Social Learning Theory

I agree with the Bandura's Social Learning Theory that aggressive behavior can be learned by viewing violent media content (Bandura 524). This theory is true because people learn through observing the attitudes and behaviors of others. A greater percentage of human behavior results from modeling the behavior of the surrounding environment. From observing others, an individual generates an idea with which new behaviors are performed, and afterward, this becomes coded information that acts as a guide for action.

Children have an increased likelihood to learn aggressive behavior from observing violent media content because young children view people around them as role models who significantly influence their behavior in several ways. At this young age children are not independent, and they easily imitate and observe many influential models such as the characters on TV, parents, teachers at school and friends within their peer group. These models offer children examples of pro and anti-social behaviors that if not managed well will become part of their behavior.

As explained by Bandura, human behavior is a product of a continuous reciprocal interaction between environmental, behavioral and cognitive influences (Bandura 524). It is expected that the influence of the media would impact the behavioral development of children significantly more than any other modeling factor because they observe this content repeatedly. Therefore, children would retain this content as mental images and symbolic codes that they would reproduce through physical capabilities. They will be motivated to engage in aggressive behaviors since they believe it is justified to act this way.

Through continual observation of the media content and recalling the reinforced models the children would make it their habit to imitate these characters that in the long run would

become part of their behavior. Therefore, it is apparent that aggressive behavior can be acquired through the process of observational learning.