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MEDIA PSYCHOLOGIST

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Rep w/1193

George Gerbner, Ph.D.
Cultural Environment Movement
P.O. Box 31847
Philadelphia, PA 19104

Dear George,

Saw you on C-SPAN the other night when it finally aired the videotape of the Violence Conference. CNN's coverage of the live proceedings was absolutely wretched and one couldn't get a clear picture of what was said and how the panel session ultimately came off. Its commercial interruptions were totally mindless and its intent to cut out Jeff Greenfield as much as possible was blatant. Thank God for C-SPAN.

I just wanted to tell you that I thought what you had to say was excellent, truly excellent, the high spot of the entire panel. I was particularly taken with your comments about freedom: freedom for writers to write unfettered with by-the-numbers formulae for violence, sex and car crashes in their scripts. Having written three movies for TV (two for CBS and one for NBC) and having many friends and patients who are screenwriters, I can assure you that you are totally correct in your assessment of development people forcing the writers into sacrificing keen-minded creative solutions for dull-witted sensationalism in order to achieve dramatic conflict. Worse, writers begin to self-censor after a while and eventually make the same sacrifice before even getting into story conferences. It is, alas, true industrial group-think. There's no need for cabals in Hollywood, conspiring to put on violent junk. The group-think and institutionalized thought serve the same function.

I hope there was some response to your CEM at the conference and that the organization gets actively engaged in making headway. If I can be of assistance out here in Hollywood, please let me know.

Sincerely,



Stuart Fischhoff, Ph.D.