



Facebook social plugin



[<< Return To Top](#)