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*Bowling for Columbine's Causal Argument a Strike*

Anybody who is an avid watcher of news television today will agree that violence dominates most "news" programs. Film director Michael Moore certainly thinks so, and his film *Bowling for Columbine* compellingly suggests that the media likes to show violence on television because that is what people find entertaining. Television producers are happy to feed our love for violence because, as we all know, money runs television, and news shows are no exception. In *Bowling for Columbine*, the director does an excellent job of using this cause and effect argument to try and prove that violence shown on news programs and in entertainment media contribute to the cause of violence in the United States.

Moore makes the case that those who run news programs are intentionally shooting news that involves violence because that is what the public enjoys. That is, rather than representing what really goes on in any given community, news programs seek out the most violent stories so that they can lead their evening news shows with riveting images. Unfortunately news isn't the only type of show to blame. Moore also uses the example of the famous show "Cops," and he speaks to the creator of the show in his

humble everyman style. Moore wants to know why "Cops" usually depicts white officers chasing black criminals. The answer to this question, Moore contends, is simple. We are undeniably a racist country. Moore investigates this theme of racism a cartoon segment voiced by the creators of "South Park." He makes the argument that as a result of blacks finally gaining "equal" rights, whites ran to suburban areas and bought all the guns that they could find in order to protect themselves from the black people. In Moore's argument, the main cause of violence is fear that is perpetuated through violent images and stories communicated in the media. In this specific case Moore suggests that "Cops"—along with plenty of other news services—have made it so that whites are afraid of black people.

Moore poses another question to the "Cops" creator, asking why all the criminal activity on "Cops" involves violence. Moore wonders why they don't show white collar crimes such as business men laundering money. The answer he gets is once again money. For some reason people are attracted to violence. The same reason that all the "Cops" episodes involve an officer chasing some criminal, who has allegedly committed a violent act, is the same reason that news shows around the country include black teenagers "shooting up the ghetto" and "robbing liquor stores." That is the type of news that people enjoy watching.

According to Moore this all goes back to the state of fear that is being created. The media continually helps develop this state of fear. News

programs are supposed to be accurate and they are supposed to be the television programming that we can actually trust. Unfortunately for us, we are continually let down by the false impressions that news programs create. Moore vividly demonstrates that by watching the news and other "reality" shows like "Cops," we tend to think that each day we are going to be put in situations involving violence at least three times, when in fact most people rarely encounter violence directly more than once a month.