

'Violence clean-up a definite need'

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by Don Higgins

In the Aug. 2 Spokesman-Review there are two articles that support John Caputo's July 5 essay, "We all have role to play in cleaning up media bad act."

Caputo described what we know but ignore about media violence. He cites more than 40 years of research that documents the harmful effects of media violence on society and says most of this research sits on library shelves ignored by media producers and media users alike.

That's why it was so good to read the Aug. 4 article, "TV for baby a no-no, say pediatricians." The American Academy of Pediatrics' stand against media violence based upon extensive research review is to be applauded. The academy joins other distinguished professional associations, including the American Medical Association, the American Psychological Association, the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and the National Institute of Mental Health in taking a strong step informing the public about their significant findings.

Additionally, it was interesting to read the article, "Violence yielding." Unfortunately, the researcher interviewed said that although violence is yielding, students' perception of violence is increasing.

According to Caputo and others, the reason for this is that violence may be decreasing in real life but increasing in all forms of media. Last year alone there was an increase of 12 percent in violent tv programming. Video games were even worse. This is what George Gerbner calls the Mean World Syndrome and why many folks have fear going into downtown areas.

I encourage citywide support for taking positive steps to clean up media pollution with media solutions.

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