

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Popular broadcasting began with radios
- In the 1960's television gained widespread popularity
- Commercial advertisements depict a large amount of violence
- Commercial ads may contain more violence than what is in the actual television program
- Children who are exposed to violent television programs and advertising are more likely to generate aggressive thoughts and harm their siblings
- Those who are pregnant or having unprotected sex are likely watching television programs that depict women as sexual objects
- Sexual objectification is the act of treating a person as a mere object of sexual desire

# TELEVISION

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## TELEVISION: A SHORT HISTORY

Early broadcasting predominately involved radios. As technology continued to develop, the television, which combined audio and visual stimuli, was invented. In the 1960's television gained widespread popularity. The decades after the 1960's saw further developments in audio and visual quality. Today there are thousands of programs with a variety of content. Now, we must understand how television viewing has impacted our health.

## ON SCREEN VIOLENCE

Research has demonstrated that there is a significant amount of violent commercial ads targeted to children. In some cases, the commercials may contain more violence than what is in the television programs. Concerned parents may want to rethink what media they put in front of their children because research has demonstrated that there is a significant positive increase in the relationship between media violence and aggression. When exposed to violent media, such as violent television ads, children from the ages of 8 to 12 are more likely to generate aggressive cognitions. Results from another study found that children who were exposed to violent TV were significantly more likely to demonstrate aggressive behavior towards their siblings.

## TELEVISION VIEWING AND SEXUALITY

Some research has suggested that sexual content on television is having an effect on women's sexual behavior. A study of 240 African-American teenage girls sheds light on the role television plays in women's sexual risk taking. Those who were pregnant or having unprotected sex watched more violent television programs that included depicting women as sexual objects. An online survey gathered significant feedback about the relationship between television viewing and unhealthy views surrounding sexuality. Results from the feedback showed that viewing television sports was related to the sexual objectification of women. The results suggested that viewing television sports is indirectly associated with rape myth acceptance.

- Rape myths are a specific set of attitudes and beliefs that may contribute to ongoing sexual violence by shifting blame for sexual assault from perpetrators to victims
- In Canada and the U.S.A, television viewing is prevalent
- Television viewing was associated with increased risk of type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease and all-cause mortality
- Television viewing time is directly related to markers for chronic kidney disease
- A physically active lifestyle will promote good health

## TELEVISION VIEWING AND DISEASE

In industrialized countries such as Canada and the United States of America, television viewing is highly prevalent. Also, there is a chronic disease epidemic effecting these countries and television has something to do with it. Results from a meta-analysis concluded that television viewing was associated with increased risk of type two diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and all-cause mortality. Furthermore, a study found that television viewing time may be directly related to markers for chronic kidney disease. Perhaps it would be a good idea for people to spend less time in front of their televisions and get moving.

## WHAT CAN WE DO INSTEAD?

A simple walk can be very beneficial for weight loss and for the maintenance of good health. A prominent American author, named Ellen White, wrote that “walking is often more beneficial to health than all the medicine that can be prescribed” {Christian Temperance & Bible Hygiene 100.5}. Individuals that walk more tend to be thinner than those who walk less. The best part is that walking doesn’t require a gym membership or any expensive gear!

In the book of Job chapter 12 in verses 7-10, the Bible says “But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee: Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee: and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee. Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the LORD hath wrought this? In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.” Clearly, we cannot understand the languages of fish and land mammals; however, wildlife can teach us many things by observing their behavior and daily habits. Another thing we can do, instead of watching television, is going outside and spending time outdoors looking at all the wildlife and plants. Hiking and camping are great activities through which we can become more familiar with nature and at the same time have fun with friends and family.

There are many other things that we can do rather than wasting time in front of a television screen. In today’s fast paced electronic filled environment, it is imperative that we get time away from work and electronic devices. Rather than watching life on screens, we can live life and experience the world around us.

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