

## **Accessible Evils**

Junior class

Since the Industrial revolution of the 17<sup>th</sup> century a snowball of new technology has worked to better society, allowing people to live longer, fuller, richer lives. Machines like the tractor allow for the surplus cultivation of crop, helping in the fight against world hunger or consider the chemistry involved in creating drugs helping to cure fatal sicknesses, but the abuse of these innovations has proven to be problematic to society. Our generation has grown up disconnection, aggression, and has bore witness to the defilement of childhood innocence.

Children today are surrounded by violence and negative influences. The video games that have encompassed the minds of today's youth are hostile and graphic in nature. The US Military uses realistic video games, such as America's Army as a method to relieve the aggressive tendencies of soldiers in combat. Games like these are released into the civilian population and played by children. If children were not influenced by such sadistic video games would they still resort to such brutal behavior? Absolutely not. Violent video games such as Grand Theft Auto and Manhunt can be directly connected to the rise in school shootings such as Virginia Tech and Columbine. Our youth grows up surrounded by headshots and decapitations; clearly desensitized children become the characters in the video games. The current rating system for video games is not

effective. The stores that sell these games must assume the responsibility they have and enforce the rating system.

The Internet has given us access to a plethora of knowledge previously unavailable. However, with an unending will and knowledge available at our fingertips, it has opened doors for strangers to directly attack and harass the innocent youth.

Myspace and Facebook have allowed our generation to connect with people all over the world, but the prevalence of hateful groups on these sites is disturbing. These groups allow people to join together in hatred against their classmates and destroy the self-confidence of others. Over one third of all teenagers have been harassed online, yet the management of these sites do little to eliminate these groups. We need stricter, enforced guidelines which outlaw hateful groups. The management of social networking sites have reaped great rewards from their success, but need to remember their responsibility to prevent bullies from attacking and driving people to suicide.

Video Games and online bullying are not the only threat to our generation. As Dateline has famously shown, the Internet has linked pedophiles with today's youth. chatrooms establish connections between child and molester allowing these harmful relationships to be formed. When these crimes occur, the child's life is forever changed. However, these felons are not receiving the proper punishment. After violently raping a four-year-old girl, Paulo Sousa received a jail sentence of only three years. These

pedophiles must be taken care of properly by our judicial system and prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

Our generation has become socially disconnected with the people closest to us. With the widespread use of cell phones, text messages eliminate the need for phone calls and allow us to never be more than a few clicks from the internet. It is not uncommon for teenagers to end relationships through text messaging, something that proves the declining importance of face-to-face contact. This problem is a very serious one and doesn't have a quick fix. Our generation needs to re-think our values and consider where the world will be when we are running the country. But in order to do that, we must pry ourselves away from our iPhones and Wiis, send actual letters and call our friends next time we want to say hi.

All of these problems can be improved upon with the involvement of caring parents who take an active interest in their children's lives. Aggression, harassment, pedophilia and social disconnection can all be bettered if parents were to have a more active role in their children's lives. We as a generation can make a difference by pulling ourselves away from our own indulgence in technology. Through this we can minimize the stranglehold technology has on today's youth.