A Treatment to De-escalate from the Effects of Violent Video Game Play

Milner, Burgess

A concern with violent video game play is that they may increase aggression. I used alternating bilateral sound stimulation (ABSS) to try and decrease ANS arousal, aggression, negative affect, and increase positive affect in participants after they played a violent video game. I tested undergraduate students. I used a biofeedback machine to measure skin conductance, the PANAS questionnaire to measure mood, and a questionnaire to measure aggression. I also used the I-tunes app called Sonic Pulse to deliver the sounds, and the video game Advanced Warfare for PC. Each participant was tested individually. Participants completed the demographic questionnaire and the PANAS before playing the video game for 15 minutes. They completed the PANAS immediately after gaming. Half the participants were then randomly assigned to the alternating sounds group. The others were in the non-alternating sounds group. Following 10 minutes of sound stimulation, I gave them the PANAS one last time and the aggression questionnaire. Skin conductance was recorded throughout the experiment. Violent video game play increased ANS arousal (skin conductance), but there was no effect of ABSS. The alternating group did however, behave more aggressively than the non-alternating group. Both negative and positive affect decreased during sound stimulation, but there was no effect of ABSS. The effect of violent video game play on negative affect was probably due to feelings of jitteriness. The effect of violent video game play on positive affect was probably due to feelings of excitement. Conclusion. ABSS may increase aggression triggered by violent video game play.

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