

Parents' Music Resource Center

July 6, 1990

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Dr. George Gerbner

Dean

The Annenberg School of Communication
University of Pennsylvania
3620 Walnut Street, #C5
Philadelphia, PA 19104-3858

Dear Dr. Gerbner:

The Parents' Music Resource Center is a non-profit, educational organization that has worked to alert parents and consumers to graphic themes promoted to adolescents in popular music. Through our efforts, the record industry has implemented a voluntary, consumer labeling service on albums and tapes that contain lyrics that are violent, explicit, or promote drugs and alcohol.

We are now turning our attention to a dream we have long shared! We want to create an animated video for children. It will be approximately 28 minutes in length, and will teach children to think critically about their entertainment choices. This video will be distributed to parents, educators, school systems, youth professionals, and adolescent health centers. Enclosed is an early script treatment.

We feel that your advice and guidance is essential. We would like you to join our efforts by becoming a member of the Advisory Team for this project. Your known expertise in the field of television studies will help us ensure that the issues dealt with in this video truly help children develop the critical thinking skills they need in the area of entertainment choices.

We have found your materials from our 1987 symposium and your recent study on television violence to be instrumental in helping us prepare this treatment. We need your help and advice to let us know if we are on the right track and if the issues are dealt with fairly and completely.

We are also inviting the following people to be on our Advisory Team: Dr. Charles Guggenheim; Dr. Alvin Poussaint; Drs. Dorothy and Jerry Singer; Dr. Dorothy Rich.

I am enclosing bio information on the Executive Producer, Executive Director and Directors of this project.

We would like you, if you choose to become a member of the Advisory Team, to go over the treatment (enclosed), final script and classroom instructional materials that are

Letter To Dr. Gerbner
Page 2

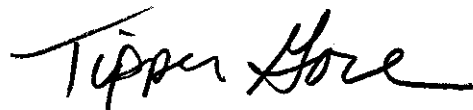
developed to enhance the video. We welcome your advice and comments on all aspects of the treatment and subject matter. The important element is your input!

We hope you can help us with this worthy project. Through our work with the American Medical Association, American Academy of Pediatrics and thousands of individuals who work with youth, we know that the need and demand for such a resource is great. Please help us fulfill that need.

We have letters of interest from the National PTA and the Discovery Channel to help distribute this film. The demand is great!

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to call or write. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tipper Gore".

Tipper Gore

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Baker".

Susan Baker

July 23, 1990

Tipper Gore and Susan Baker
Parents' Music Resource Center
1500 Arlington Blvd.
Arlington, VA 22209

Dear Ms. Gore and Ms. Baker:

Thank you for your letter and kind invitation of July 6. Yes I will be glad to serve on the Advisory Team.

I read the treatment. The material is imaginative and lively. It will undoubtedly make an interesting and useful film. I hope that the following comments can be taken into consideration in creating the script.

I am confused between the electric shock that sends Elliot into his dream sequence and the condition of "sensory overload." Is "overload" a dream? (He wakes up and is diagnosed as having suffered from e. shock on p. 26.) Also about the transition between the fantasy that takes place in Elliott's mind (from his point of view) and the shift to Zork, etc. Is that still his dream? If so, when he wakes up there should be no physical evidence ("Think" on tag, etc.) lest we confuse dream and reality. Then it's better just to learn from a dream. If not, and the intention is to present Zork "people" as plausible, then a transition is needed to that.

I wonder about the concept of sensory overload itself. Although lot of people talk about it, there is no evidence that such a thing exists. We "sense" (i.e. perceive) a small portion of what we are exposed to, and no more than our senses can manage. It is true that we are surrounded with more stimulating material than ever before, and people tend to worry about that (as they worried about books and "bookworms" before) but I am not convinced that is valid or useful for the intended audience. "Sensory overload comatose state" (p. 22) clearly defied experience and may reduce credibility. Overly frantic and mindless activity, confusion and distortion, telling stories to sell something (the "dollars and dollars and dollars" theme), or just the need to pick and choose -- these are some possible valid themes.

Even if it were valid, sensory overload is a quantitative and no qualitative concept. If the objective is to "think" -- what should be think about? Just to reduce the flow? No, we should think about the bases for choosing. More difficult, and it would take more time to develop, but I think it would be worth the effort.

I wonder about the negative and mindless portrayal of the parents (also inconsistent with their first appearance)

and the ridiculous doctors. The only positive adults are in fantasy.

The main point (Gamma lines on p. 25) is stated but not demonstrated. There is too much frantic activity that is unrelated to that (or as far as I can tell any) point. I admit it is difficult to demonstrate "wise" choice, but with the wonderful creativity evident in this treatment, may be it be tried.

I am enclosing pages on which you will find some further comments and questions.

This project is off to a great beginning! Good luck.

Sincerely yours,



George Gerbner
Professor of Communications

Parents' Music Resource Center

FOUNDERS

Mrs. Susan Baker
Mrs. Tipper Gore
Mrs. Pam Howar
Mrs. Sally Nevius

March 8, 1991

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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George Gerbner
Professor of Communications
The Annenberg School of Communications
University of Pennsylvania
3620 Walnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104-6220

Dear Dr. Gerbner:

We wanted to update you on the status of our film, "Media Mania" and thank you once again for your participation. Your assistance in this project has been greatly appreciated by the founders and Board of the Parents' Music Resource Center.

In 1990, we received a \$20,000 grant from the Alcoa Foundation toward our \$250,000 budget. We submitted several other proposals, the most notable to the Carnegie Corporation of New York for the remaining amount of our budget. Enclosed is a copy of their negative response.

While we are disappointed at their initial reaction, we still think this idea is so important. We believe that many of the criticisms they raised are valid and would like to address them and continue to pursue this important project. While our scripters are extremely talented in the entertainment area, we still need your help in the "how tos" of the educational messages we are trying to convey.

Can you give us anymore helpful advice? We realize your busy schedule and the importance of your current work, but hope you can take the time to look over the treatment once more, as well as Carnegie's letter.

We greatly appreciate all you have done to help us get this far. We hope we can continue to work together to provide the critical thinking skills our young people need.

Sincerely,



Tipper Gore
President

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**THE ANNENBERG SCHOOL FOR
COMMUNICATION**

UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA
3620 Walnut Street Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104-6220

March 28, 1991

Tipper Gore, President
Parents' Music Resource Center
1500 Arlington Blvd.
Arlington, VA 22209

Dear Ms. Gore:

Thank you for your letter and materials of March 8. Stewart and his reviewers simply did not like the entertaining quality of the script and wanted something more analytical and instructional. The best person to consult on that is Kathleen Tynner, Executive Director, Strategies for Media Literacy, SML Suite 306, 347 Dolores Street, San Francisco, CA 94110 (Tel: 415 621 2911).

If you would like to discuss other possible mutual interests, including a new initiative (see enclosed), I would be pleased to meet with you perhaps sometime in the morning of Friday, April 5 (when I have a luncheon meeting at George Washington University), or at some other convenient time.

Please let me know.

Sincerely yours



George Gerbner
Professor of Communication and Dean Emeritus
Tel: 215 898 6776 Fax: 215 898 2024
Internet: FGG@ASC.UPENN.EDU

THE ANNENBERG SCHOOL FOR
COMMUNICATION

UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA
3620 Walnut Street Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104-6220

March 28, 1991

Tipper Gore, President
Parents' Music Resource Center
1500 Arlington Blvd.
Arlington, VA 22209

Dear Ms. Gore:

Thank you for your letter and materials of March 8. Stewart and his reviewers simply did not like the entertaining quality of the script and wanted something more analytical and instructional. The best person to consult on that is Kathleen Tyner, Executive Director, Strategies for Media Literacy, SML Suite 306, 347 Dolores Street, San Francisco, CA 94110 (Tel: 415 621 2911).

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Please let me know.

Sincerely yours

George Gerbner
Professor of Communication and Dean Emeritus
Tel: 215 898 6776 Fax: 215 898 2024
Internet: FGG@ASC.UPENN.EDU

Nancy R. Hoit
1175 Main Street
Hingham, MA 02043

To: Dr. Serbner
Date: 6/21/95
Subject: Family Re-Union Conference
No. of Pages Including Cover 1
Receiver's FAX: 215-387-5202

Additional Comments:

In thinking about our conversation last night regarding the conference moderated by Vice President Gore, it's clear to me that your involvement would be too great an inconvenience for you. Fortunately, we have secured someone for whom this is a wonderful opportunity.

I hope that we have the chance to work together in the future when your schedule permits - and that you will be interested in the outcome of our conference.

Hoit Phone: 617-749-5563
Hoit FAX: 617-749-5638

For further information, or if there are problems in transmission:

Many thanks for your time and attention to this matter -
Nancy Hoit.