

THE ANNENBERG SCHOOL FOR
COMMUNICATION

UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

3620 Walnut Street Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104-6220

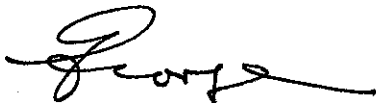
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October 4, 1993

Susan Stutman, M.A., M.S.W., B.C.D.
Executive Director
Institute for Mental Health Initiatives
Fax: 202 368 3891

Dear Susan:

We are trying out your scheme. I hope to get back to you in a few days and report how it works, what changes (if any) might be useful, and what it would cost to do the analysis on our fall sample.

Sincerely yours,



George Gerbner
Professor of Communication and Dean Emeritus

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October 11, 1993

Susan Stutman, M.A., M.S.W., B.C.D.
Executive Director
Institute for Mental Health Initiatives
Fax: 202 363 3891

Dear Susan:

We have tested the scheme and found it doable but need some clarification.

As I said when we met, coders can only record what they see in a clear and unambiguous way. It is then up to the analyst to arrive at more global and interpretive judgments on the basis of the data. Of course therapists may be able to interpret behavior on the screen; reliable and naive (but trained) coders should not attempt to do that. Even the definition of "behavior" is problematic; what we see is the enactment of a script by an actor as directed by a director. Whatever is there is supposed to advance the story, not necessarily reveal how people might act. Nevertheless, it has a formative effect on viewers.

In light of this, we (including the assistants who tested the items and would supervise coders) have these questions:

1. How specifically are we to define anger as an isolated emotion? By this we note potential confusion as to emotions which can be associated with anger -- frustration, annoyance, passionate speech -- but are not 'pure' anger. There are other problems too, as in cases where characters perform harmful acts without outward show of anger. So - is deadpan violence anger? Suffering indignities that SHOULD anger but do not? Our rule would be that only clear-cut, conventionally expressed, typically "angry" states, and the scenes in which they occur, would be coded.
2. How deeply are we to explore behavioral manifestations and responses to anger? Because coders cannot interpret, but only code 'what is', factors such as suppressed anger, or detailed angry factors (i.e. threats, foul language) will require extensive additional instruction.
3. How are we to interpret the effects of anger? What do we mean by angry scenes which 'improve' and 'deteriorate'? What about delayed effects: for example, where an angry scene which 'deteriorated' relations at the time was later seen as constructive? Are we looking only within scenes or the relation of these scenes over time? Final conclusion?

4. In many anger scenes there is no clear target, or there is mutual recrimination, general shouting. This requires extensive description and analysis.

5. Anger management is rare - scripts often cut from anger scenes to "later", etc. and one may (or may not) know how it came out, but not how it was "managed."

So you see there are problems. The only solution I can see is to select and code scenes in which the persons and relations are unambiguous and in which many if not most of your categories (with slight refinement) are codable.

This is a significant undertaking both in time, training, and importance. The incremental cost would be:

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Graduate assistant coordinator, 2 months | \$3,300 |
| Coding of pilot samples, including double-coding for reliability test, 300 hours at \$10 per hr..... | 3,000 |
| Training of coders, 200 hrs. at \$8 per hr. | 1,600 |
| Trainer and supervisor, 6 weeks at \$15 per hr..... | 3,600 |
| Keypunching and verification of data..... | 1,000 |
| Professional services, analysis of data, report writing | 7,000 |
| Miscellaneous (computer, coding sheets, supplies, duplicating, secretarial, space, utilities) | <u>2,500</u> |
| Total | \$15,000 |

If no report is required, only delivery of data, this could be reduced by \$5,000.

We are beginning the analysis of this season's sample next week. If you would like to be included, please let me know by Thursday. Of course, we can take a more leisurely route and plan for next year.

Sincerely yours,



George Gerbner
Professor and Dean Emeritus

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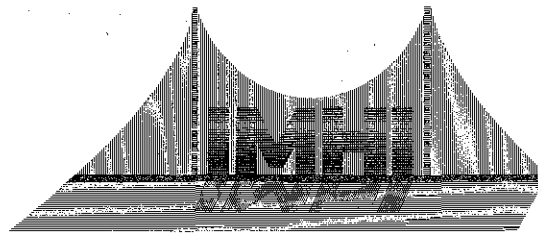
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George Gerbner
Professor and Dean Emeritus



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MENTAL HEALTH

RHODA BARUCH, E.D.D.
President

SUZANNE STUTMAN, MA, M.S.W., B.C.D.
Executive Director

CAROL AUERBACH, M.S.
Vice President

November 2, 1993

George Gerbner, Ph.D.
University of Pennsylvania
3620 Walnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104-6220

Dear Dr. Gerbner,

We look forward to working with you and your team on the research project. We are particularly interested in the analysis of episodes of anger in television programming, including (1) the anger theme, (2) the characteristics of the angry character, and (3) the variety of skills used in managing the anger. Examples of the last category will be most helpful when your coders can supply the. We expect that the findings from such a content analysis will play an important part in changing our "cultural environment," a mission to which you are dedicated. Indeed, you have provided leadership in defining and raising awareness about this aspect of our society.

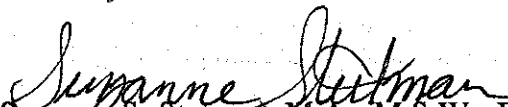
This letter will serve as our agreement. If you agree with the following conditions, please sign at the bottom and return to me.

As we discussed over the phone, the research will begin in November and will last approximately six months. During that time, IMHI will be available as a resource to supply you with applicable information regarding anger and anger management and if needed to help in the training of coders. The final report will be co-authored by Dr. Gerbner and representatives of IMHI.

The \$15,000 fee for services will be paid in three payments of \$5,000. The first payment will be sent upon receipt of a signed copy of this agreement, the second payment will be sent 90 days after we receive the signed copy, and the final payment will be made upon completion of the report. All checks will be issued to the The Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania.

We are very excited about this project and look forward to working with you. Please call me at (202) 364-7111 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,


Suzanne S. Stutman, M.A., M.S.W., B.C.D.
Executive Director

Approved _____

Date _____

INSTITUTE for MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVES

4545 42nd Street, N.W. Suite 311 Washington, D.C. 20016 (202) 364-7111 FAX 363-3891

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- Rae Goodell Simpson, Ph.D.
Parent Educator
- Claudia Sloan
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- Sheila Smith
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Price Stern Sloan, Inc.
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