

Video games are unfairly targeted

EDITORIAL

By **LACHLAN BARBER, LORENZO STUFANO, CONNOR JONES and MACKENZIE HUNTER**

THERE is not a more misjudged topic than the controversial issue of violent video games.

This is being talked about to an extent by TV shows, news articles and there are long debates on the issue.

A recent incident of violent video games being accused of causing real life violence is the case of an 8-year-old boy from Louisiana, US, who retrieved the family gun and shot his grandmother. The issue in this case is that before the incident the boy had been playing the video game *Grand Theft Auto IV*.

When it was found that the boy had been playing the game there was a chance for the media to point the blame to violent video games, even asking the creators of the game, Rockstar North, to make a statement on the issue.

When asked, Rockstar replied with "We just make video games, that's all".

Another example of video games being wrongly accused is the Sandy Hook Elementary school shooting, where 20-year old

Adam Lanza shot 20 children, six adult staff members and himself in Sandy Hook, Connecticut. The shooting prompted several gun control debates, eventually leading to the blame being shifted to video games.

It turned out that Lanza played *Call of Duty*, a video game where the goal is to shoot other players. When the media found out he played *Call of Duty*, they said he had a "Call of Duty obsession".

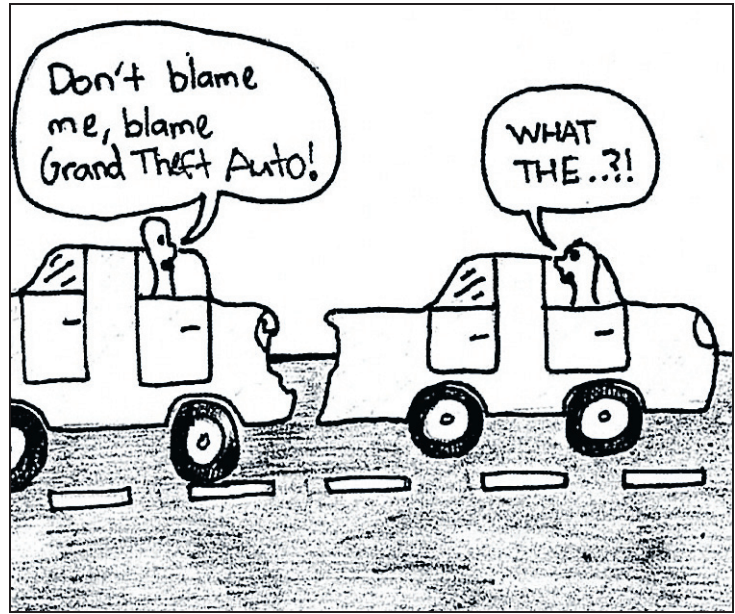
The media have previously blamed other forms of entertainment like music and movies for tragedies that involved shootings; in previous cases they blamed Marilyn Manson for the Columbine High School killings.

The media use these forms of entertainment as scapegoats rather than finding logical reasons.

Some of these shootings occur because the person behind them may have criminal or violent tendencies, they are seeking revenge or attention, or because of an underlying mental health problem.

Parents should be careful with the games they buy and look at the ratings when purchasing for their children. Games with a mature rating should be avoided and parents should also make sure there aren't any firearms accessible to children.

By doing this perhaps video games may finally be spared the blame.



Cartoon: Lorenzo Stufano



HOT: Art may imitate life this summer as temperatures are meant to soar.

Summer set to melt coast

By **ROSIE STIMSON, JASMINE BREWER and LARA THOMPSON**

BE prepared to sweat, that is what the Bureau of Meteorology has said as temperatures are set to soar to 45 degrees or higher this summer.

Already this month people of the Hunter and Central Coast have experienced temperatures of 30-plus degrees and this is worrying for the three months ahead.

The recent string of hot days has already attracted thousands of beach-goers to the coastal shores and surf clubs are preparing themselves for a busy summer.

However, this is not a good sign when it comes to bushfire danger; the rural fire services have said to prepare a plan of action to ensure

personal safety this summer.

Fire and Rescue NSW is urging house owners to check that fire alarm batteries are changed, especially after 173 people lost their lives in the Black Saturday bushfires of 2009.

To prevent this from happening people should listen to the bushfire rating categories which include, low to moderate, high, very high, severe, extreme, and catastrophic.

If the fire rating is low-moderate or high it is unlikely that action will be needed. If the rating is very high be on alert, if it is extreme to severe be ready to act and if it is catastrophic act now.

The main message from the Cancer Council is to slip, slop, slap, seek and slide when going outdoors this summer.

Hair-raising crop done for an important cause: a best friend

By **KRISTY HOSPES, JORDAN RIVERS and ALIYAH MYERS-LATHAM**

ELEVEN-YEAR-OLD Bella Wilkin shaved her head not only for the Leukaemia Foundation, but also for her best friend Daisy Collins, raising almost \$10,000 in the process.

Daisy was diagnosed with leukaemia when she was only four years old.

Ever since, Bella has been trying to think of different ways to help raise money to find a cure. As soon as the ad for Shave for a Cure started, Bella knew that was what she wanted to do.

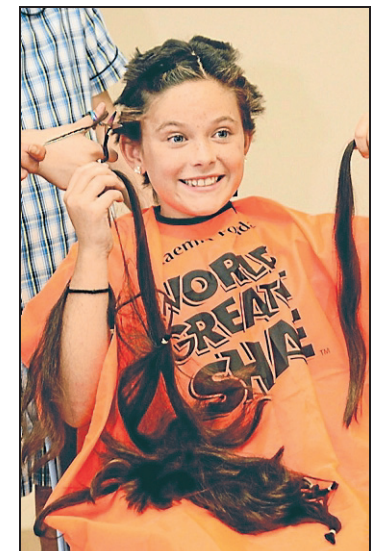
On March 13, as nervous as Bella was, she did the shave and raised \$9114, well over her target of \$5000.

This has made a great contribution to the Leukaemia Foundation's goal of \$17.5 million.

Once the numbers were added up, they in fact raised nearly \$20.5 million.

Bella is ecstatic about her achievement and hopes to raise even more money next year.

CHAMPION: Bella Wilkin loses it all for charity. Picture: Kristy Hospes



The fallout of chemical warfare

By **WADE LOGUE, HAROLD HUGHES, CAMERON JOHNSON and SAM LINDSAY**

ON August 21, a chemical attack was launched on the Syrian people, in the areas of Ghouta and Damascus. This was a climax in hostilities between the regime of Bashar al-Assad, Syria's president, and Syrian rebels.

The death toll for this attack is blurred: it is believed to be between 355 and 1729.

No one precisely knows who is responsible for the attacks; the United States, France, the United Kingdom and Sweden believe the Syrian government is responsible.

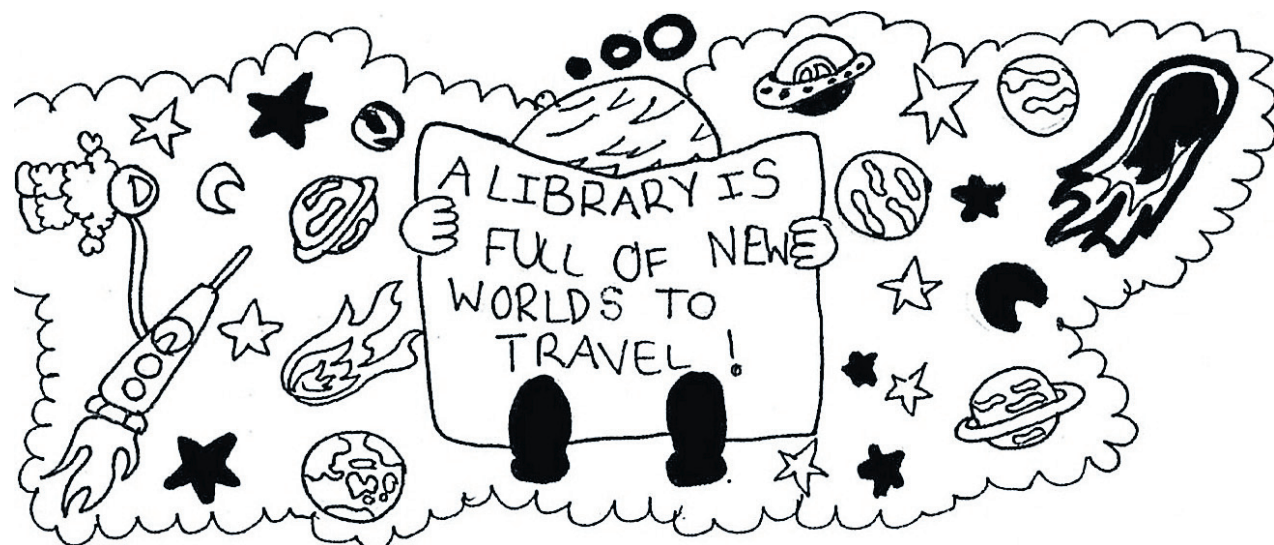
This caused the US to arm itself for intervention on the order of President Barack Obama. It armed cruise missiles and prepared forces when Mr Obama dramatically decided to ask for consent from Congress before launching the attack.

Congress voted the plan down and Mr Obama agreed to find another solution. A plan for disarmament was recently proposed and agreed to by the Syrian and US presidents.

However this is a very delicate situation, as Russia is one of Syria's allies, meaning it has a substantial military power to support it.

This incident has raised issues regarding the US's political power, and whether it has the right to be the world's enforcer.

OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN THIS SCHOOL NEWSPAPER ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE COMPETITION SPONSORS



Advertisement created by Amber O'Brien and Aliyah Myers-Latham, of Tuggerah Lakes Secondary College, Berkeley Vale.

Here for a good education, here for the community

13 19 87 newcastlepermanent.com.au

Here for good.

