



BOSTON COMMON
ASSET MANAGEMENT

TO: The Economist Magazine, Letter to the Editor
RE: Violent video games
Date: August 10, 2005

Sir,

Your conclusion that resistance to the sale of violent video games to youth is merely the result of a generational divide and “skepticism of new media” is completely off mark. As investors and members of the Violence and Militarization of Society Working Group of the Interfaith Center of Corporate Responsibility, we have worked with the video game rating organization and numerous retailers over the past year on improving safeguards to prevent the sale of M-rated video games to youths under 17 years of age. These efforts are important on a number of levels, including financial. In June Take-Two Interactive Software was forced to lower fiscal year guidance as a result of pornographic content embedded in GTA: San Andreas that rendered the game unsaleable to anyone under 18. We are not “digital immigrants” that fear the unknown world of gaming. On the contrary, we are well aware and supportive of the educational benefits of video-games you mention. Marketing violence to youth is a separate issue. Protecting children from interactive play requiring them to solicit and beat prostitutes, kill cops and promote racial stereotypes in order to win is hardly analogous to historic objections to Elvis or the written texts of Plato.

Sincerely,

Boston Common Asset Management