

Annenberg Report Finds Minorities Relegated to Minor Roles on Tv Shows

New York—Men outnumber women three to one. Orientals are over-represented, while Blacks and Hispanics are under-represented, and most majority types get proportionately more leading roles.

These are some of the findings of "Women and Minorities in Television Drama, 1969-1978," a research report prepared in collaboration with the Screen Actors Guild and released Oct. 29. The report was compiled by George Gerbner and Nancy Signorielli of the Annenberg School of Communications, University of Pennsylvania.

The programs included in the sample for the study were those aired from 1969 through 1978 during one week of prime time (8 to 11 p.m. EST) and weekend-daytime (8 a.m. to 2 p.m.), Saturday and Sunday programming in the fall of each year, plus spring samples in 1975 and 1976. A six-year sample (1970-1976) was subjected to special analysis to determine the ethnic background of the characters.

The researchers also used what they termed "cultivation analysis," which they explain as "that part of our research which investigates the contribution of television viewing to people's conceptions of social reality."

The tv drama is described as "a highly controlled assembly-line product governed by a relatively few formulas." The roles in tv drama that are "most numerous are those for whom the world of television has most use."

While noting that it is not necessarily fair or just that women and minority roles on tv should be mathematically in proportion to their percentage in society, the researchers do, however, use what they term a Representational Index. This is a ratio of the percentage of tv representation to the actual population percentage, multiplied by 100.

The report also found that:

- Among leading characters created specifically for children, males outnumber females 5.4 to 1.
- Orientals have been over-represented relative to their share of the population.
- American Indian characters in prime-time drama matched their share of the population, though not in leading roles, and have been virtually excluded from children's programs.
- Blacks and Hispanics have been under-represented in both prime time and children's daytime programming.
- More than half of the prime-time population is 25 to 45, in contrast to society's 27 percent.
- Professionals, especially medical and legal, are over-represented, "and of course, police and criminals."

In a section on "role characteristics" in tv drama, women's concerns are said to be portrayed as marriage, romance, and the family. "Such typecasting indicates," the report charges, "not only a concentration of women's roles in these areas but also a restriction of opportunities."

"A rather gloomy picture of aging" is presented on tv, the report contends. Older persons are practically invisible, making up only 2.2 percent of the fictional population, compared to society's 11 percent.

The report comes down heavily on violence,

which it asserts "rules the symbolic world of tv." On a 10-year average, there is a rate of five violent incidents per hour in prime time and 18 per hour in weekend daytime children's programming. The researcher's definition of violence is: "...an overt expression of physical force compelling action against one's will on pain of being hurt or killed, or actually hurting or killing."

Does viewing affect perceptions? The researchers did a correlation between the amount of viewing and how many believe the number of older people, the health of older people, and the longevity of older people are declining. They found a direct relationship that is not lessened by various controls for sex, education, or income.

Observed the research report: "Heavy viewers are more likely to believe that old people are disappearing. The more time one spends watching television, the more one thinks that there are fewer older people around, and that those who are may be dying sooner."

Copies of the report are available from either: The Screen Actors Guild, 7750 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood, Calif. 90046, or The Annenberg School of Communications, University of Pennsylvania, 2620 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, Pa. 19104.

Boob tube lives up to its name

By MICHELE LANDSBERG

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When you turn on the TV tonight for an hour or two of mental browsing, just think: You're plugging into a network of 100 million other North Americans, your nerves flicking to the same stimuli and your brain imprinting the same images.

And all of you are getting more sexist, racist and deluded the longer you watch.

Now wait a minute; don't get mad at me. That's not my conclusion. It's the conclusion of the most respected TV-watcher-watchers in the business. . . . the experts at the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania, who base those findings on 10 years of research.

On your TV tonight you'll see and believe in a miniature model of our world. . . . but a skewed model, where men form 73 per cent of the population, women are a compliant and adorable minority, and old people don't exist except as cartoons.

The TV men are vigorous, dominant professional types in their 30s or early 40s. In fact, TV is a complete world of 34-year-old men. It's odd how passively we accept that, because, of course, it doesn't reflect anything

real except for the "consumer income curve." The men who create TV are creating it for the middle-class men like themselves with money to spend.

Most of the women who flutter and swoop and simper around these TV men are not in their 30s, but in their 20s. "The character population in TV drama," remarks the Annenberg study, dryly, "is structured to provide an abundance of younger women for older men."

One of the most fascinating insights of the study is the way in which "TV women age faster than men." By middle-age, the women are depicted as old while the men are still dashing heroes with "romantic possibilities." I hadn't noticed it before, but of course it's true. And when TV women get old, they're automatically frail, accident-prone and the Character Most Likely to be Murdered: Victims.

Old age is bad news on TV, of course. So bad that it's practically wiped out of existence: Only 2 per cent of TV's characters are old (and usually batty) compared with 11 per cent of the real population.

Well, what of it? I hear the restless reader muttering. So what if women are portrayed as overwhelmingly young, attractive and "benign but powerless," to quote the study? Isn't this more feminist niggling and fussing

over trivia? After all, it's just TV.

Yeah. Only TV. The most powerful and pervasive force in our history. (You really think those advertisers would spend billions of dollars if TV didn't sway and mould us?) In fact, what the Annenberg studies spell out is just how massive an influence TV has on us. A couple of years ago, Annenberg told us about the "mean world syndrome" — heavy TV viewers believe that the cities are 10 times more violent than they really are, and have extreme law-and-order ideas to match their TV-shaped world.

Now we learn that heavy TV viewers are measurably more sexist. According to Annenberg's 10-year study combined with national opinion polls, TV buffs really think that women's place is in the home, that women shouldn't work, that men are more suited "emotionally" for politics. Feminists, gnash your teeth. TV addicts are immune to the movement.

Worse and worse, TV is even more perniciously sexist for children. Men outnumber women more than 5 to 1 on children's programming, and anyone who has watched a morning of cartoons knows how gross are the stereotypes.

True, we're not all heavy viewers and we're not all

lobotomized. But even if you count yourself among the enlightened, can you really swear that TV has not affected your idea of female beauty, your concept of a "man's role," or your perception of black and aged people?

It's sinister. The omnipotent story-teller of our time, the one-eyed hypnotist in our living rooms, the enchanter who mesmerizes our children, is telling lies and warping our view of the world.

I'd love to think that we could fight back against all this unfair distortion with our very own public network. But CBC has been a perpetual disappointment. Its 1974 internal "status of women" report documented the CBC's own sexism and discrimination against women employees, but progress since then has been slow and halting.

During last year's election, the CBC trumpeted its political coverage with newspaper ads showing the all-male CBC news team. This year won't be any different. Of 28 reporters for the National News, only two are women. In Canada, on the public network, the world as seen through the eyes of the National News is still young, white and overwhelmingly male.

Security payments were not part of the federal budget from 1935 to 1969, and were only added to the budget in the latter year because the surpluses then being run by the Social Security system were useful in concealing the full costs of the Vietnam War. Califano's misrepresentations may have contributed to the confusions evident in the *Times* article, Cruikshank told *BT*, "though he has backed off somewhat since that time."

Cruikshank's own point of view is that declarations like Califano's have blown the "burden of the elderly" completely out of proportion by omitting to mention (1) that taxes for youth—including education and the public schools—are mainly found in State budgets, while those for the elderly are centralized at the federal level, and (2) that generalizations on this subject are not possible until careful statistical account has been taken of the number of people in the population who are "working and producing" as compared with the number who aren't—including the percentages of the latter represented by the young and the unemployed.

One of the *BT* contacts who expressed complete certainty that Cruikshank had been misquoted, even before he had had an opportunity to speak with him, was Jack Ossofsky, executive director of the National Council on Aging, who was also quoted in the *Times* article. Ossofsky confirmed the accuracy of his own statements, as quoted in the *Times*, to the effect that American assumptions about retirement must be completely rethought in view of the fact that cessation of work-life is now understood to be medically and psychologically detrimental to senior citizens.

Contact: Nelson H. Cruikshank, Counselor to the President on Aging, Room 425, Executive Office Bldg., Washington, DC 20503, (202) 456-7097; Jack Ossofsky, Executive Director, National Council on Aging, 1828 L St., NW, Washington, DC 20036, (202) 223-6250. The NCA's new Fact-Book on Aging, which includes information on such subjects as health, housing, demographics, income, employment, and crime victimization, is \$10.00 postpaid (paperback only); The Myth and Reality of Aging, published in 1975 and based on a major Louis Harris poll commissioned by NCA, is now in its fourth printing and is available at \$9.00 postpaid (paperback only).

TELEVISION AS A NATIONAL "CHURCH"— AND THE POLITICAL DANGERS...

Readers of *Psychology Today* will recall an article by George Gerbner and Larry Gross that appeared in the April 1976 issue under the title "The Scary World of TV's Heavy Viewer." It revealed that among the majority of American viewers who watch TV frequently, intensively, and nonselectively, the medium has apparently produced a variant conception of social reality. Heavy viewers, for example, estimated their chances of being victimized by a criminal at astronomical rates bearing no relationship to actual crime indices.

Dr. Gerbner is the dean of the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications, and the guiding force behind a series of methodologically sophisticated projects seeking (1) quantitative definitions and surveys of program "content," and (2) acceptable descriptions of TV as a culture-wide "message system" that presents "coherent images of life

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and society." The Annenberg projects devoted to these ends have been in existence for just over a decade, and the *Psychology Today* article was in effect a dry run for a series of fuller "Violence Profiles," the most recent of which (No. 9) appeared in the Summer 1978 issue of the *Journal of Communication*. All versions of the school's research carry the same fearful implications, however, summed up in Gerbner's recent observation, during a *BT* interview, that TV represents "a kind of self-contained culture that would have been envied by Hitler and the medieval church"—not least because its effective communication of a self-defined "reality" is supported out of the pocketbooks of those being indoctrinated.

As a native of Hungary who left for the United States in 1939, when the propaganda machine of Josef Goebbels had been instrumental in opening Eastern Europe to Nazi penetration, Gerbner became one of a group of postwar researchers who worked with Theodore Adorno in studies of "the authoritarian personality." Adorno, Gerbner noted to *BT*, was at work on the subject of television as early as the forties, and his article "On Television" included an acknowledgment of the contribution Gerbner had made in extensive conversations with the author.

Looking at television from an intellectual position that has been decades in the making, Gerbner has no hesitation in seeing its emergence as the third stage in a historical process that (1) produced a European pre-industrial culture profoundly unified by the information disseminated by church, state, and other storytellers, including the anonymous transmitters of what we now characterize as "folklore"; (2) which then, in the period of the Industrial Revolution, produced a de-ritualized culture within which a whole series of "independent publics" could grow up around the print media; and which now (3) seems to have created a unique TV medium whose simultaneous saturation of the minds of millions of people exceeds even that attained by the preachers and artists of medieval times, who once filled the European ear and eye with images of salvation, damnation, and the crucified Christ.

Gerbner admires the earliest work of Marshall McLuhan, especially *The Mechanical Bride*, but feels that McLuhan went badly astray when he began to campaign for the notion that the medium is the message. "The message of the medium is the message," is Gerbner's reply, since TV is not a system of philosophical contemplation but—like the religious system of the Middle Ages—a direct influence on conduct. As only one example of the types of findings that have become normative in this field, Gerbner noted in his recent *Journal of Communications* article the work of a recent researcher who has found "that, over time, newspaper reading predicted significant increases in children's political interest and knowledge, while television exposure was related to significant reductions in these aspects of political learning. Moreover, when compared with interpersonal political discussion, television and newspaper exposure maintained equal or greater relevance to children's political socialization. Another study found that adult heavy television viewers were less active and less interested in political affairs than light viewers."

Gerbner and his co-researchers are well aware of the methodological problems in trying to separate out the effects of TV from those of other cultural influences. As part of their Cultural Indicators project, they have developed a system of "Message System Analysis" that monitors world network television drama, and has used carefully trained analysts to "observe and code various aspects of television content. By 1978, 1437 programs, 4106 major characters, and 10,429 minor characters had been analyzed." In turn, these careful quantitative analyses help to inform the school's program of "Cultivation Analysis," which seeks to answer such questions as: "How are these [TV] images reflected in the assumptions and values held by audiences? How are the 'lessons' of symbolic behavior applied to real life?" Some of the findings to date:

- "Cultivation Analysis during the past five years has revealed a consistent and significant relationship between television exposure and many aspects of social reality. Two such aspects seem to be particularly salient to [Violence Profile No. 9]—perceived danger, and mistrust and alienation." Correlations between the latter and heavy TV viewing have

been established several times by the National Opinion Research Center and other survey groups. In 1975, when NORC asked respondents whether they expected the United States "to fight in another war within the next ten years," 70 percent of light viewers and 76 percent of heavy viewers answered "Yes."

- Using their well-known "Violence Index," whose analyses are the current official measure of how much violence appears in TV programming each year, the Annenberg researchers found a sharply defined peak of violence for almost every category (including "comic" and "cartoon" programs) in 1976, followed by a decline in the fall of 1977 that has continued into the present TV season.
- "The pecking order of both general mayhem and killing is dominated by men—American, white, middle-class, and in the prime of life. But at the very top of the general order of victimizers are 'bad' women, old men, and 'bad' men, in that order. The presence of evil at the top of the power hierarchy suggests the dramatic role of villains provoking heroes to action ... At the bottom of the dramatic pecking order we find women, lower-class people, and old people. Of the 20 most victimized groups (both for total mayhem and killing), all but three are composed of women."

Only a "new *symbolic* environmental protection agency," Gerbner observed to *BT*—one dedicated to protecting us from image and idea pollution rather than hydrocarbons—could begin to cope with this indoctrinating system at a time when 98 percent of all Americans watch TV and the majority, about 60 percent, "are monopolized *nonselectively* by TV, with their frame of life essentially given by television." As the latter especially are confirmed in a paranoid vision of reality, and become a virtual cultural underclass unable to gain a cognitive "handle" on the process that absorbs them, Gerbner feels a strong unease about the possibilities for political manipulation of a "very large and potentially mobilizable group."

Contact: Dr. George Gerbner, Annenberg School of Communications, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA 19104. The full-length report on which "Violence Profile No. 9" was based, Trends in Network TV Drama and Viewer Conceptions of Social Reality, is available from Avis Beck of the Annenberg School at \$15.50 per copy, postpaid.

...AND OTHER CURRENT RESEARCH ON THE MEDIA, POPULAR CULTURE, AND CITIES

Prof. Muriel Cantor of American University is one of a number of American sociologists currently devoting much or most of their time to studies of the media—especially national TV—and her dissertation, published in 1971 under the title *The Hollywood TV Producer: His Work and His Audience*, remains a standard introduction to one aspect of the field. She recently characterized herself to *BT* as "a re-entry woman" whose work has paralleled that of such analysts and scholars as Daniel Bell, Kevin Phillips, and Michael Harrington.

Like George Gerbner, Cantor is particularly concerned about the government's relationship with the media, and the fact that the programming on national network channels represents essentially "what the government wants us to hear." All aspects of TV, she observed, including drama and the news, are subject to a series of controls that—even when they are intended to assure "fairness"—put government in the position of media controller. "Even TV violence," she noted, "can be said to be 'government-sponsored.' That in itself makes it a political issue."

Cantor's present work, with two co-researchers, is centered on the subject of "The Popular Arts in America," and includes content analyses intended to establish "how sex has been presented in fiction directed at women." She also has strong interests in the sociology of work generally, and takes part in a marriage and family studies program that includes an unusually successful course—half-applied and half-theoretical—on *Jobs and Careers*. ("We can't keep the students away.") One of her most drastic conclusions from this aspect of her work is that about 80 percent of all American workers are now underemployed.

Herbert Gans of Columbia University is so well known for his work in urban affairs that it may come as a surprise to some readers of *BT* that his major book, *Deciding What's News*, will be published by Pantheon in March (price not yet established). "I've always been interested in the mass media," Gans recently observed to *BT*, "always interested in mass culture." Gans started work in the 1960's on his study of "how journalists make decisions—the values, pressures, and opportunities they confront. I hung around a long time and talked to a lot of people. The result could be characterized as a fairly big book."

Gans' concern with cities and suburbs continues unabated, however, and he characterized the present moment in national affairs as "one that's been coming for a long time. A plurality of Americans now lives in the suburbs." Gans acknowledged that a certain feeling of depression has now settled in among urbanologists as it becomes clear that one "sixties dream"—that the nation would soon begin to redress the economic imbalance between center-city and suburb—comes to look increasingly unlikely. Indeed, even the older references to "suburbia" as a vaguely homogeneous entity have become obsolete, since today "there is no such thing as 'suburbia.' There are many suburban communities." The self-concern exhibited by these municipalities leaves little room for the types of concern about the cities and healthy regional development that were being urged on Americans in the sixties and early seventies.

A parallel breakdown of earlier assumptions can be seen, Gans observed to *BT*, in the fact that "there is no theory of the city anymore." The earlier ecological model "simply doesn't work any longer." Gans himself sees the subject of urban economics as probably more relevant, now, than urban sociology. But the empirical work on economics is just beginning, and neo-Marxist studies of the type now becoming more common, though they show promise, are sometimes "just ideology."

"The most general point about the fate of the cities," Gans declared to *BT*, "is that it is related to the broader capitalist system." One of his own major research interests at the moment lies in the area of national economic policies and patterns as they impact on "declining regions."

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PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION COUNCIL TO MEET ON ERA REFERENDUM

The December issue of the *APA Monitor* carried what one of *BT*'s Washington sources referred to as an "unusually chaste" announcement of the organization's forthcoming referendum on the ERA boycott (*BT*, Nov. 20), buried at the very bottom of the newspaper's front page in the form of a two-inch squib. But more recent conversations with some of those supporting the referendum—as well as members of the APA's staff—suggest that the organization's journalistic reticence may be the outcome of some unusually conflicted feelings that now center on this issue.

APA's Council, the governing body of more than 50 members representing the association's 35 divisions and State affiliates, will be meeting at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington on January 19-21, and heavy discussion of the referendum question is expected. One sign of the expectations on this score: discussion of the issue has been placed near the top of the agenda, and may take up more than half of the time allotted for the meeting.

Those who helped to push the number of signatures on the referendum petition past the point at which a vote became mandatory have told *BT* that APA's Washington staff is strongly but not solidly opposed to the poll, which will permit members to "approve or disapprove" the council's prohibition against holding APA meetings in States which have not approved the ERA—a decision that led the organization to cancel the 1979 Atlanta convention *after* preliminary agreements with that city's hotels had been signed. At least one member of the APA's front office, referendum supporters have told *BT*, was among the signatories to the petition.

Int'l House Alumni News (Berkeley)
January 1979

George Gerbner, '41-'42, On T.V. Violence

The American Medical Association has sponsored a public strategy session to discuss the current state of TV violence and what to do about it.

George Gerbner, Dean of the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communication, attended the forum, and said he and his staff have kept a "TV Violence Index" for the last decade.

After a brief decline in 1973, Gerbner said, the violence level has been rising ever since, and now stands higher than ever. Psychological surveys of television watchers, he said, reveal that heavy viewers feel "a significantly higher sense of personal risk and suspicion" about society than do those who watch TV less frequently.

TV violence, according to the panel, is certainly not the only source of increased aggression in some children, but scientists now have a high degree of conviction that it is a factor for those children who are vulnerable because they are either seriously affected or traumatized by other forces in their lives. Conceivably there could be millions of such children.

Apparently, the behavior of children changes dramatically when they watch TV programs emphasizing "positive social behavior." They demonstrate increased cooperation, sharing an understanding of others' feelings, and an ability to verbalize their own feelings. In some cases their ability to obey rules and play imaginatively often improves.

Alternative Rating Systems — Something More Than Just Head Counts

***As NCCB prepares for a national test of its
Quality Index™ *, NAB, CPB, Ford, Markle and
others begin meetings***

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Traditional television program rating services provide broadcasters, advertisers, and a concerned public with only an estimate of the size of the audiences of various programs. The basic assumption of this approach is that audience size is an acceptable barometer of program popularity. Repeat viewing is implicitly accepted as the best measure of program quality, although studies show that only 55 % of the audience for a program episode will have watched the previous episode. Moreover, it is commonly known that a show's rating is largely determined by program scheduling.

Current media uses and gratification research suggest that an individual's reaction to a program should not be assumed. It has been well demonstrated that actual viewing behavior does not necessarily represent viewing preferences (nor vice versa).

Noting that a program's quality cannot simply be defined with respect to the size of its audience, the National Citizens Committee for Broadcasting (NCCB) developed in 1976 what is believed to be a methodologically sound test instrument intended to gauge viewer satisfaction (primarily enjoyment and importance). The instrument was developed by NCCB under the direction of Dr. Andre de Vernel. The test instrument was developed with financial support from both foundation sources and a major national advertiser. Having submitted its test instrument to several of the most prominent experts in the opinion research field, NCCB determined in 1977 to conduct a pilot test of the instrument.

NCCB undertook a one-week, two hundred-home test. During a week in November 1977, over 200 adults in the Washington, D.C. area recorded and evaluated the television programs they watched, using a special, copyrighted diary designed by NCCB. The test, conducted under the supervision of Dr. Joseph Philport of the University of Maryland, was intended to determine exactly what the quality instrument was capable of measuring — and what it was not capable of measuring.

Although the results of the 1977 pilot test are still being evaluated by Philport and by the Annenberg School of Communications of the University of Pennsylvania, current data indicate that the test was highly successful and that the instrument is ready for implementation on a national level.

Dr. Philport cautioned that the NCCB pilot sample was too small to generalize nationwide. Nevertheless, he said "the findings indicate that the diary provides a valid measure of perceived program quality and the Quality Index is not a duplication of the current program ratings. For example, "Happy Days" rated third in the NCCB ratings portion of the test, but ranked 27th in the Quality Index.

As indicated, the report on the pilot study by NCCB has not yet been made public. Rather, the report and analyses of the raw data collected were made widely available to the foundation community and academic community. As a result, interest in alternative ratings and the potential they hold for the future is increasing dramatically.

On December 31, 1978, Carolyn Setlow authored an article in the *New York Times* referring to the current activities in the alternative rating areas. Setlow, it should be noted, had at one time agreed to become President of NCCB based on her enthusiasm for NCCB's Quality Index, but, for personal reasons, was unable to assume the position. She is now director of corporate planning for Newsweek, Inc., and a consultant to the Markle Foundation on alternative rating systems.

In her article, Setlow revealed that two important meetings have taken place in the foundation community on qualitative ratings. Fred Friendly of the Ford Foundation met with Donald Thurston of the National Association of Broadcasters and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. When contacted by access, Friendly disclaimed any major significance to the meeting.

Setlow's article also mentioned a conference to be held in New York

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* Quality Index is a trademark of the National Citizens Committee for Broadcasting.

Rating Systems

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during the week of January 8, 1979, sponsored by the Markle Foundation. Jean Firstenberg, a program officer for Markle, stated that attendance at the conference was limited to a select group of technical experts picked by Markle.

The precise purpose of these meetings is not clear. CPB and NAB have both announced special interest in developing quality rating systems. A recent CPB report, for example, stated: "Look to 1979 as the year of qualitative broadcast ratings, as CPB begins investigating audience research systems sensitive to viewers' evaluations of television programs."

The NCCB is proceeding with a plan to implement its already developed Quality Index before the Fall's new season is completed. According to Samuel A. Simon, Executive Director of NCCB: "The Quality Index that we have developed needs only minor modifications to be ready for a full scale nationwide test. We are currently working with Dr. Philport of the University of Maryland and Dean George Gerbner of the Annenberg School of Communications." Financing for the NCCB nationwide implementation is at this time still uncertain, although Simon indicated that considerable commercial interest has been expressed and that NCCB is not adverse to working with industry in implementing its Quality Index.

In contrast, PBS's "I, Claudius," ranked 46th in the ratings, but first in the Quality Index.

Other results of the 1977 test, none of which has previously been publicly released, indicated that "All in the Family," "One Day at a Time," and "Circus of the Stars" all ranked the same in the ratings, but scored radically different under the Quality Index. Thus, "All in the Family" scored 11th in quality, "One Day at a Time" 20th, and "Circus of the Stars" 35th.

The Quality Index reveals two measures of viewer reaction — enjoyment and importance. These two scores can best be examined with respect to "Sixty Minutes." While ranking first in ratings and fourth in the Quality Scores, there is a fairly sharp contrast in the program's Importance and Enjoyment ratings. The program had a relatively high Importance Score, and an average Enjoyment Score.

The one-week test also collected demographic data. That is, its ratings and Quality Index data were collected based on sex, age, occupation and educational level of the viewer. The breakdown of the results provided no surprises. Indeed, they tended to validate common-sense expectations. Thus, those with higher educational levels tended to prefer "M*A*S*H," while those with a lower educational level tended to prefer "Laverne and Shirley."

Americans are called beset by crime myths

An average American's opinions about crime are enshrouded by mythology, some of it the result of simple misinformation and some of it the product of television drama that greatly exaggerates the risks of ordinary life, two experts said yesterday.

The misinformation gets in the way of mustering public support for cheaper and perhaps more effective methods of treating convicts. Television's picture of crime, however, does more subtle damage, creating unreal fears and making people feel helpless, the experts said.

The statements by Allen F. Breed, director of the National Institute of Corrections, and George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania, came during a seminar called "Crime and People: Myths and Realities," held yesterday at Morgan State University.

The seminar, attended by about 100 persons, was sponsored by the university and the Maryland Conference of Social Concern, a private organization.

Mr. Breed, the former head of California's juvenile corrections system, spent much of his speech detailing a list of "myths" about crime and their corresponding "truths." Among the statistics he cited:

- Of the reported crime in the United States, 14 per cent is violent and 86 per cent is against property.
- Only 5 per cent of the victims of gun-carrying robbers required medical care, whereas 13 per cent of the victims of unarmed robbers required it.
- About 70 per cent of unarmed robbers committed violence during their crimes.
- Men are twice as likely to be victims of robberies and assaults as women.
- In a study of Washington, only 4 per cent of all accused persons released on bail failed to show up at trial. Neither being a local resident nor the possibility of getting a severe sentence if found guilty had any correlation with a person's likelihood of showing up for trial.
- Among convicts in prison, 67 per cent had jobs a month before they were arrested, 60 per cent lived with family members and only 3 per cent were on welfare.
- The average length of prison sentences is going up nationally. In 1945, it was 16.5 months, in 1965 it was 33.5 months and in 1975 it was 45.5 months.
- Among persons arrested in Maryland, 44 per cent are black. Among the persons sent to prison here, 77 per cent are black.
- About 65 per cent of the convicts in Maryland's prisons are there for non-violent crimes.

Mr. Breed said misconceptions about crime, as well as the lack of a "criminal-justice constituency," leave discussion of such delicate subjects as whether to build new prisons to "politicians who can get away with law-and-order rhetoric that we can control crime merely by repressive measures."

Incarceration today is by far the most expensive way of dealing with criminals, he said, saying that building new prisons costs between \$35,000 and \$50,000 per inmate and that the price of keeping a convict in prison for a year is between \$12,000 and \$25,000.

He said that for nonviolent criminals, restitution, fines and supervised probation offer alternatives that are all cheaper than imprisonment and "on empirical evidence, no greater threat to society."

An idea Mr. Breed said was worthy of consideration is that of "free-market" prisons, run privately and licensed by the state. A prisoner would be given a voucher from the state for the cost of his incarceration and would be able to pick his own prison.

The accountability and "climate of vol-

unteerism" in such a system, he said, "might foster true self-reform on the part of inmates."

In his speech, Dr. Gerbner argued that television—and particularly television drama—is now "the greatest common denominator" of American culture, a power that rivals that of religion in pre-industrial, tribal societies.

There are incidents of violence in about 66 per cent of all television dramas on prime time, and on weekend prime-time periods, 90 per cent of the dramas include violence, he said.

About 60 per cent of all characters in TV dramas are involved in some kind of violence—either as perpetrators or victims—and 10 per cent are involved in killing, he said his studies showed.

Furthermore, Dr. Gerbner said his studies have shown that persons who watch more than three or four hours of television a day are "more afraid of strangers . . . that person greatly exaggerates the amount of violence involved in crime."

The combined result is that television creates disproportionate fears among certain segments of society—fears that have little or nothing to do with actual crime rates, he argued.

"People who are heavy viewers are more likely to exhibit greater fears than their next-door neighbors who are exposed to the same real-life dangers but watch less or no television," he said.

What he sees as the emphasis on violence in television drama has lately become a problem in television news, he said.

The invention of portable, remote cameras has "heightened the ability, and therefore the temptation" to cover dramatic, violent stories, particularly those that most closely resemble crimes seen on TV drama.

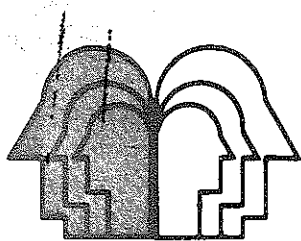
"Occupational accidents [and] crimes of poor people against poor people can be very dramatic. We ignore them," he said, rejecting the notion that television news is interested in all kinds of violence.

"Some things fit our fantasies and some things don't," he said.

He called for the creation of "community media councils" to press the companies that control television "to present us representative visions of reality."



ALLEN F. BREED
... debunking the "myths" of crime



The Maryland Conference of Social Concern

1301 Park Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland 21217

(301) 225-0600

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February 5, 1979

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Dr. George Gerbner, Director
Annenberg School of Communications
University of Pennsylvania
3620 Walnut Street
Philadelphia, Pa. 19174

Dear Dr. Gerbner:

On behalf of the Maryland Conference of Social Concern, I wish to thank you for providing the luncheon address at our recent "Crime & People: Fears and Realities" forum. Your presentation of your research findings presented with some historical and sociological perspective was exactly what the committee had hoped for in focus and content. I am sorry for any skewing of focus which may have occurred from the reactors. You will note from the enclosed Sunday Sun article, however, that your main points were clearly understood. Besides that media, two of the television stations carried live coverage of the forum on the evening news.

We have received the recordings of the proceedings and will be transcribing them during the next couple weeks. We would appreciate your review of your presentation prior to its "publication". A rough draft will be sent to you as soon as it's ready. Enclosed is a check for \$528.50 for your honorarium, and travel expenses.

Thank you again for your participation.

Sincerely,

Mary T. Camenga
Executive Director

MTC/eb

JAN 25 1979 *By Keller*

T.V. Violence: Is It Hurting Us?

By: Becky Grimes

96% of American homes have at least one television. The average set is on at least six hours a day. In a life-time, the average American will have spent 6-8 years in front of the TV. By age 12, the average child will have watched 101,000 violent acts.

Television has become a drug. Habitual viewers are addicted, and need their daily fix in order to get along.

Has violence on TV really affected us? Facts tell us it definitely has.

Dean Gerbner, of the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications studied violence on all three networks' Saturday morning programs. He found 71% of the stories had at least one killing or human injury and about a third of the dramatic segments were "saturated" with violence.

A 14 year old Calgary boy's death by hanging, resulted from his attempt to imitate a mock-hanging performed by Alice Cooper; a rock star, during a television program.

At the University of North

Carolina Child Development Center, researchers paired 10 pre-schoolers who had similar television and play habits. Then, over an 11-day period, one child was shown a violent Saturday morning television program, while his partner watched a non-aggressive show. The 5 exposed to violent programs became more aggressive (kicking, choking, pushing and hitting) while their partners' remained largely unchanged.

Survey teams studied 2900 junior - and - senior - high students and 1500 graduates from almost 100 schools throughout the nation. In the group the researchers found a correlation between television violence viewing and a wide range of trouble-making behavior.

One thing that can be done about this scandalous situation is to refrain from using television as a baby-sitter. This one thing could change the situation remarkably.

One Advisory Committee survey of parents of 274 first-graders shows that one - third actually encouraged their children to watch TV just to keep them occupied.

Remember - too much TV can be hazardous to your health.

Main Line Times
Feb. 9, 1979

'Television As Teacher' Discussed At Episcopal

By HOLLY HERMAN
Special To The TIMES

"Television is the symbol of our new, cultural environment," and TV is "the most fundamental socializing process of the American culture" according to George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania, who spoke on "Television as a Teacher" at Episcopal Academy, Monday night.

According to Gerbner, TV is the most highly centralized and institutionalized American activity with the average household television operating six hours and 37 minutes per day.

He referred to this phenomena as an "industrial religion," and proceeded to present two contrasting views on TV's affect on society.

First, he stated that TV can be viewed as an enrichment of our cultural horizons, because its messages are reasonably fair.

"TV is a ritual which represents our highly coherent, industrial society. It supplies a form of communication with a common set of symbols," said Gerbner.

He also claimed that the so-called, less educated learn more about the state of the world by viewing TV. "Because of television people have the same sports and celebrities in common," he said.

In contrast, Gerbner also said that the intellectual sees TV watchers as "dreary-eyed addicts who lead passive lifestyles, and people whose intelligence has been suppressed."

"TV allocates a great deal of time descending norms and identifying isolation to the repressed by imposing its will on others," said Gerbner.

He went on to say that all programs and even the news reports follow formulas which fit the image which will capture the most viewers. "Because TV's basic formula is based on the drama show ratings, the stations' ability to change their style is limiting. Even the news is sold to fit the fantasies of drama," he said.

He claims that entertainment and law enforcement are the number one subjects shown adding, "Law, which occupies one-third of the programs, uses violence to portray power."

Gerbner pointed out that women are discriminated against on TV with female roles outnumbered by

men, three to one. In reality, 45 percent of the working world are women, according to Gerbner.

He classified "heavy viewers" as those who watch TV four or more hours a day, and "light viewers" as those who watch less than two hours a day. He described the differences between children who are heavy viewers and those who are light viewers in three specific areas which he researched.

First, concerning sexual roles, he said that TV, more than any other institution induces children to their roles. The heavy viewers, according to Gerbner, reflect less and believe more in traditional stereotyped roles of men and women compared to light viewers. He feels that TV should prevent, rather than perpetuate stereotyped roles.

Second, the heavy watchers exhibit the "mean world syndrome". "Because TV exaggerates the number of law enforcement occupations, heavy watchers think that the world is more dangerous to live in than light watchers. Statistics show that these people have more watch dogs, locks and guns than people who watch little TV."

Thirdly, he stated that those who

watch a lot of TV are less likely to see themselves achieving higher levels of education. "Depressed IQ's may not be caused by TV watching, but there is a relation to achievement tests. Statistics show that those with high IQ's who watch a lot of TV do worse on achievement tests than those who don't. But, those with low IQ's who watch a lot of TV do better on achievement tests."

Gerbner claims that children who do not watch a lot of television are exposed to a greater variety of cultural activities than those who do. "For the culturally deprived, TV rises cultural horizons, but it is the intellectuals who are disturbed by it."

He commented that "Because TV has become the number one teacher in our society, educators should realize that they have a new role. They should concentrate more on re-organizing analytical and critical thinking."

His two great hopes are that "programming will become seemingly more diversified and educationally enterprising."

Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.
Journal

FEB 10 1979

Register
60

PITTSBURGH — Dentists are not on our side. A study by researchers at the University of Nevada in Reno concludes that they are frequently “authoritarian, unsympathetic and unwilling to believe that their patients feel pain.” The report, published in the University of Pennsylvania’s *Journal of Communication*, says that 80% of dentists interviewed believe that pain is in the head, not in the mouth. Researchers found dentists to be mostly concerned with giving out information rather than emotional support to nervous patients. “Emotions, questions, empathy or reactions are not encouraged . . . rather, the patient is told how he or she should feel.”

Film & Social Responsibility

Although it has traditionally trafficked in films with varying degrees of violent content, the motion picture industry was nonetheless surprised by the mayhem that ensued from showings of Paramount's "The Warriors."

The Walter Hill film loomed as not much more than another actioner, the first in a coming mini-cycle of pics about youth gangs. It was licensed by Paramount at relatively reasonable terms, a signal to some exhibitors, that the film's grossing potential was deemed less than socko.

Not only has "Warriors" drawn some respectable notices, it also has indications of being a substantial grosser — a pattern of repeat patronage is beginning to emerge. Along with the good news, however, is the well-publicized bad reaction (see separate story). The situation has prompted pointed questions about the relationship between on-screen and real violence, and about the responsibility of a major company to the public.

Should Paramount have yanked the picture nationally following last week's events? One prominent industry observer says such an action would be "unfortunate. It would set a lousy example. Remember, we're treading in a very touchy area." Feeling was that if Par bowed to pressures to do so, a precedent would be established which could be employed to block wide distribution of other pics that offend — or even incite — other groups.

Does "The Warriors" conclusively prove that on-screen violence provokes violent behavior off-screen? The relationship isn't so simple, as a talk with Dr. George Gerbner, Dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the Univ. of Pennsylvania, reveals.

Dr. Gerbner has a complex theory about the double-edged effect of violence that defies easy summary. One of the effects, according to the professor, is creation of a kind of paranoia among those who see themselves as potential victims, who often turn to a so-called higher authority, such as a censorship board, for protection.

Dr. Gerbner concedes that films, unlike tv, is a medium that is selectively chosen by those who "are already inclined to think of themselves as the type" depicted on-screen. That's borne out by "The Warriors" experience since, according to exhibitors, the pic plays heavily to teenage males in groups.

How to prevent future occurrences of mayhem at "Warriors" showings? Beefing up the film industry's rating system wouldn't help since that apparatus can't be used for "social control," avers one source. The problem can best be handled by exhibitors on the local level, says another, because theatremen are most aware of the danger points in the communities they do business in.

Harmon Class Cinema F.D.

VARIETY 2-21-79

FEB 22 1979

TV Teases with Sex Innuendoes

PHILADELPHIA (RNS) - Researchers have found a dramatic increase in the use of verbal sexual innuendoes and seductive behavior on prime-time television during 1975-77.

The study showed that seductive behavior tripled - up from one act per hour in 1975 to more than three per hour in 1977 - and sexual innuendoes increased more than five times, from one per hour to nearly seven per hour.

Sexual intercourse, which was never even alluded to in 1975, was implied 15 times in the 1977 sample, according to the report in the Winter 1979 issue of the Journal of Communication published by the University of Pennsylvania Annenberg School of Journalism in cooperation with the International Communication Association.

Violence Number One

Although sex has not replaced violence on TV, "there does appear to be an increasing tendency to 'tease' the audience," the researchers said. Flirting (physical suggestiveness) quadrupled during the 1975-77 period.

The study covered all prime-time programming broadcast on the three major networks for one week beginning Oct. 19, 1977. A similar study was conducted by two

of the same researchers in 1975.

Both studies were analyzed for physical contact, sexual behavior, and verbal references to sex.

The "sexiest" programs in both studies were found to be variety shows and situation comedies. They contained more physical contact and innuendo than did crime and adventure shows. There were no explicit depictions of sexual intercourse in 1975 or 1977.

The researchers said the level of sexual behavior remained fairly constant from 8 to 11 p.m. but "there is some indication that the family viewing time (8 to 9 p.m.) agreement was upheld."

successful, according to Popov, in treating both oligospermia—in which males produce insufficient sperm to achieve fecundation—and those forms of impotence typified by premature ejaculation, difficulty in achieving or holding an erection, or loss of libido. According to Popov, “relatively short treatments—just a few applications—provoke the return of the libido, as well as adjustments of other types of sexual inadequacies.”

The active ingredients in this treatment—which can be self-administered—are delivered in the form of an aerosol spray directed into the mouth. The spray is manufactured through a process that involves universities and companies in the U.S., France, and Switzerland. An injection form of the treatment, Popov told *BT*, has been approved by the FDA for use in Veterans Administration hospitals only, and Masters and Johnson, the sex therapists, “are reported to be using it also, but only as a clinical treatment.” A complicating factor is that 29 patents have already been applied for in different parts of the world, all of which are being contested and none of which has yet been granted. “The treatment is not going to be available to the public for several years.”

The use of a related amino acid treatment for memory and mental functioning generally was recently confirmed by Dr. Dirk Pearson of Palos Verdes Estates, CA, on a nationwide television show. Pearson offered independent confirmation of Popov’s contention that the use of such organically derived substances is not addictive and does not cause dependencies of the type sometimes produced by straight hormonal replacements. Popov is also exploring the use of such hypothalamic extracts as pain-killers.

The Center’s Board of Associates includes Dr. Rene B. Henry, President of the Centre Medical d’Etudes et de Recherches (Paris), Dr. Frank Schmid of the University of Heidelberg, Dr. Warren M. Levin (*BT*, Dec. 6, 1976), and Dr. Harry K. Panjwani of the Rockefeller University.

Contact: Dr. Ivan M. Popov, Renaissance Revitalization Center, Cable Beach POB N4854, Nassau, Bahamas; Dr. Dirk Pearson, POB 942, Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274.

...CHILDREN AND THE MENTALLY ILL AS MEDIA VICTIMS...

“Children under 10 comprise nearly one-fifth (18.3 percent) of the U.S. population,” Dr. George Gerbner of the University of Pennsylvania observed in a paper delivered to a recent conference on child abuse. “The same age group makes up *less than two percent* (1.9 percent), or less than one out of fifty, of the TV population. Even this decimated proportion goes down to 1.6 percent in prime time (which is when the largest number of children as well as adults are watching), and goes up only to less than 3 percent (2.8 percent) in weekend daytime children’s programming.”

At the same time, the child population depicted on TV “is more racially balanced than any other age group on television. Especially boys, under 10, and in cartoons, have the largest proportion—actually, an overrepresentation—of nonwhite characters among them.” And both of these peculiarities must be seen in conjunction with the fact that “overall, for every violent character on TV, there are 1.2 victims. But for every violent youngster (under 20), there are 1.5 victimized children in prime time and 1.7 in weekend daytime (children’s) programming. The victimization ratio for boys in both prime time (1.6) and daytime (1.8) is the highest of all male age groups.”

If Gerbner’s analysis of TV’s curious portrayal of children can be called suggestive, a grimmer note was struck by his recent talk on “Dreams That Hurt: Mental Illness in the Mass Media.” He noted that the Annenberg School’s studies of the contents of TV dramas, over a period of 11 years, had found “that about 10 percent of the programs regularly involve some depiction or theme that has to do with mental illness,” and that “there is serious violence in about 41 percent of all dramatic programs but in 66 percent of dramatic programs that involve some depiction or theme of mental illness.”

According to Gerbner, “the mentally ill is the group most likely to be both violent and vic-

timized in the world of television. Out of all dramatic characters, 45 percent of—if I may use the term—normals are violent but 70 percent of the characters labeled or characterized as mentally ill are violent. Fifty-four percent of the normals but 80 percent of the mentally ill become victims of violence. Seven percent of normals are killers, but 21 percent of those characterized as mentally ill are killed. In other words, every mentally ill character shown as a killer is killed. The treatment is a tooth for a tooth; no other group in the fictional population suffers and is shown to deserve such a fate."

Gerbner went on to observe that "out of all women characters, 'only' about 26 percent are violent, but 67 percent of the female mentally ill are violent. In other words, the label of mentally ill makes women almost as violent as men. No other label in the world of television does that." And he noted that "the most mental illness prone occupations are clerical, sales, manual labor, crime (a large group in the world of television), and science. The image of the mad scientist is the image of individual intelligence running out of social control. Few fictional mad scientists work for Dupont, General Dynamics, or the Pentagon. The least mental illness prone occupations are owners and proprietors, policemen, farmers, and ministers."

Gerbner's summation: "'Good' characters comprise 59 percent of all characters [on television], but only 21 percent of mentally ill characters. The vast majority of mentally ill characters on television, and I would say in all popular fiction, are not only dangerous, violent, and victimized, but also are touched with a sense of evil that justifies mistrust and victimization. The social function of these depictions is to make it easier to behave toward the subjects of the depictions in abnormal and irrational ways ... The mentally ill is a stigmatized group that serves as a lightning rod for pent-up insecurities and, at the same time, demonstrates the moral and physical price to be paid for deviance."

Similar conclusions emerge from Gerbner's essay on "Deviance and Power: Symbolic Functions of 'Drug Abuse,'" which will appear in a book on *Deviance* that is being edited by Charles Winick. Here Gerbner traces an intricate symbiosis between the terrors of "drug abuse" generated by a society which has created an intricate "surveillance and repression machinery" to cope with this self-defined "problem"—at the same time that the mass media continually suggest that drug use is the key to a successful and happy life. A careful analysis of comic books purchased in the Philadelphia area has revealed, for example, that "in more than half (54 percent) of the stories, the key to super-status is the consumption of some chemical substance that can effect a drastic transformation. On the whole, one out of every 5 characters uses drugs to seek super-power, ultra-intelligence, or eternal life. Scientists, as a group, are heavy users; some of them become (or try to become) super-heroes. Scientists *administer* the drugs even more frequently ... Of all those who administer drugs, 56 percent are scientists and 33 percent are super-heroes."

Gerbner also traces, with many examples, an intricate sexist and quasi-pornographic message that runs through an anti-drug comic book, *Teen-Age Booby Trap*, over half a million copies of which have been purchased by the Department of Defense alone. "Half of all women [depicted], but only 35 percent of the men, are shown as victims of drugs, despite the fact that real-life drug addiction is much more prevalent among males. The male addicts are somber, tragic figures engaged in serious business. The women—mostly blonde and scantily clad—are just hysterical." In a characteristic panel, we see "Blondie shrieking in psychedelic horror as monsters fall upon her. A giant bird descends with claws ready and long sharp beak and tongue poised for action. A death head puts a bony finger on her curly locks."

Gerbner concludes that "the implicit social content and covert communication of all types of imagery, especially 'drug abuse' literature, must be examined for the unwitting reinforcement of the very pressures that make dangerous drugs so attractive a risk to so many. The projective and instrumental portrayals of deviance for purposes of repression as well as control pose a challenge to analysts and citizens alike."

Contact: Dr. George Gerbner, Dean, Annenberg School of Communications, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA 19104, (215) 243-7041. This is the second of two articles on the

research being conducted by Gerbner and his associates. The first appeared in BT on January 8.

...ROSALYNN CARTER ON THE STIGMATIZATION OF THE MENTALLY ILL...

Mrs. Carter's testimony before Senator Kennedy's Subcommittee on Health and Scientific Research (Feb. 7) was received with courtesy and praise by her Congressional audience, several of whom perceived her as an important ally against the "austerity" drive recently launched by another member of her family. Her statement in support of better care for mentally ill Americans included some comments on the widespread stigmatization to which these human beings are subject:

"Throughout our public hearings, and in the hundreds of letters I receive from people who know about my interest in mental health, the problem of stigma was brought home to me—in poignant and painful ways. A young college student who wrote me summarized the dilemma quite well. She said, 'Because I am aware of the fact that many people are truly ignorant when it comes to the subject of mental health, I have concealed the fact that I am going to a therapist from most people. I do this not only to escape the fact that I might be labeled a "crazy person" but because I am 21 years old and will soon be looking for a job after I graduate from college next year. The fact that I have been emotionally ill might get in the way of finding a good job.' ...

"The fear and misunderstanding of mental illness and emotional problems are deeply ingrained in our society. Negative public attitudes hold back progress in this field. Until we break the self-feeding cycle of fear, discrimination, and lack of understanding, our efforts to improve the quality of care for all who need it will be in vain.

"This means rethinking our own attitudes about mental illness and emotional problems. It means raising our children so that if they are confronted with mental illness in themselves, their families, or friends and neighbors, they aren't afraid or ashamed to seek help. It means speaking out on behalf of the mentally ill and working for their rights as citizens ...

"Before she died, Margaret Mead came to visit me at the White House. We talked of our shared interest in mental health. She said to me then that if we select for our first consideration the most vulnerable among us—the emotionally disturbed child, the institutionalized psychotic, the street addict—then our whole culture is humanized. She believed that our value as individuals, our success as a society, can be measured by the compassion we show for the vulnerable."

Contact: Office of the First Lady's Press Secretary, The White House, Washington, DC 20500.

...AND MHLP CHALLENGES 290 VIRGINIA COMMITMENTS AS ILLEGAL

In a suit entered on January 25, the Mental Health Law Project has charged that 290 residents of Arlington County in Virginia were illegally confined to State institutions by judges whose commitment orders followed "brief, ritualistic, and perfunctory" hearings. The class-action suit on behalf of two women, "Virginia Woe" and "Jane Doe," specifically alleges that both were certified as mentally ill following examination by a physician in general practice with no special training in psychiatry. Neither woman, according to MHLP attorney Robert Plotkin, was adequately represented by the court-appointed lawyer assigned to her.

Plotkin observes that "it is this kind of judicial inaction—in Arlington County, in the rest of Virginia, and in a number of other States—that perpetuates the practice of locking people away arbitrarily, even though that's the very abuse new commitment laws like the one in Virginia were designed to stop." The emphasis on the judiciary's failure to enforce existing commitment laws makes this a potential landmark case, according to Plotkin, and only the second such suit to be entered in this country. In 1977, a Wisconsin State court ordered judges in Milwaukee County to follow strict guidelines in appointing lawyers in civil-commitment cases, so as to make certain that "effective" representation was provided.

Television Violence Declining

There's been good news and bad news regarding the levels of violence on television.

The good news is that during the 1977-78 television season, the levels of violence depicted on television programs dropped sharply from the year before.

The bad news is violence still was evident in two-thirds of all prime time television shows and in nine out of ten weekend morning shows, according to continuing studies at the University of Pennsylvania.

A report on the current season should be out shortly. I hope the trend toward less violence continues.

Arrest statistics show a significant increase in juvenile involvement in violent crime. From 1967 to 1976, juvenile arrests for violent crimes increased nearly 100 percent. The corresponding increase for adults was 65 percent. Youngsters between the ages of 10 and 17 now account for about half of all the arrests for serious crimes.

Part of the blame for these disturbing statistics has been laid to the steady diet of violence television has been feeding to our children.

According to the Nielson Ratings Service, teens watch an

average of more than 22 hours of television every week. Children watch even more, an average of more than 24 hours each week.

In 1969, the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence in its final report said: "We do not suggest that television is a principal cause of violence in society. We do suggest that it is a contributing factor."

Dr. Robert Liebert, psychologist at the State University of New York, has been quoted as saying "the more violence and aggression a youngster sees on television regardless of his age, sex or social background, the more aggressive he is likely to be in his own attitudes and behavior." He arrived at that conclusion from analyzing more than 50 studies on the behavior of some 10,000 children between the ages of three and 19 years.

Studies conducted to date are not totally conclusive. Some researchers even have said it's really not possible to study the impact of television on its viewers. I do think, however, that the studies available to us

provide good reason for concern.

In recent years, most of the action on television violence has come from the private sector, notably from the National PTA. In recent months, the PTA has met with advertisers to discuss the programs they support and has ranked the most violent and least violent programs on television this season.

Television programmers do have a good point when they contend that parents should be responsible for the television their children watch. It's been noted even after midnight, the child audience still exceeds a million.

The programmers should pay more attention to violence levels themselves. I will reintroduce a resolution in the House of Representatives urging those responsible for programming to consider violence levels. The resolution also would encourage further study of the correlation between television and real-life violence.

It's time for Congress to pay more attention to this serious matter.

Does violence on the screen mean violence on the street?

By Louise Sweeney

Staff correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor

Washington

"The Warriors," a violent film glorifying gang warfare, has grossed over \$20 million for Paramount Pictures, but at a terrible cost in human life, some observers charge. Three teenagers were murdered after the film had been screened in California and Massachusetts.

A few weeks after "The Warriors" opened, reports of more violence appeared following the showing of another new film "Boulevard Nights," a Warner Bros. movie about Spanish-American youth gangs in a Los Angeles barrio.

In two California cities at least eight young people were injured in battles with guns and knives. In a third city, there were 11 arrests, but no injuries, after a showing of "Boulevard Nights."

Those and other violent acts erupting in the wake of these films raise the question: Is there a relationship between violence seen on the screen and violence enacted in the neighborhood?

Behavioral experts contacted for this article suggest there may be.

"These are the armies of the night," shrilled the full-page newspaper ads which promoted the opening of "The Warriors." "They are 100,000 strong. They outnumber the cops 5 to 1. They could run New York City. Tonight they're all out to get the Warriors."

An equally sensational TV commercial ran across the country, its impact even more chilling because it showed some of the more violent action from the film. The weekend "The Warriors" opened, it grossed \$3.5 million.

Real killings where movie played

While it was playing in southern California, Marvin Kenneth Eller, 19, was fatally shot just outside the men's room of the

Palm Springs Drive-In, apparently in a reenactment of the film's savage bathroom battle.

Only four hours earlier, in another California town, Oxnard, 18-year-old Tim Gitchell and three friends were jumped by a gang of 15 who had seen "The Warriors." Two of young Gitchell's friends were knifed, and Tim Gitchell was stabbed to death.

Tim Gitchell and his friends were white; the gang members were black. Although in the film the gang called the Warriors has a mixed membership, several of the gangs that pursue the Warriors are divided along racial lines.

The third murder occurred in Boston, where 16-year-old Martin Yakobowicz was taking a subway home to Dorchester. As he changed trains he ran into a gang of six who had just come from "The Warriors." During a fight that followed, he was stabbed to death.

Greek saga as a base

The film is based on a Sol Yurick novel, which, in turn, draws on Greek historian Xenophon's "Anabasis," the story of an army of Greeks fighting their way back home after a war with Cyrus the Younger of Persia, through alien and hostile Persian country.

On screen the Warriors are a Coney Island gang who attend an inter-borough gang rally far up in the Bronx. The rally is called by a Messianic gang leader, equal parts Elmer Gantry and Jim Jones, named Cyrus (Greek overtones), who is head of the Riffs. Cyrus calls for intergang warfare to end and for the 60,000 members to unite against the police and take over the city, borough by borough. When the rally is at fever pitch, Cyrus is shot by a member of a rival gang, the Rogues, who lay the blame on the Warriors. The rest of the film is one long tracking shot of the gangs battling — with knives, guns, bicycle chains, clubs, switchblades, Molotov cocktails, and baseball bats — and pursuing the Warriors through the subways back home to Coney Island.

Like 'Clockwork Orange'

The film, directed by Walter Hill, is drenched in stylized, romanticized violence reminiscent of the "Droogs" gang brutality scenes in Stanley Kubrick's 1971 film "A Clockwork Orange." As in that film, gang members this time around are dressed (like rival armies) in flashy uniforms — the Warriors in auburn leather vests over bare chests, the Furies in striped baseball uniforms with bats and grotesque makeup à la the rock group "Kiss," the Riffs in orange kung fu jackets.

The violence is treated lyrically, like a dance, so that when someone is murdered or slashed or beaten or torched, there is no sense of maiming or killing a human being — no fear or

pain or horror or mortal agony. It is like a series of carefully dressed, large-scale dolls mutilating one another. The Warriors are given heroic treatment that covers their punk violence with a gloss of glamour.

"Boulevard Nights" wasn't available for screening here in Washington at this writing, but reports of violence in connection with the film were making news.

In San Francisco, four youths were shot and another stabbed outside the Alhambra Theater following the initial showing of the film. In Ontario, California, two girls were stabbed and a boy shot at the end of a showing of "Boulevard Nights" at the Mission drive-in. In San Jose, California, 11 youths were arrested in what police call a "mass of gangs" meeting and fighting at a showing of "Boulevard Nights" at the Capitol drive-in. More than a dozen police cars were called out to quell fights that erupted in a crowd involving 600 cars and 1,500 people. No one was seriously injured, but there were arrests for assault, drunkenness, and drug possession.

As a result of violent incidents, "Boulevard Nights" has been pulled from two California theaters, the Alhambra and the Mission. In the case of the Alhambra in San Francisco, where sensitivity to violence runs high following the Peoples Temple tragedy, Mayor Diane Feinstein asked the theater owner after the five attacks to consider not showing the film again.

Josh Getlin, the Mayor's deputy press secretary, said the Mayor had asked city Chief of Police Charles Gain whether there was a connection between the showing of the film and what happened afterward. He said eyewitnesses reported it [the film] was a catalyst, and the violence was gang-related. She felt very strongly, based on police conclusions, that there was a connection between the film encouraging violence and the violence that resulted, that it was harmful to the well-being of the people of San Francisco, and she didn't think that was the purpose of films. "It has incendiary subject matter," said Mr. Getlin, speaking of "Boulevard Nights." (The fights reportedly broke out between Spanish-American and Asian-American gang members, but injured bystanders.)

Filmmaker disagrees

The filmmaker disagrees with Mayor Feinstein's view. "Do I think the film produced any violence?" asked Dick Brooks, publicity director of Warner Bros. "No. Warner Bros. doesn't think the film produced any violence. It's not a film of violence. The content of the film is not violent. The film didn't provoke violence; the social conditions in which we live provoke violence. . . . The problem is . . . what's going on in San Francisco and that area. It was originally resentment of a

gay group vs. a Chicano group. . . . 'Boulevard Nights' did not provoke it. It is an outgrowth of the social conditions where these people are living."

Mr. Brooks said that Warner Bros. had offered to provide free security protection to three theaters in the Los Angeles area where the film was playing, and was participating in providing it at a number of others in California. The film had grossed more than \$1 million, he said, in its first four or five days. It was playing at 103 theaters in New York, California, Texas, and New Mexico.

Warner Bros. is involved with two other youth gang films: "Over the Edge," an Orion Pictures film which is being released through Warner's, and "The Wanderers." Mr. Brooks said both films are already "in the can" and that the studio has other such pictures under way.

Gang types drawn

In San Jose, Frank Mosonic of the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office explained what had happened there: "When the film is shown, the normal moviegoer doesn't go. It draws gang types. . . . It draws people who like to fight. . . . There was a big melee out there, lots of 'low riders,' primarily - members of gangs who lower their cars [to drive]. It drew lots of different clubs. We were ready to go with a show of force, so it didn't get beyond our control. . . ."

In Ontario, detective Gary Hobbs of the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Office, said "Boulevard Nights," drew a

bunch of "Spanish-American gangs fighting each other." He called it "an attractive nuisance," adding, "It attracts rival gangs, which is not to say the movie, per se, caused it. It's similar to rival groups showing up for dances. . . ."

The ad that drew them there is one that shows a gang member in an undershirt, jeans, and hat against a metropolitan skyline, with a caption reading, "Everything happens on the boulevard. And the boulevard happens all night."

Critics' reviews of both "Boulevard Nights" and "The Warriors" have been mixed. The highly respected film critic of the New Yorker magazine, Pauline Kael, wrote a rave review for "The Warriors" which Paramount reprinted as a full page ad. In it, she said, "Probably the assumption [Paramount's] was that the audience for this picture doesn't read reviews. But the literate shouldn't miss out on it. 'The Warriors' is a real moviemakers' movie. . . . 'The Warriors' is like visual rock."

But typical of another reaction was that of Joseph Gelmis, the film critic of Newsday, who views the film as inflammatory and amoral.

"'The Warriors' has 'drawn blood,'" Mr. Gelmis told Monitor, because there is no effective screen in society today to prevent film companies from playing to profits at whatever social cost. "The mentality of the corporation is . . . they'll sell anything that gets them that net gross."

Mr. Gelmis maintained there is a connection between filmed violence like that shown in "The Warriors" and social vio-

lence. He mentioned a fellow critic at an early screening who "said prophetically that 'The Warriors' makes you want to go out and knock somebody's head off. There is a very direct connection between what we see and do. It's inflammatory, like 'Death Wish' [a film about a man who stalks and kills criminals in revenge after thugs have done violence to his family]. It makes you want to get even."

"'The Warriors' is an antisocial movie," said Mr. Gelmis, allowed because "there is neither industry self-censorship nor a production code." The only other effective medium for stemming film violence, he pointed out, is the moral power of the critics.

"And we critics, because of what happened in film in the '60s, are often against value judgments. We were put in the position of thinking of films only in terms of an aesthetic - how movies are made, does it work? That's a very different question from what is this movie *doing*? We have to question why it was made, and bring a value judgment to it. . . . We have to start talking about not how well it's done, but what's up there on the screen."

Mr. Gelmis underlined that "the best movies appeal to the best in us. But movies like 'The Warriors,' which have no purpose except to give you an adrenalin rush and send you out feeling excitement, provoke a clash, are doing the public a disservice. . . . There's a difference between films that know

★Please turn to Page B28

'The Warriors'

Continued from Page B28

art? Say I do a piece of art, whether it's a movie or a fiction story. If people psychologically have problems, have a head for violence, they're going to get violent no matter where they go."

Paramount vice-president Gordon Weaver, who was not available for comment on this story, told People magazine that the violence was "the sort of thing that happens at rock concerts, high-school basketball games, and any place where diverse groups meet. It could have happened anywhere." He told the Washington Post that Paramount had expected no trouble from the film: "We are not naive, but it never crossed our minds."

The Monitor contacted a number of behavioral experts for their comments. Dr. George Comstock, professor of communications at the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications at Syracuse University, said: "It's quite possible for a film to combine things just right, to create an immediate impact or immediate violence. There's no reason to doubt that this film would have this kind of influence [on adolescents], although it might not be exciting to the FCC or Vincent Canby [New York Times film critic]. And I see no reason to believe that people involved in violence [like this] would become involved in similar violence in the absence of film. The notion that film stimulates the behavior of any people prone to violence doesn't say film has no effect."

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'The Warriors'

Continued from Page B30

Speaking of "The Warriors," Dr. Comstock said, "... Dramatizing them . . . , making these guys look heroic . . . basically encourages those looking for a similar kind of experience."

Dr. Comstock also mentioned one of the examples most cited in the debate on links between screen and real violence: Several years ago, after the movie "Fuzz" had been aired over a Boston TV station, a woman was set on fire in an apparent reenactment of a scene from the film. Two prominent TV test cases have come up recently: In Florida, the Ronald Zamora case, in which the youth's lawyer claimed he'd been driven to murder by prolonged exposure to TV violence, and the "Born Innocent" case in California, in which a young girl's lawyer charged she had been raped by other children who were acting out a scene from that TV movie. (Neither argument was upheld by the court.)

In a less publicized situation, UPI reported that a 14-year-old Columbus, Ohio, boy killed his 11-year-old brother with a pistol, allegedly reenacting a scene he had watched the previous night when the film "Dirty Harry" was televised.

But Dr. Gerald Lesser, a professor of developmental psychology at Harvard University, doubts that a film like "The Warriors" could incite violence in a normal person. "I don't think so," he said. "But it might kick it off in an insane person. Ninety-nine people may be able to deal with the film, but the one person on the edge of insanity won't."

And Dr. Hans Toch, a social psychologist who teaches at the School of Criminal Justice at the State University of New York and who wrote the book entitled "Violent Men," said, "It is impossible to attribute a motive for an act to exposure to a film. A random person who is exposed to a film is not going to go out and kill someone." But he notes that "under particular conditions violence can be the reaction" to screen violence "if people who are watching have special motives . . . if, for example, the audience had a disproportionate number of gang members."

One of the foremost experts on TV violence, Dr. George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania, has testified often before Congress on the subject. He suggested to the Monitor that it would be irresponsibly dangerous to televise "The Warriors" nationwide.

"I suggest that 'The Warriors' should never be shown on TV," said Dr. Gerbner. "I would fear the consequences. People watching TV assume there is normal behavior. Their insecurity and fear would be heightened to such an extent that gangs of youths in cities who have done nothing would live under a reign of terror. 'The Warriors' shows these groups in society as dangerous, terrorizing. Society would demand their repression. This is dangerous in a democratic society."

Mr. Gould of Paramount said, "Right now it's too early to tell if we're going to release 'The Warriors' for television. We have no plans to release it. Since it has an 'R,' if we did show it on TV, the violence in it that caused it to get the R — all that violence would have to be removed for TV."

Finally, a spokesman for the MPAA, which endorses the ratings system that gave "The Warriors" its R, says it has no official comment on the film. "I don't think we have a position on it," says MPAA vice-president Richard Heffner. (MPAA president Jack Valenti, traveling in Egypt, could not be reached.) "All the ratings system does," said Mr. Heffner, "is indicate through one of its categories the kind of material a child might encounter. It's an advisory service to parents." An "R," Mr. Heffner said, among other things, indicates "the violence may be hard." ■ • /

MORNING CALL
ALLENTOWN, PA.
AM-90,000

TV violence in kids' shows hits record weekend levels

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Violence in network broadcast weekend TV shows aimed at children rose to record levels on ABC and CBS and a near-record on NBC last fall, according to a study released yesterday.

The study also found that young people who are heavy television watchers display an exaggerated sense of fear and mistrust of the world they live in.

Researchers for the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications said they found that violence in late evening network programming also had increased.

However, overall violence depicted during the "family hour" — 8-9 p.m. EST — decreased for the second year in a row, the researchers said.

"There is a consistent relationship between fear and the amount of television watched," said Nancy Signorielli, research coordinator for the study of network tele-

vision. "They (heavy watchers) do perceive the world as much more violent and they are much more fearful."

For research purposes, heavy television watchers were defined as those who tune in more than four hours a day. Violence was defined as "hurting or killing a person or the credible threat of hurting and killing."

Using that definition, almost nine out of 10 characters appearing in children's TV programs broadcast by the three major networks on weekend mornings are involved in violence, according to the study.

Researchers said the rate of violent incidents in children's programs zoomed from 15.6 per hour in the fall of 1977 to a near-record 25.0 per hour last fall. The record level of 25.5 was measured during the 1969-70 season.

Please See TV Page A9 ▶

TV

► Continued From Page A1

ABC and CBS boosted the violence in children's programs to 26.3 and 26.8 incidents per hour, respectively — a record high for both networks, the study said. NBC's rate went up 20.6, its third highest level.

The study, which received funds from the American Medical Association

and the National Institute of Mental Health, is part of a continuing research project on network programming which began in 1967.

Spokesmen for both ABC and NBC said they could not comment before seeing the study. CBS officials were unavailable for comment.

The researchers also found:

► The late evening (9-11 p.m. EST) increase in violence was due primarily to NBC's increase in violent programming, followed by an increase on ABC, but not CBS. However, NBC led in

reducing early evening prime-time (8-9 p.m. EST) violence, followed by CBS. Both reached record lows for that time slot.

► Unlike the other networks, ABC increased its violent programming during the "family hour," as well as the late evening and weekend-daytime hours.

► A relationship between aggressive behavior and the amount of television watched. When samples of junior high school students were asked, "How often is it all right to hit someone if you

are mad at them?", a significantly higher proportion of heavy viewers answered: "Almost always."

► Extensive viewing among children is associated with greater apprehension of walking alone at night, even in their own neighborhoods.

► School children who watch more television are more likely to believe the police frequently use force and that the average policeman will often use his gun, too, to shoot fleeing suspects.

► Women and minorities bear an unequal burden of victimization.

TV: Father Brown as a New Yorker

By JOHN J. O'CONNOR

THE first title of tonight's "World Premiere Movie" on NBC-TV was "Father Brown, Detective." Then, shortly before its scheduled broadcast, it was changed to "Sanctuary of Death." Now, after having been postponed twice, the film is being presented, at 9 P.M., as "Sanctuary of Fear."

Clearly, there is a certain amount of indecision in executive suites as to how the product might best be marketed — or exploited. A similar indecision can be detected, unfortunately, in the film itself.

"Sanctuary of Fear" offers an updating of a character created by G.K. Chesterton in 1911. Father Brown, the priest-detective, figured in a series of short stories that spanned 24 years. In a very loose adaptation, he is being brought to television as a contemporary New York priest, based in a parish on Manhattan's West Side.

The idea is not unpromising, particularly when Father Brown is being played by Barnard Hughes, star of Broadway's "Da" and certainly among the warmest and most ingratiating of actors. The executive producer for Marble Arch Productions is Martin Starger, and the producer is Philip Barry, the team that brought last night's "Friendly Fire" through so sensitively.

But this Father Brown is continuously being thrown into situations closer to "Going My Way" than the sophisticated wit of Chesterton. This evening's plot is a wash with lovable eccentricities and irritating red herrings.

A young woman (Kay Lenz) sees dead bodies, but when the police arrive, they have disappeared. The lieutenant (Michael McGuire) is increasingly skeptical. The woman goes to the unfailingly sympathetic Father Brown for help.



Barnard Hughes, as the crime-solving clergyman Father Brown, with Kay Lenz in "Sanctuary of Fear," on NBC at 9 P.M.

When it quickly becomes apparent that the most obvious suspects in the story are not the villains, the trick in solving the mystery is simply to watch the passing bit parts. The answer is obvious long before the end of the two hours.

Meanwhile, Father Brown is afforded an unconscionable quota of cute routines. Going to see his client in an Off Off Broadway play, he allows that "there was some language I haven't heard since I was the assistant chaplain at Sing Sing, but . . ."

He must cope with unctuous parish women arranging charity auctions and a Monsignor concerned about the church's finances. Evidently in a ploy to pad out the production, he is arrested for a traffic violation and, in the Greenwich Village courtroom, manages to solve another mystery on the run.

In short, Father Brown has been stuffed, not quite whole, into a fairly typical, decidedly mediocre format. "Let there be light," he says before wrapping up his case. The same might be hoped for any further television dabbings into the Chesterton character.

Study Finds Children's TV More Violent

Young people who watch much television are more apprehensive about their own safety and more likely to think that people are mean and selfish, according to researchers at the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications. They noted that violence in weekend children's television programming rose to nearly record levels on the three major networks in the fall of 1978.

The study shows strong associations between patterns of network dramatic content and conceptions of social reality among children and adolescents. It found that television cultivated an exaggerated sense of danger and mistrust in steady viewers compared with similar groups of those who watch television less frequently.

School children who watch a great deal of television are also more likely to believe that the police frequently use force and the average officer will shoot fleeing suspects.

It was noted that there were 15.6 violent incidents an hour in 1977 in children's programs, but that figure rose to 25 an hour in 1978. Dr. George Gerbner, co-principal investigator for the project, said the definition of violence used in the research project was "that of unambiguous physical violence — hurting or killing a person or the credible threat of hurting or killing."

BACKGAMMON
by Paul Magriel

Thursday in
**The New
York Times**



APR 23 79

READING EAGLE

READING, PA.

S-85.000 PM-50.000

Watching TV Cultivates Fear

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Children who spend more than four hours a day watching television think the world is more violent than do children who watch less TV, a new study indicates.

The study, released Sunday by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications, also reported that violence in weekend network shows aimed at children rose to record levels on ABC and CBS and to a near-record level at NBC last fall.

"There is a consistent rela-

tionship between fear and the amount of television watched," said Nancy Signorielli, research coordinator for the project.

"They (heavy watchers) do perceive the world as much more violent and they are much more fearful," she said.

CBS officials were unavailable for comment. NBC and ABC said they would not comment until they had seen the study.

The study, part of a project that began in 1967, is funded by grants from the American Medical Association and the National Institute of Mental Health.

The researchers also found a relationship between aggressive behavior and the amount of television watched, and said children who watch a lot of TV are likely to believe that police often use force.

READING TIMES

READING, PA.

AM—40,750

Study finds TV kid shows violent

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Violence in weekend television shows for children rose to near record levels on all three major networks in the fall of 1978, according to a study released Sunday by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications.

The researchers also found that violence in late evening programming had likewise increased to near record proportions, and that young people who are heavy television watchers display an exaggerated sense of fear and mistrust of the world they live in.

Violence depicted during the so-called "family hour" — 8-9 p.m. EST — decreased for the second year in a row, the researchers said.

"There is a consistent relationship between fear and the amount of television watched," said Nancy Signorielli, research coordinator for the project, which received grants from the American Medical Association

and the National Institute of Mental Health.

"They (heavy watchers) do perceive the world as much more violent and they are much more fearful."

The researchers defined violence as "hurting or killing a person or the credible threat of hurting and killing."

Using that definition, almost nine out of 10 characters appearing in children's TV programs are involved in violence, according to the study.

Officials at CBS were not available for comment Sunday. Spokesmen for NBC and ABC said they would have no comment until they had seen the study.

The researchers also found:

—A relationship between aggressive behavior and the amount of television watched. When samples of junior high school students were asked, "How often is

it all right to hit someone if you are mad at them?", a significantly higher proportion of heavy viewers answered: "Almost always."

—Heavy viewing among children is associated with greater apprehension of walking alone at night, even in their own neighborhoods.

—School children who watch more television are more likely to believe that the police frequently use force and that the average policeman will often use his gun as well as shoot fleeing suspects.

—Women and minorities bear an unequal burden of victimization.

—The rate of violent incidents in children's programs zoomed from 15.6 per hour in the fall of 1977 to a near record level 25.0 per hour last fall.

—Both ABC and CBS boosted the violence saturation

of children's programs to 26.3 and 26.8 incidents per hour, respectively — a record high for both networks. NBC's rate went up 20.6, it's third highest level.

—The late evening (9-11 p.m., EST) increase in violence was due primarily to NBC's increase in violent programming, followed by ABC, but not CBS. However, NBC led in reducing early evening prime-time (8-9 p.m. EST) violence, followed by CBS. Both reached record lows for that time slot.

—Unlike the other networks, ABC increased its violent programming during the "family hour," as well as the late evening and weekend-daytime hours.

The study is part of a continuing research project on network programming which began in 1967. For research purposes, heavy television watchers were defined as those who tune in more than four hours a day.

SCRANTON TRIBUNE

SCRANTON, PA.

AM-33,217

Study Shows Lots of TV Gives You Morbid Views

PHILADELPHIA (UPI) — People who watch a lot of television have a more pessimistic, morbid view of the world and think its is much more violent than it really is, according to a University of Pennsylvania study.

At the same time, said a survey by researchers at the Annenberg School of Communications, violence in weekend children's television has reached near record levels at all networks, with violence playing a role in almost 100 percent of weekend and daytime programs aimed at children.

There were 15.6 violent incidents per hour in 1977 in children's programs, but it rose to 25 per hour in 1978, five times the exposure given to more adult audiences in prime time.

CBS had 26.8 incidents per hour, with ABC showing 26.3 and NBC 20.3. NBC led the increase in children's-time violence but also led the way in reducing violence in early evening prime time viewing, it said.

The study by researchers George Gerbner, Larry Gross,

Nancy Signorielli, Michael Morgan and Marilyn Jackson Beeck was released Sunday.

It said its findings on the 1978 television season reinforced earlier conclusions that watching television, probably because it is violence-filled, gives the view "a heightened and unequal sense of danger and risk in a mean and selfish world."

It said the findings "continue to show that young people who watch more television are more apprehensive about their own safety and are more likely to think that people are mean and selfish."

The studies also show that television portrays more violence toward the young, women, non-whites and foreigners and both lower and upper classes but not middle class members. Violence toward women on television increased, the study said, especially on children's programs.

In examining heavy television viewers, the researchers said, "We have found that television cultivates an exaggerated sense of danger and mistrust."

Probed for their views on law enforcement, violent crime and the chances of meeting up with violence, the heavy television viewers tended to describe the world as seen on television rather than in their own community.

They saw police as using their weapons often, or using other forms of force frequently, and thought that more people were involved in violence than can be supported by crime statistics.

The study said television

induced more fear in both children and adults with the heavy television viewers saying they were more afraid to go out at night alone.

Issues and People

More Violence

The Annenberg School of Communication (University of Pennsylvania) has released its annual Violence Profile No. 10, whose findings show that violence in weekend children's TV programs rose to near record levels on all three major networks in the fall of 1978 with new children's programs showing the sharpest jump.

According to Annenberg researchers, late evening violence was also up last fall, although violence in early evening prime time (8 to 9 p.m. EST) showed some decline for the second year in a row with new prime time programs showing a decrease in violence.

The findings also showed that (1) women and minorities bear an unequal burden of victimization, and (2) young people who watch more television are more apprehensive about their own safety and more likely to think that people are mean and selfish.

The study revealed that TV cultivates an exaggerated sense of danger and mistrust in heavy viewers, compared to similar groups of light viewers. According to George Gerbner, Dean of Annenberg School, "The most significant and recurring conclusion of our long-range study is that one correlate of television viewing is a heightened and unequalled sense of danger and risk in a mean and selfish world."

It should be noted that prime-time violence began to fall after NCCB began to identify sponsors with the most violent programs. Although NCCB did not repeat its monitoring this past fall, it is scheduled to begin again this spring.

For information or a copy of the report, contact: Susanne Katz, University of Pennsylvania, 3620 Walnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104, (215) 243-7401.

be offered a variety of foods while actors—drawn mainly from the lower castes—restage her myth.

Contact: Prof. Ralph Nicholas, Dept. of Anthropology, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL 60637.

NEWS ROUNDUP

Caroline Bird has established her reputation as an author who manages to be simultaneously breezy, readable, anecdotal, very thorough in her research, and well-targeted with respect to issues that happen to be on everyone's mind when her book appears. *The Two-Paycheck Marriage: How Women at Work Are Changing Life in America* (Rawson, Wade, \$8.95) is her most recent book, and is particularly insightful in describing the tenacity of the assumption that the male partner in a marriage is more "central" than the female. While acknowledging the difficulties that new work assumptions pose in a period of limited economic expansion, she concludes that "the economy of the future will be based on individuals who are growing and changing on timetables that have nothing to do with their sex. There won't be many more people than there were in 1979, but they will be better and happier people. More of them will be adults. More of the adults will be earners. And more of the earners will be working at jobs and schedules of their own choosing. The most probable future is a world that will be more diverse, faster changing, more human, and much, much more fun than the world we came into." . . .

AT&T's office of basic human resources research has completed a study in which 400 men recruited in the 1950's were tracked over a period of 20 years—and some conclusions drawn about those who succeed in becoming managers at middle and higher levels. Not surprisingly, successful managers have scored high on indices for qualities like achievement, dominance, autonomy, and aggression. But the study has also concluded that once hired, even less competent employees tend to move up to at least the middle management level. In addition, managers, as they age, "tend to become more hostile and less affiliative. The notion that the maturing manager, at least up to age 45, becomes kinder . . . appears to be a sentimental fantasy." The study is described in the Winter 1979 issue of *The Wharton Magazine* . . .

The editorial in the most recent issue of *Biological Psychiatry* (Vol. 14, No. 1) observes that "neuroscientists, who generally tend to avoid philosophy and to limit themselves to supposedly objective data, are now moving slowly into the area formerly occupied exclusively by philosophy and theology. As knowledge has accumulated about the functions of the hippocampus and the amygdala, it is clear that some of this new understanding bears directly on these classical problems of philosophy. The discovery of inhibitory and excitatory neurotransmitters and their relationship to each other brings startling new insights into the mechanisms of control of human behavior. Even such basic concepts as 'will' or 'free will' are undergoing reexamination with the tools of psychology and neurochemistry." . . .

"The culture of narcissism" is a phrase popularized by Christopher Lasch's recent book of the same name, and even social scientists with non-conservative opinions have begun to express concern to *BT* about their encounters with adolescents whose self-preoccupation seems to allow no room for moral values of any kind. The concern with moral development is showing up in many research projects now underway, including the work of Harvard's David McClelland (*BT*, Dec. 11, 1978), and represents one more area in which something that appeared as obvious as oxygen in an earlier decade now looks like a laborious and uncertain achievement. Lasch will be one of the participants in a conference on "Moral Development and Its Failures" that will take place at the Menninger Foundation (POB 829, Topeka, KS 66601) on October 18-19 of this year . . .

Along the same lines, David Riesman discussed "a great moral crisis in education" in a rare interview obtained by *BT* (Jan. 1)—and has now been seconded by the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education, which has issued a series of proposals for coping with such practices—by students—as cheating, theft, and the misuse of financial aid, and such practices—by teachers and schools—as grade inflation, misleading advertising, and the awarding of credits and degrees for inadequate work. Carnegie's proposals are summarized in the April 23 issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* . . .

There are national moral implications too in *Violence Profile No. 10*, just released by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications. Using as its standard the appearance on TV of "unambiguous physical violence—hurting or killing a person or the credible threat of hurting and killing, in any context," the study finds, with respect to the Fall 1978 season, (1) that violence in the "family hour" prime-time slot (8-9 p.m. EST) showed some decline for the second year in a row, but (2) that "violence in weekend children's and late evening programming rose to near record levels." Women and minorities continue to be victimized on TV at rates that bear no relationship to existing social and demographic realities, and Dr. George Gerbner, the dean of the Annenberg School, observes: "Surprising as [our] findings are after last year's reductions in violence, the clear message of unequal power and victimization is even more striking. The incitement of a few to imitative violence may be the price a society pays for the control and pacification of the many through the unequal burden of fear imposed on them by symbolic violence." Copies of the full technical report are \$17.50 from the Annenberg School (checks payable to the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania), Philadelphia, PA 19104.

CALENDAR

MAY

10: National Institute on "Aspects of Divorce and Remarriage," in Orlando, FL. Sponsored by the American Bar Association. Contact ABA National Institutes, 1155 E. 60 St., Chicago, IL 60637.

10-13: National Symposium on Learning Disabilities, in St. Louis, MO. Contact King McElroy, Information Office, Box 1142, Washington University, St. Louis, MO 63130.

11: Twelfth Annual Eagleville Conference, in King of Prussia, PA. Theme: "Ethical Issues in Substance Abuse Treatment." Contact Patricia Moretti, Eagleville Hospital and Rehabilitation Center, Eagleville, PA 19408.

11-12: Second Annual Symposium on Family Therapy Practice, in Olney, MD. Contact Family Therapy Practice Network, 18114 Hillcrest Ave., Olney, MD 20832.

11-12: Intensive Course on "Nature and Management of Stress: Focus on the Psychotherapist, Physician and Dentist," in Tuscaloosa, AL. Faculty includes Hans Selye. Contact Peter Balsamo, Continuing Education in Human Services, University of Alabama, POB 2967, University, AL 35486.

11-12: Workshop on "Sexuality Counseling: The Adolescent," in Denver, CO. Contact RMMP Center for Continuing Education, 2030 E. 20 Ave., Denver, CO 80205, (303) 321-2471.

12-13: Workshop on "Insight into Human Sexuality: Beyond Technique," in San Diego, CA. Conducted by Dr. Harold Greenwald. Contact YMCA Human Development Center, 1115 8 Ave., San Diego, CA 92101, (714) 231-1591.

13-17: 1979 National Conference on Social Welfare, in Philadelphia, PA. Theme: "Meeting Human Needs Throughout Life: Toward National Social Service Policies." Contact Betty Shepherd, National Conference on Social Welfare, 22 W. Gay St., Columbus, OH 43215.

14: Intensive Course on Epilepsy for Allied Health Personnel, in Boston, MA. Contact Donna Marcy, Dept. of Continuing Medical Education, Boston University School of Medicine, 80 E. Concord St., Boston, MA 02118.

15-June 20: Courses in Concepts of Dying and Future Life in World Religions, Aging and Its Effect on Hearing, Problems in Interpersonal Communication Among the Aging in Nursing Homes and Hospitals, Impact of Elderly Migration on Florida, Nutrition and Diet, Social Aspects of Death and Dying, Long-Term Care Administration, Politics of Public Health Organizations, and Workshop in Auditory Disorders, in Coral Gables, FL. Contact Institute for the Study of Aging, University of Miami, Coral Gables FL 33124.

16-19: Workshop on Men and Women in Groups, in Philadelphia, PA. Contact PEP Center for the Study of Psychoeducational Processes, 650 Ritter Annex, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA 19122.

17-18: One-day Seminars in Program Evaluation Training, in Dallas, TX. Contact Peter Hunt, Personnel Research and Training Institute, 13011 Boca Ciega Ave., Madeira Beach, FL 33708.

18-20: National Symposium on Sexuality and Disability, in San Francisco, CA. Contact University of California Continuing Education in the Health Sciences, 1343 Third Ave., San Francisco, CA 94143.

18-20: Conference on Therapeutic Management of Family Violence, in Lake Arrowhead, CA. Speaker: Suzanne Steinmetz. Contact UCLA Extension, Dept. of Human Development, POB 24902, Los Angeles, CA 90024.

18-20: Multiregional Conference of the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists, in Boston, MA. Theme: "Issues Concerning Children in Marriage and Family Life." Contact Richard Pigott, 6 Babson Park Ave., Wellesley Hills, MA 02157, (617) 237-5992.

18-20: Workshops in Couple Communication Instructor Training, in Atlanta, Minneapolis, and Pittsburgh. Contact Interpersonal Communication Programs, 300 Clifton Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55403, (612) 871-7388.

18-20: Conference on "Burn-Out: How to Recognize it and What to Do About It," in Los Angeles, CA. Contact UCLA Extension, Dept. of Human Development, POB 24902, Los Angeles, CA 90024.

19-20: Third Annual Conference on Biofeedback, in Washington, DC. Contact Ruth Sagar, 4380 MacArthur Blvd., NW, Washington, DC 20007.

23-24: Conference on "Primary Prevention: Putting Concepts into Action," in Lincoln, NE. Contact Howard Helpern, Lincoln-Lancaster County Child Guidance Center, 215 Centennial Mall South, 312 Lincoln Center Bldg., Lincoln, NE 68508.

23-25: Conference on "Creating a Community Support System for the Long-Term Patient," in Madison, WI. Contact Leonard Stein, Continuing Medical Education, 610 Walnut St., Madison, WI 53706.

24-25: Ninth Annual Southwestern Partial Hospitalization Conference, in Waco, TX. Contact Bill B. Peters, Heart of Texas Region MHMR Center, POB 1277, Waco, TX 76703.

25-26: Workshop on "Sexuality Adaptation for the Chronically Ill," in Denver, CO. Contact RMMP Center for Continuing Education, 2030 E. 20 Ave., Denver, CO 80205, (303) 321-2471.

26: Annual Conference on "Pioneers of Our Times" of the American Psychotherapy Seminar Center, in New York City. Participants include Silvano Arieti, Margaret Mahler, and Hanna Segal. Contact Alfred Yassky, Executive Director, APSC, 789 West End Ave., New York, NY 10025.

26-27: Workshop on "Beyond Divorce: Counseling Techniques for Professionals," in Seattle, WA. Contact National Institute for Professional Training in Divorce Counseling, 1295 Lenox Circle, NE, Atlanta, GA 30306.

JUNE

1-2: Workshops on "Developing Self-Esteem" and "Religious Issues in Sexuality," in Denver, CO. Contact RMMP Center for Continuing Education, 2030 E. 20 Ave., Denver, CO 80205, (303) 321-2471.

3-7: Fourteenth Annual Meeting of the Association of Halfway House Alcoholism Programs, in Lincoln, NE. Contact AHHAP, 786 E. 7 St., St. Paul, MN 55106.

4-6: First Annual Meeting of the Society for Scholarly Publishing, in Boston, MA. Contact Society for Scholarly Publishing, 57 Park Plaza Motor Hotel, Boston, MA, (617) 482-1800.

4-7: Fourteenth Annual Conference of the Association for the Care of Children in Hospitals, in Los

Angeles, CA. Contact ACCH 1979 Conference Office, Wright Institute, 1100 S. Robertson Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90035, (213) 550-0571.

4-8: Seminar on the Biology of Aging, in Ann Arbor, MI. Contact Dorothy Coons, Continuing Education Program, Box N, Institute of Gerontology, 520 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor, MI 48109.

5-8: Sixth Annual Puerto Rican Substance Abuse Conference, in Santurce, Puerto Rico. Contact National Association of Puerto Rican Drug Abuse Programs, 1766 Church St., NW, Washington, DC 20036.

6-9: Third National Youth Workers Conference, in San Francisco. Theme: "Direct Service to Youth." Contact National Youth Work Alliance, 1346 Connecticut Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20036.

7-8: Conference on "Patient Reentry into the Community," in Washington, DC. Contact National Association of Private Psychiatric Hospitals, 1701 K St., NW, Suite 1205, Washington, DC 20006, (202) 223-6691.

7-9: Second Annual Convention of the International Psychohistorical Association, in New York City. Contact David Beisel, Dept. of Social Sciences/Psychology, Rockland Community College, 145 College Road, Suffern, NY 10901.

7-11: Rocky Mountain Regional Conference of the Association for Humanistic Psychology, in Englewood, CO. Contact Lou Rivero, Coordinator, 525 East Amherst, Englewood, CO 80110.

8: Workshop on "Working With the Divorce Process," in Chicago, IL. Contact Jeanne B. Robinson, Center for Family Studies/Family Institute of Chicago, 10 E. Huron, Chicago, IL 60611, (312) 440-1414.

8-9: Workshop on "Planning for Success: Mid-Life Career Change, Burn-out, Marital and Professional Goals," in Los Angeles, CA. Contact Westlake Center for Marital and Family Counseling, 951 S. Westlake Blvd., #206, Westlake Village, CA 91361, (213) 889-3731.

8-10: Workshop on "Family Therapy: Approaches and Techniques," in Beverly Hills, CA. Keynote speaker: Dr. Murray Bowen. Contact Ellen G. Ruderman, Community Consultation and Education, Thailans Community Mental Health Center, 8730 Aiden Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90048, (213) 855-3403.

8-10: Workshop on "Human Sexuality: A Holistic/Humanistic Approach," in Washington, DC. Contact Center for Study of Human Systems, 8604 Jones Mill Road, Washington, DC 20015, (301) 657-8299.

8-10: Workshop on Foundations of Biofeedback Practice, in Indianapolis, IN. Contact Biofeedback Society of America, U.C.M.C. C268, 4200 E. 9 Ave., Denver CO 80262, (303) 279-5259 or 394-7054.

11-12: Seminar on "Issues in Hospice-Care for the Elderly: A Forum," in Ann Arbor, MI. Contact Dorothy Coons, Continuing Education Program, Box N, Institute for Gerontology, University of Michigan, 520 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor, MI 48109.

13-15: Seminar on "Drugs, Alcohol, and the Elderly: Use/Abuse/Misuse," in Ann Arbor, MI. Contact Dorothy Coons, Continuing Education Program, Box N, Institute of Gerontology, University of Michigan, 520 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor, MI 48109.

Wednesday, May 9, 1979

VARIETY

WCCO-TV Show Gets Nat'l PTV Slot

WCCO-TV, the CBS affiliate in Minneapolis, produced a documentary hour last November on the social impact of television. With limited resources, the station put together a surprisingly elaborate and detailed report. But it's questionable whether Bill Moyers should've given it a national public-broadcasting audience on "Bill Moyers' Journal" recently.

The documentary, called "A Death in the Family" on WCCO and "TV or Not TV" on the Moyers show, was built around the device of the dismantling of tv sets in five households to explore how the families would voluntarily cope with no tv for a whole month. (Each was paid \$500 by the station to participate in the experiment.)

But this device quickly became an excuse to trot out the likes of George Gerbner, dean of the U. of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School; Nicholas Johnson, chairman of the National Citizens Committee for

Broadcasting; Jean Johnson, an official with Action for Children's Television; and Tracy Weston, deputy director of the Federal Trade Commission. These and other experts rehashed their familiar complaints about exploitative violence and sex on tv, about the passive habits tv instills in its regular viewers, about the addictive nature of the medium and about advertiser manipulation of the audience's psyche.

Moyers came on with a postscript featuring interviews with some of the members of the families who suffered through the monthlong loss of their tv sets. One woman admitted she and her family have gone right back to their old habits as heavy, uncritical viewers.

Although two of the fathers said that the experiment taught them that it's important to spend more time with their children, one had to wonder how long they'll keep to that resolve. —Demp.

JUL 20 1979

By John

News Boosts TV

The subtle effect of the viewers' exposure to the depressing "bad news" content of today's television news broadcasts contributes greatly to the numbers of people who watch TV's prime-time entertainment programs, a Temple University political scientist says.

"Viewing of television news leads to distrust and fear, which leads to a desire for relaxation and escape, which leads to entertainment program exposure," Dr. Richard A. Joslyn maintains.

Dr. Joslyn is a resident of Elkins Park who teaches a course on public opinion and propaganda at Temple. He has done a number of studies on the impact of television on American life.

"Much research has investigated the common-sense notion that people learn factual information about real-world events from the news and that news tells them what to think about what is politically important. Apparently this occurs, though most of it is forgotten within a few hours," Dr. Joslyn said.

"MORE IMAGINATIVE research has recently suggested that watching the news has more pervasive long-term effects on people's general perceptions of the world in which they live and their place in it.

"Political scientist Michael Robinson, of Catholic University, has shown that those exposed to much public affairs broadcasting tend to come away from their exposure with a decreased sense of political efficacy — the extent to which one thinks he or she can affect political events or processes, and an increased sense of social distrust — the feeling that society is disproportionately sinister and other persons are not to be trusted.

"These findings have been confirmed in the on-going studies of television exposure by George Gerbner and Larry Gross, of the University of Pennsylvania. They found that those exposed to high amounts of television are more distrustful, cynical, fearful and misanthropic than occasional viewers.

"An interesting survey by Stephen Holloway and Harvey Hornstein, reported in "Psychology Today," shows that being exposed to

predominately 'good' or 'bad' news can affect not only people's beliefs, but behavior as well. Those exposed to bad news were more apt to estimate that few members of their community were decent, honest and altruistic, and were more apt to behave in a competitive rather than a cooperative manner.

"It seems then," Dr. Joslyn said, "that given the size and composition of the audience of television news, and the perceived credibility of the networks and correspondents, the more long-term, subtle effect of news exposure is anti-social and destructive to the fragile bonds that keep society civilized, at least on the surface."

ASIDE FROM the occasional demagogue, burglary alarm salesman and psychiatrist, is there anyone who could possibly benefit from such an effect of television news exposure?

"Unfortunately, the answer is yes. There is a powerful, wealthy, efficacious segment of the American economy that probably benefits quite handsomely from the anti-social effects of television news," he said.

"That sector is the television networks themselves, their affiliates, the advertising agencies that rely on the medium, and the various and sundry production, transmission and acting entities who are closely dependent upon the television networks.

"A misanthropic, distrustful, cynical population is a collection of individuals who are alienated, isolated and afraid. It is a population that stays indoors at night, feels no particular fondness for social interaction and prefers being entertained to being educated or challenged.

"Such a population, it seems, is a natural audience for the prime-time entertainment programming provided by most stations at most times.

"THE WEALTH of the industry depends, of course, on the size of its audience, which depends, first, on individual choices to remain at home in the evening; second, on individual choices to watch television instead of doing something else, and, third (and only third), providing programming that is at least acceptable to the potential audience.

Atlanta snag out of way of Cox merger with GE

Local groups settle over petition against WSB stations; deal calls for programing, EEO concessions; corporate marriage still hangs on four other protests filed at FCC

For General Electric and Cox Broadcasting and their efforts to clear the way for FCC approval of their proposed merger, the count now is one petition to deny down and four to go.

The companies last week notified the FCC of an agreement under which the American Civil Liberties Union of Georgia and the Atlanta branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People will dismiss their three-year-old petition to deny the renewal of Cox's WSB-AM-FM-TV Atlanta.

The agreement covers a number of issues that figured in the petition to deny, including programing and minority and female employment.

But it also discloses GE's grant of \$375,000 to a trust for an educational institution—yet to be named—for the establishment of a communications facility. The facility would be used both for educational purposes and for the production by members of the public of programing to be presented on WSB-TV under the terms of a provision for public access.

Nor is \$375,000 all that the trust would receive. Metromedia Inc., which is to acquire Cox's WSB(AM) while GE picks up the television station, would match that amount. (A black-controlled group, BENI of Georgia, would acquire WSB-FM.)

The communications facility would be in addition to the foundation that GE, in its application to acquire the Cox stations, promised to establish. The foundation would be designed to train minorities and women interested in broadcasting as a career and to foster the development of public access and public advocacy. GE has promised to contribute to the project some \$7 million-\$9 million to be obtained from the sale of some of the stations being spun off in the merger.

Other provisions of the agreement commit GE to policies aimed at assuring "objective presentation of news" by GE stations; to present on WSB-TV programs (including one between the hours of 6 p.m. and 11:30 p.m. weekly) devoted to matters of local concern, including minorities in the community, and to broadcast at least

160 public service announcements weekly on the station.

The EEO section of the agreement requires WSB-TV to reach a level of minority employment consistent with the percentage of minorities in the Atlanta metropolitan area. In addition, the station "will exert its best efforts to fill 25%" of the expected openings in the top four job categories with minorities over the next three years. And it will "exert good faith efforts" to employ women in all top job groups.

The agreement also provides for reimbursement of the expenses—up to \$125,000—incurred by NAACP and ACLU in prosecuting the petition to deny renewal of the Atlanta stations.

But the agreement does not take effect unless the commission approves the merger, and four petitions to deny the merger—valued at an estimated \$500 million—are still pending. One was filed jointly by the National Citizens Committee for Broadcasting and the Committee for Open Media, and another by the Virginia Beach Telecommunications Corp. The two others were filed by Marcus Garvey Wilcher, of the Community Coalition for Media Change (BROADCASTING, Aug. 6).

WATCH: wound tightly for the fight over WDCA-TV

Another force to be reckoned with in children's TV rises up

To some members of the Washington Association for Television and Children, Taft Broadcasting did not seem to be taking them seriously when they were protesting Taft's proposed acquisition of WDCA-TV (ch. 20) Washington. If that was the case, Taft now has reason to regard the group with some seriousness. So does the FCC.

WATCH, a three-year-old group with several hundred members (including schools, churches and other institutions), is preparing to go to court to force an unscrambling of the sale, which the commission approved, 4-3, and which the parties promptly consummated (BROADCASTING, Aug. 20). In the process, WATCH hopes to show the commission's top-50 policy to be meaningless.

That wasn't what WATCH's founders had in mind in setting up the organization in the spring of 1976. They were con-

cerned about the programing local television stations were providing their children. And Action for Children's Television, while perhaps effective on a national level, was not organized to deal with local issues—it does not, for instance, petition to deny renewals of license. With a gift of \$27,000 from the Junior League—Townes Osborn, one of the founders of WATCH and still one of its principal strategists, was on the league's board—WATCH was launched.

It arrived at its present position not because of concern over the top-50 policy or other multiple ownership matters. It was concerned over what its members felt was the lack of effectiveness of the commission's 1974 policy on children's television programing and advertising, a policy designed as the answer to those demanding government action to force an upgrading of the service television was offering children. ("We thought it would be helpful if we showed it had no meat," said one member.)

WATCH decided to monitor the children's programing of Washington's six television stations in an effort to substantiate members' suspicions that the stations were doing less in the way of programing and more in the way of advertising than the statement envisaged.

Monitoring efforts in 1976 and 1977 produced reports supporting those views. WATCH's report on its 1977 monitoring, issued last year, said that, with the exception of noncommercial WETA-TV, Washington stations were not complying with the policy (BROADCASTING, Sept. 11, 1978).

As a result of that exercise, WATCH filed its petition to deny the renewal of WDCA-TV, which had ranked lowest of all the stations on the basis of the factors studied. The commission denied that petition, as well as a petition for reconsideration, before finally approving the station's sale, by the Improvement Leasing Co., for \$15.5 million.

WATCH, which is represented by the Citizens Communications Center, did not make it easy for the commission. Opposition to the sale almost led to the first rejection of a transfer on the basis of the top-50 policy. Three of the seven commissioners voted to deny the sale on the ground that Taft, which already owned six stations in major markets, had not made the "compelling public interest showing" required of applicants seeking a fourth station—or a third VHF—in the top 50 markets. In the 11 years the policy had been on the books, the commission had approved all 18 applications, involving 38 stations, that had triggered the policy. And the approval was usually routine.

WATCH, said Osborn, wants to demon-

As I said... some scumble. Didn't know about this but not surprised. Quel mess!

Small world. Townes Osborn, who played a leading role in the opposition of the Washington Association for Television and Children (WATCH) to the renewal and transfer of WDCB-TV Washington (see story this page) also is playing what some in Washington are calling a leading role in a "media reform soap opera."

Osborn, who is divorced from Wilton (Chip) Osborn, now the owner of KJLA(AM) Kansas City, Mo., gave birth to a baby boy on Aug. 10, and named him Alexander Lavidge Johnson. The father is former FCC Commissioner Nicholas Johnson, with whom she had worked at the National Citizens Communications Lobby, which Johnson heads.

The couple are not on good terms. Osborn filed suit with the D.C. Department of Human Rights charging NCCL with sex discrimination because, she says, Johnson said she could not work with the lobby while she was pregnant. The case was closed in May for lack of jurisdiction, according to the department.

To some, Osborn's activities called to mind stories of frontier women, as well as soap opera heroines. Very pregnant, she went to a special commission meeting called on Aug. 2 to consider the proposed sale of WDCB-TV, only to see the commissioners postpone action. The next time the commission met on the subject, on Aug. 16, Osborn was there again, just six days after giving birth.

Johnson last week had "no statement one way or another" on the matter. He was reached in San Francisco, where he was addressing the scientific session of the California Dental Association on the subject of television's impact on the nation's dental health.

strate in court that the commission approved the sale even though "no compelling public interest showing" had been made. And a decision in WATCH's favor, she said, would assume that "subsequent petitions for waiver would be a lot better."

Taft, she said, did not take WATCH "seriously." It originally offered only a couple of programs in support of its compelling public interest showing, she said. (Indeed, Taft lawyers, looking at the history of the top-50 cases, were confident the commission would approve the sale.) Nor did the amendment beefing up Taft's showing impress WATCH, even though one provision called for a commitment of \$250,000 to a fund to develop programming specifically for children. Osborn said WATCH is prepared to provide "input" but would not be "bought off."

WATCH, then, may not look as it did when it was established three years ago. There are more men, more Hispanics, more blacks on the 16-member board than

was the case originally. It has a 10-member advisory board—including George Gerbner of the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications and Kathy Bonk of the National Organization for Women—and an eight-person speakers bureau. Its members maintain contact with local stations, and take some credit for what they see as an upgrading of children's programming at most of them. And it manages to support itself by members' dues, foundation grants and help from private businesses. But it has not lost track of the objective it had when it began monitoring the Washington stations' children's programming.

The commission, Osborn noted, is scheduled to review its children's television policy this fall. When it does, she said, there will be a case study of what happens when a citizen group tries to apply it to local stations. To Osborn, the policy statement "is just a public relations gimmick."

Washington Watch

Making it easier. Before leaving for its August recess, Congress cleared way for industry representatives to serve as spokesmen for U.S. delegation to general World Administrative Radio Conference beginning in Geneva next month. Congress adopted amendment to State Department authorization measure conditionally exempting members of WARC delegation from statutory ban on private-sector members serving as spokesmen for U.S. delegations to international conferences. Amendment, proposed by Senator Harrison Schmitt (R-N.M.), requires that such individual file financial disclosure statement and that secretary of state certify that person is most qualified on delegation to speak on particular subject. Glen Robinson, who heads delegation with rank of ambassador, is expected to make use of freedom congressional action gives him.

FOB's McKinney to WARC. There is new face on U.S. delegation to World Administrative Radio Conference. James McKinney, deputy chief of FCC's Field Operations Bureau, was named to fill vacancy created by departure from State Department, on year's leave of absence, of Jay Katzen. Katzen, in Office of International Communications Policy, was listed as political advisor on delegation.

On schedule. NBC President Fred Silverman's luncheon address to Washington's National Press Club on Sept. 19 will adhere to plans calling for no more than four speeches per year and will be his sixth since assuming NBC's presidency 15 months ago. There's no inkling of content, but it's expected it will be review of his stewardship, with emphasis on news and promises of things to come. Sellout crowd of 450 is expected.

Benny Hill scores at 11:30, too!

San Fran.

KTVU doubles rating
of previous 11:30 PM show*
NTI overnights 7/10 and 7/11/79
give Benny a 6 rating!

Cleveland

WUAB rating up 50% over
previous 11:30 PM show
Adds 22,000 adults 18-49*



*Feb.-May 79 ARB, 11:30 PM-12 M

The Benny Hill Show

Produced by

Thames Television

Distributed by

D.L. Taffner/Ltd.

1370 Ave. of the Americas
New York, N.Y. 10019 (212) 245-4680
5900 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1450
Los Angeles, Ca. 90036 (213) 937-1144

SEP 12 1979

gph
✓

Is seeing believing?

By **ALLAN C. KIMBALL**
Citizen Staff

Can you tell the difference between what is real and not real on television? Perhaps you think you can, but there is strong evidence that the overwhelming visual nature of the medium has people quite confused.

Seeing is, they say, believing.

The National Institute of Mental Health reports that a majority of adults use TV to learn how to handle specific problems in their lives. Problems like relationships among workers or family members, values, dealing with children, understanding deviations from the social norm, sexuality, and politics.

The overall values put forth on television situation comedies and dramatic shows are taken as valid, providing useful information.

When solving problems, the adults studied in the report recalled how the problem was solved in a television version of that same situation. They reported often making similar choices.

Actors in daytime soap operas know this is true, simply from the volume of mail they receive wishing the character they play on TV a happy birthday, or warning them of what another character

is planning against them, or condemning them for certain actions their character is taking in the series.

Another report conducted by the University of Pennsylvania found that "Although critics complain about the stereotyped characters and plots of TV dramas, many viewers look on them as representatives of the real world. Anyone who questions that assertion should read the 250,000 letters, most containing requests for medical advice, sent by viewers to Marcus Welby, M.D. during the first five years of his 'practice' on television."

Heavy viewers of TV are more likely to overestimate the percentage of the world population that lives in America, according to the report. They also seriously overestimated the percentage who hold professional jobs and drastically overestimated the number of police in the U.S. and the amount of violence in society.

In all cases, the overestimate matched a distortion that exists in television programming. The more TV people watched, the more their view of the world matched television reality.

Knowledge that the TV programs are fictional

does not prevent people from believing them anyway, or at least gaining important impressions that form their beliefs.

Yet another study has shown that a greater percentage of voters based their decisions on which candidate to vote for on the information they got from TV ads rather than information gotten any other way.

Advertising, in fact, plays a major role in most people's lives for although most understand that ads are simply sales pitches and the people in them are not real people, consumers still purchase brands which are heavily advertised. Advertising, then, does work even though people know what it is trying to do.

Thinking is not defense enough because simply by watching we allow the various images to pass into our brains and we, being supremely visual animals, retain the images longer than we do the knowledge that what we have seen is fiction.

Today's college-bound generation is the first generation weaned and raised totally by television. How will their perception of America's future and of the American Dream will change the face of society?

agree that allowing TV to become a major part of an individual's life is undoubtedly going to have detrimental effects.

The problem is that television has become a part of the American way of life. George Gerbner, the dean of the Annenberg School of Communication at the University of Pennsylvania, and Larry Gross, an associate professor also at Annenberg, have estimated that approximately one third of American adults watch an average of four or more hours of TV every day. The Nielson Index figures for television viewing estimate by the time a child graduated from high school he will have spent only 11,000 hours in school, but 15,000 in front of the TV set. That's an astonishing amount of time to spend watching television.

TV viewers should be aware of the problems that can be associated with too much television viewing. Most of all, they should be aware of the fact that this wealthy industry is only successful because of the viewer's faithful patronage. The TV industry is not concerned with "what is best" for its viewers; it's in business to make money. Until people re-evaluate what they consider to be worthwhile entertainment, the TV industry, along with its sponsors, will continue to provide television viewers with programs that fail to reflect life in a realistic way.

Recently, a letter to the editor was printed that discussed the problems related to excessive television viewing. I

Cindy J. Savage
38273 Hurrican Drive, Willoughby

WILLOUGHBY, OHIO
NEWS-HERALD
D. 22,420 S. 21,875

SEP 16 1979

Too much TV

SEP 18 1979

By [signature]

Bill Mandel



Or I'll kill you

I was at a dinner party in Marin County Saturday night when a 7-year-old boy threatened to stab me if I didn't play catch with him. He could have done it, too. He was packing a six-inch-long, hard plastic shiv.

The incident set me thinking about the values youngsters pick up from TV. Until their popularity faded, the so-called "action-adventure" shows ("Baretta," "Police Woman," "Star-sky & Hutch," etc.) were filled with lines in which someone threatened to kill someone else if he or she ever did *that* (put a hand on the speaker's shoulder, speak too familiarly with someone's spouse or lover, get a smudge on the speaker's auto paint job) again. And here I was being threatened with stabbing if I didn't play catch.

After the game was over I consulted my notes for the new TV season. Yes, there is a definite upswing in certain stock characters who transmit unhealthy values and/or mores to viewers. The most obvious is the smart-mouth (Hollywood likes to say "precocious") kid, who tells elders where to stick it and where to go. Maybe I'm wrong, but I think there are enough real-life smart-mouth kids around without flooding the role-model fantasy market with them.

Another stereotype that's been cast into steel-hard acceptance on TV is that of old people. If they aren't "peppery" old folks with the same "precocious" tendencies of their grandchildren, the oldsters are portrayed as

doddering, sexless, socially impotent, irrelevant and sufficiently debilitated physically to become butts of deaf, senile and bald jokes.

Yes, say apologists for TV, that's what you know-it-all cynics say, but where's your *proof*? Now, thanks to a research team at the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications in Philadelphia, we have some hard evidence that exposure to TV depictions of old people leads viewers to the following *wrong* conclusions:

- Old people are shown to be a vanishing breed on TV, but the reverse is true.
- The more TV respondents watch, the earlier they gauge people — especially women — to have reached a useless old age.
- Heavier TV viewers of shows which depicted old people are more inclined to say that old people are inferior.

The research team reported that TV's characterization of the old shows them to be: not serious, stubborn, eccentric, socially inactive, sexually irrelevant and powerless. Attitudes among heavy TV viewers also contained the following assumptions about the old:

- Old men have evil powers that are punished by death.
- Old women have no power and are easily victimized.
- Older women have few romantic opportunities because older men usually socialize with younger women.

Significantly, these attitudes were most prevalent among people 20 years old and younger. Commenting on the study, its director, Dr. George Gerbner, added, "Young people are the most susceptible to TV's influence. Therefore, the best and possibly *only* time to learn about growing old with decency and grace is in youth, in the everyday social and cultural environment." Since TV is for many the only cultural environment, things don't look good.

AS IN LORO-TOMY

NBC president Fred Silverman recently said "The Misadventures of Sheriff Lobo," which greets the world at 8 tonight on Channel 4, is "like the 'Road-Runner' cartoon, except with people." Sheriff Lobo himself (Claude Akins, who deserves better) says it with more pith on tonight's premiere: "Don't mistake confidence for desperation." This "comedy" deals with fictional Orly County, South U.S.A., and revolves around the poor police work of the sheriff's department. There's the fat slob deputy, the eager young overachiever and the mellow chief (Akins). To say tonight's plot is far-fetched — but still stupid — is to understate the case mightily. If I were the Road-Runner, I think I'd sue for defamation.

SEP 2 0 1979

Television Biased To Older Americans

PHILADELPHIA (UPI) — Television rarely uses older actors and relegates them to inferior or stereotyped roles when it does, perpetuating myths that senior citizens are less important and less capable than the rest of the population.

The comments are included in the results of a two-year

research project at the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications funded through a \$200,000 grant from the Administration on Aging.

Dr. George Gerbner, one of the research investigators, said persons more than 65 years old make up about 11 percent of the

population but constitute only 2.3 percent of the characters on television.

"It's a gross under-representation. Children growing up see old people very rarely. They're almost invisible," he said. "They have very few and highly stereotyped roles to play."

The project findings conclude the portrayal of seniors on television cultivates negative images about their abilities and supports beliefs that they are "inferior in many ways."

"I think anything that puts down and handicaps a group of many millions of people and discriminates and deprives them of equal opportunity and equal respect is harmful," said Gerbner.

When older people are represented on television, they are shown as more stubborn and eccentric than others, less active socially and sexually, and less effective in most other ways, the report said.

Gerbner said no evidence exists that older persons are less sexually active and "not to extent as portrayed on television."

He said TV is even less fair in its treatment of woman.

"The 65 year old man has a much better chance of being cast in a romantic lead than a 65 year old woman," he said.

Gerbner said the largest group of female actors on television are in their 20s while their male counterparts are generally in their 30s and 40s.

He said the effect of television portrayals on viewers, especially those younger than 20, is to promote a conception that "older people are declining in number and are less important."

Elderly Found Portrayed As Stereotypes on TV

PHILADELPHIA, Sept. 21 (UPI) — A University of Pennsylvania study concludes that older actors are given very few roles on television and that the parts they do get perpetuate stereotypes of the elderly.

The two-year project was conducted by the university's Annenberg School of Communications and was financed with a \$200,000 grant from the Administration on Aging.

The portrayals of the elderly on television cultivate beliefs that the aged are "inferior in many ways," the study said.

They are portrayed as more stubborn and eccentric than others, less active socially and sexually, and less effective in most other ways, according to the report.

Dr. George Gerbner, one of the researchers, said persons over 65 years old make up 11 percent of the population but constitute 2.3 percent of the characters on television.

"It's a gross underrepresentation," he said. "Children growing up see old people very rarely."

SEP 24 1979

By Diane Holloway

TV slants view of elders

There's nothing like a good old research study to cloud up an already dreary Monday morning — especially when the report contains depressing information.

A two-year research study conducted by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications reveals that old people are "grossly under-represented in television drama."

At a time when the elderly make up an increasing part of the American population, their absence on TV leads many viewers (mainly children and teenagers) to believe that old folks are a vanishing breed.

Furthermore, the portrayal of old people on TV tends to cultivate negative images about their abilities, according to the study.

When they are present, old people are seen by most TV viewers as stubborn and eccentric, less active socially and sexually, and less effective in other ways than younger characters.

One happy exception to the apparent norm, however, was the late Will Geer as Grandpa on "The Waltons." There was practically nothing he couldn't do, and he was madly in love with his spunky, old wife.

Other findings of the study indicate that elderly women are worse off than men on television. Beginning with the report that most viewers believe women age faster than men, the findings go downhill for the poor over-the-hill ladies.

While old men are often seen as evil characters, old women are generally seen as powerless and inferior. They are likely to be victimized in some way, socially or criminally.



television

Diane Holloway

The population of dramatic television is way out of kilter with America's real-life population. A disproportionate number of young women are seen on TV because younger women tend to play opposite older men (but not *old* men).

As women age on television, they are assigned roles of older characters earlier than men of the same age. These "older women" roles are usually the stereotype hag or victim. More grannies than granddaddies appear on TV. There are, of course, fewer romantic possibilities for older women than males of the same age.

Given the importance of sex in both comedy and drama these days, the decline in romantic parts is the toughest cut of all for the "mature female" character.

The reflection of the elderly, particularly elderly women, is indicative of the Never-Never Land philosophy of television. Youth prevails. Men age gracefully to a point, then disappear; women age quickly, and disappear. And, of course, almost the entire makeup of the TV population is white and middle class.

The Annenberg School study is further evidence of the vast discrepancy between the characters inside the video box and the real people outside looking in.

TV criticized for poor portrayal of the elderly

Gerbner study contends that the old are underrepresented in programing, and that when they do appear, their roles are stereotypes

In its portrayal of the older person, television is not telling it like it is. That accusation is made in the findings of a two-year research project at the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications.

The findings were presented last Monday (Sept. 17) at a conference in Washington. The research team was headed by the university's Dr. George Gerbner, also known for his studies of violence on TV.

Gerbner and his associates said that at a time when older persons are making up an increasing part of the population, they continue to be underrepresented on TV dramas, leading viewers to believe that older persons are a vanishing breed.

The analysis is based on 1,365 programs and 16,688 characters that appeared in one week of prime-time and weekend-daytime programing in the fall of each year from 1969 to 1978.

The more television viewers watch, the study said, the more they believe that people, and especially women, reach old age earlier in life than others, that the total number of older people is declining rather than increasing, and that older people are inferior in many ways.

It was also contended that when they are present on television, older people are shown as less serious but more stubborn and eccentric than others, less active socially and sexually, and less effective in most other ways.

The findings also show that on TV:

- Older men are more likely to possess powers that are evil and punished by death.

- On the other hand, older women have no such power and are most likely to be victimized by violence.

- Drama is structured so that younger women play opposite older men, meaning that a disproportionate number of women shown are young.

Gerbner emphasized that all of the effects noted in the study were strongest in the under-20 age groups of TV viewers.

"Strikingly, young people are the most susceptible to television's influence," he said. "Therefore, the best and possibly only time to learn about growing old with decency and grace is in youth, in the everyday social and cultural environment."

Principal investigators in the Annenberg project with Gerbner were Larry Gross, an associate professor, and Nancy Signorielli, research coordinator. The study was funded by a \$200,000 grant from the Administration on Aging, Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

SEP 27 1979

By [unclear]

Elderly Said Misrepresented

PHILADELPHIA (RNS)

Older people in America are grossly underrepresented and misrepresented on television drama, according to a two-year study by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications.

The study showed that at a time when the older population in America is steadily increasing, very few of them are depicted in TV drama.

And when older persons are shown in TV drama, they are portrayed negatively as stubborn eccentrics, and persons who are less serious and less effective in most other ways than younger people.

The Annenberg study showed that TV viewers — especially those under 20 — are strongly influenced by television images of older people. The study suggested that TV should make an effort to portray older people in a more positive light, as part of a necessary public education.

"Strikingly, young people are the most susceptible to television's influence," according to George Gerbner, one of the investigators in the Annenberg study.

"Therefore," he said, "the best and possibly only

time to learn about growing old with decency and grace is in youth, in the everyday social and cultural environment."

The study showed that television viewers have distorted impressions about older people as a result of TV dramas.

The more TV viewers watched, the more they believed that people — especially women — reach old age earlier in life than they actually do, and that old people are inferior in many areas. Because older people are shown so infrequently in TV dramas, viewers mistakenly believe the older population is growing smaller.

Old men were found in TV dramas to often possess powers that are evil and punished by death. Old women were likely to be victimized by all groups of dramatic characters.

TV drama was often structured so younger women played opposite older men, resulting in a disproportionate number of women who are shown as young, the Annenberg study found.

SEP 28 1979

Byline

Oh, No; Not That

In the population at large, the elderly, or "senior citizens," as they are sometimes called, make up 11 percent of the total.

In television, where roles are created and assigned, these old folks get a scant 2.3 percent of the parts and even these perpetuate the stereotypes of the aged. They are portrayed as stubborn and eccentric, less active socially and sexually, much given to ineffectiveness in other ways.

No kidding.

So concludes a study by the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania on a \$200,000 grant from the Administration on Aging. In television, as in job opportunities, beauty contests, contact sports, military service, romantic adventures and the Indianapolis 500, the old folks are left out.

What this means, as the study points out in interminable detail, is

that the viewer who watches enough television to encounter 300 characters will see in a week only seven over 65 and most of these in some unfavorable light.

So far as one can determine, none of this has caused any great worry in the Social Security set. Most of these unfortunates have graver matters on their minds.

What is to worry about is the implication that society can be greatly improved by forcing upon television programming the rule of proportional representation — so many teen-agers, so many working stiffs in their middle ages, so many golden oldies, each in exact reflection of the demographic profile.

One could agree at once that television programming is dismal and still doubt that it will improve when the Federal Communications Commission has taken over the writing, casting, production and direction. Oh, no; not that

SEP. 28 1979 *B.K.L.*

Study Finds TV Conveys Wrong Idea of Elderly

PHILADELPHIA
(RNS) — Older people in this country are grossly under-represented and misrepresented in television drama, according to a two-year study by the University of Pennsylvania Annenberg School of Communications.

The study showed that, at a time when the older population is steadily increasing, very few of them are depicted in TV drama. And when they are shown, they are portrayed negatively as stubborn eccentrics, persons who are less serious and less effective in most other ways than younger people.

The study showed that TV viewers—especially those under 20—are strongly influenced by television images of older people. The study suggested that TV should make an effort to portray older people in a more positive light, as part of a necessary public education.

"Strikingly, young people are the most susceptible to television's influence," George Gerbner, one of the investigators in the Annenberg study, said.

"Therefore the best and possibly only time to learn about growing old with decency and grace is in youth, in the everyday social and cultural environment."

The study showed that television viewers have distorted impressions about older people as a result of TV dramas.

The more TV viewers watched, the more they believed that people—especially women—reach old age earlier in life than they actually do, and that old people are inferior in many areas. Because older people are shown so infrequently in TV dramas, viewers mistakenly believe the older population is growing smaller.

Old men were found in TV dramas to often possess powers that are evil and punished by death. Old women were likely to be victimized by all groups of dramatic characters.

TV drama was often structured so younger women played opposite older men, resulting in a disproportionate number of women who are shown as young, the Annenberg study found.

SEP 30 1979

Byline

Inquiries into the realm of violence on TV

By Pamela J. King

PHILADELPHIA — If George Gerbner were king, his first decree would be a simple one: Cast more women on television shows. The results of that one action, he says, would be a more realistic balance of the sexes on TV and a reduction of televised violence. And eventually, he concludes, "the world would be a more just place."

But Gerbner is not king, though he commands the land of sit-coms and stereotypes, of high drama and low comedy, with an army of statistics and computerized correlations. For the past 10 years he has studied the magic — if not misguided — light of television.

Dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania, the 60-year-old Hungarian-born professor publishes the annual profile of violence on television and directs a broader study, the Cultural Indicators Research Project, which measures trends in TV content and television's effects on viewers. To

Gerbner, the tube is a serious index of our society and he scoffs at those who consider it trivial.

"Television is a ritual, a collective ritual, that modern society needs," says Gerbner, his accent diminished after 40 years in America. "The average child is born into a home in which the television is on 6½ hours a day. That's 6,500 hours of moving images before a child goes to school. TV is an instrument of power that overshadows church or school; the historic relationship of church and state now exists as TV and state.

"Television is not a selective medium. For the first time, the parochial, the isolated, the rural — those out of the mainstream — have something in common with the rich, powerful and beautiful. Television is the cement, the cohesion of our society."

But, according to Gerbner, the world of the television viewer is created by people who are governed by only one consideration: "cost per thousand." That explains why so many shows are violent, he

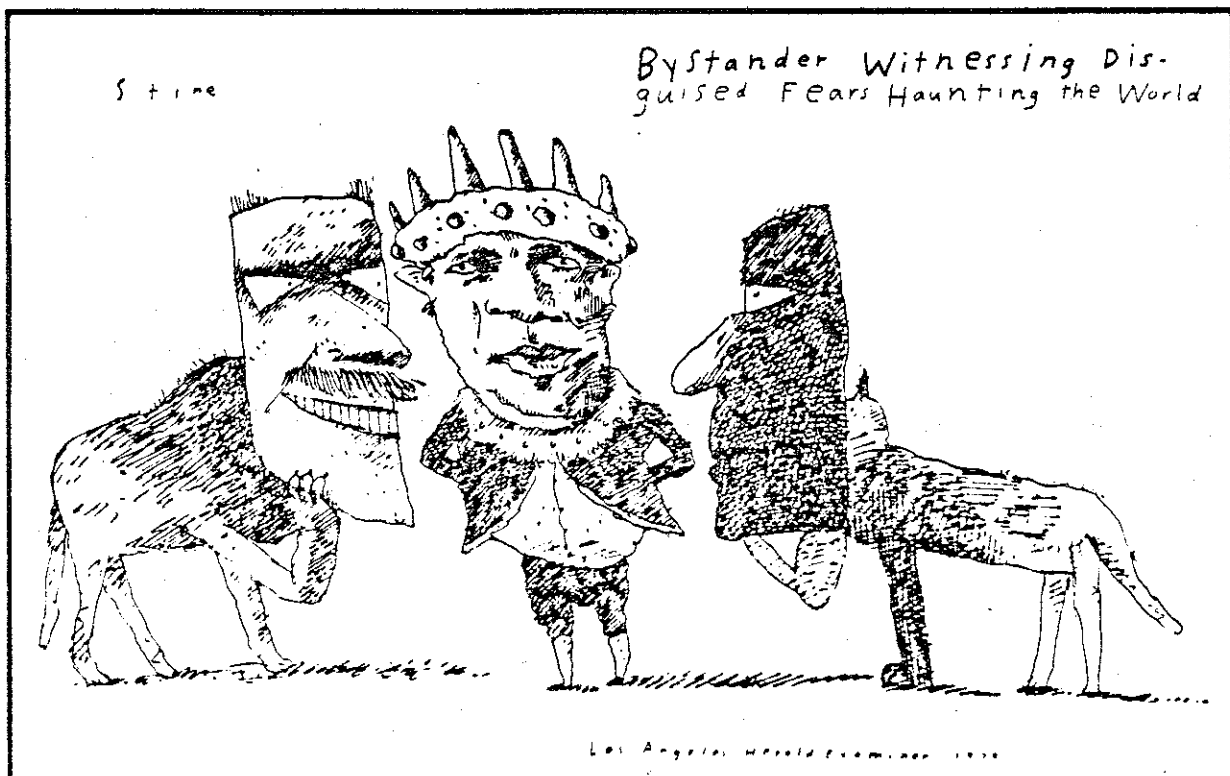
says, because "violence is a cheap industrial ingredient inserted five times per hour."

Three problems particularly distress Gerbner. The first involves violence, or more specifically, the creation of an audience, trained through television violence, in the role of victim. The other two are the perpetuation of the male-dominated-world image through imbalanced casting, and the cultivation of prejudice and inequity through stereotypes of minorities, women and the elderly.

Televiased violence has been a specific field of study for Gerbner since 1968, when the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence asked him to assess its affect on a population shaken by three assassinations and the horrors of Vietnam. His findings have bared a common misconception: Rather than encouraging aggression, televised violence fosters mistrust and alienation among regular viewers, creating a population more timid and paranoid than

Televiased violence / E-4, Col. 4 X

STINE



Televised violence

Continued from page E-1

those who rarely tune in. According to Gerbner, one who watches a lot of TV is more likely than the light viewer to assume that the world is a dangerous place and will be more hesitant to walk the streets. When asked whether he or she has a 1-in-10 or 1-in-100 chance of being mugged, a steady viewer is more likely to choose the 10 percent option.

The 1978 Violence Profile, recently published in the *Journal of Communication*, notes a substantial increase in televised violence over the previous year. Of 111 programs on the three major networks — a week of prime-time shows plus one weekend of children's daytime programming — 94 programs (84.7 percent) contained violent acts at the average rate of 8.3 per hour. In 1977, 75.5 percent of the shows contained an average of 6.7 acts of violence per hour. The 1978 statistics are substantially higher than the average figures for the past decade, exceeded only in 1976.

"My work can protect television from unwarranted attacks," Gerbner says. "It is ridiculous to think that individuals are incited to violence because of TV and we have testified in court on behalf of the networks. Violence on TV only makes people more insecure."

Those viewers not only perceive the world as overcrowded with murderers and perverts, but they also project to reality television's ratio of four men to every woman: the domination of women by men



George Gerbner

thus becomes numerical as well as cultural. This issue is crucial to Hollywood's union officials because it means that actresses are far less likely than actors to find employment on television shows.

Gerbner added that 8 percent of all TV characters are younger than 18 years old (30 percent of all Americans are less than 18) and 2.3 percent of all characters are older than 65 (compared to 11 percent of the actual population). Women age quickly on TV, he says, which contributes to societal neuroses about growing old; a 65-year-old actress is invariably cast as an old woman, he adds, while a 65-year-old man usually plays a middle-aged man.

"Television cultivates resistance to change," Gerbner says. "Those who are shown as powerful retain power. That is the basis of our hierarchically structured society — and that is counter to our ideals."

Gerbner charges that the group which determines television's content is too narrow and he laments its commercial motivation. But he is surprisingly optimistic when he

discusses the future of TV: "If you assume the networks don't care, then you assume they don't deserve their license to the public airwaves. I think that if they have access to information such as I have gathered (sample tapes of 5,000 shows with 15,000 characters), then they will use better judgment for what they do."

Gerbner is not, however, without apocalyptic comment. He says that self-analysis and change based on findings such as his are key to the networks' survival and concludes that "if they let the mechanism operate on unrealistic grounds as it does today, it will not exist in 50 to 100 years."

Fortunately, Gerbner says, public pressure groups are injecting themselves into the decision-making process. "They're trying to liberate us from the strait-jacket of commercial interests," he said with relief. "The public is asking the networks to loosen the formulas on which they determine the universal curriculum."

The formulas are based, of course, on production costs and TV ratings. Because of these narrow criteria, Gerbner says, children's programming is mired in the "age of barbarians" (a whopping 97.9 percent of all weekend daytime children's programming contains an average of 25 acts of violence per hour) and cultural programming is vastly underfinanced.

Gerbner's aggressive rhetoric is one reason why the networks greet his television profiles with all the enthusiasm of pharmaceutical firms hearing the findings of the FDA chemists. "It costs 'em to clean it up," Gerbner said with a grin. "It requires more time and money for creative people to come up with new ways to approach human solutions."

Pamela J. King

TV's Sexual Stereotyped Messages Bring Psychological Harm To Children

Toy commercials for little girls are sugar and spice, but the message for little boys is designed to nurture macho men, according to a research study.

Writing in the summer edition of the *University of Pennsylvania Journal of Communications*, researcher Renate C. Welch of the University of Kansas reported that advertisers used "blatant, obvious and exaggerated" sexually stereotyped messages to sell toys to children.

More subtle, but still pervasive and perhaps more dangerous, said Welch, were the techniques toy

commercials used to get the message across.

Welch's team distinguished three types of commercials among the 60 studied: male, using solely male child actors; female, solely females, and neutral, using both sexes.

Among the techniques:

- Male and neutral commercials had a higher rate of scene changes than female commercials, which contained more fades, dissolves and soft background music.

- Female child actors did very little talking in neutral commercials, whereas they did a great

deal of talking in female commercials.

- Aggression was almost entirely limited to male commercials.

"The problems of male role stereotypes are sometimes neglected because of our frequent focus on females," Welch said.

"The pattern of high energy, quick changes and aggression that might be summarized as 'hype' shown here may be as maladaptive as the portrayal of femininity as quiet, retiring and limited in scope," Welch said.

In content itself, the researchers found that in children's programs and commercials males outnumber females and spokespersons on or off-camera are usually male.

In general, girls play with dolls and miniature domestic implements; boys play with vehicles, competitive games and war games.

"These content messages are blatant, obvious and exaggerated versions of sex stereotypes," Welch said.

TOLEDO, OHIO
CATHOLIC CHRONICLE
W. 57,647 (C)

OCT 5 1979

By Kula

TV ignores aged

Older people in America are grossly underrepresented and misrepresented in TV drama, according to a two-year study by the University of Pennsylvania's School of Communications.

The study showed that at a time when the older population in America is steadily increasing, very few of them are depicted in TV drama.

And when older persons are shown in TV drama, they are portrayed negatively as stubborn eccentrics, and person who are less serious and

less effective in most other ways than younger people.

The study showed that TV viewers — especially those under 20 — are strongly influenced by TV images of older people.

The study showed that TV viewers have distorted impressions about older people as a result of TV dramas.

The more TV viewers watched, the more they believed that people — especially women — reach old age earlier in life than they actually do, and that old people are inferior in many areas. Because older people are shown so infrequently in TV dramas, viewers mistakenly believe the older population is growing smaller.

OCT 5 1979 *Byrd*

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PORTLAND, ORE.
CATHOLIC SENTINEL
W. 19.888 (C)

OCT 5 1979

By Keller

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Older people in America are grossly underrepresented and misrepresented on television drama, according to a two-year study by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications. When older persons are shown in TV drama, they are portrayed negatively as stubborn eccentrics, and persons who are less serious and less effective in most other ways than younger people. The study showed that TV viewers — especially those under 20 — are strongly influenced by television images of older people. The study suggested that TV should make an effort to portray older people in a more positive light, as part of a necessary public education.

OCT 5 1979 *Register*

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OCT 7 1977

TV slights the elderly, study claims

From wire services

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TV drama was often structured so younger women played opposite older men, resulting in a disproportionate number of women who are shown as young, the Annenberg study found. The projects was funded through a \$200,000 grant from the Administration on Aging.

Klerman added that "the establishment of this Center within a short time of the formation of the Health Care Finance Administration to tighten the federal reimbursement purse-strings, in my view, makes it especially noteworthy. As the federal third-party payer, HCFA dispenses dollars in the 'megabillion' range. It thus inevitably sets a tone which other reimbursers may follow."

CONSUMERISM SEEKS TO APPLY MANUFACTURING AND MARKETING STANDARDS TO PROFESSIONALS, TOO

"In the United States today, some warranty of quality is implicit in the manufacture of goods and the marketing of services. To date, most practitioners of the learned professions have not seen themselves as businesspeople, even though they sell services. Largely for this reason, they have tended to believe that professional licensing and certification suffice to serve the public interest by limiting the persons permitted to practice to those who meet certain standards set by the profession and governmental jurisdiction.

"Consumerism has now demanded a new look at this equation. It says that protection against inadequate training is not enough. Consumers now are rightfully demanding to be protected against ineffective service, even if offered by highly trained, credentialed and ethical practitioners."

—Dr. Gerald L. Klerman

Klerman concluded by observing that "many questions remain to be answered: What criteria should be applied in which evaluation? Who is responsible for doing which assessments? What is the role of the professions vis-à-vis the federal role? I believe it is an opportune time for the psychology and other professions to join in the process of finding the answers on behalf of the public."

Contact: Dr. Gerald L. Klerman, Administrator, ADAMHA, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20857.

ANNENBERG STUDY FINDS TV PRESENTING HIGHLY DISTORTED IMAGES OF THE ELDERLY

On September 17, the editor of *BT* was one of a group of academicians, media figures, senior citizen activists and government officials invited to a Washington conference on "Aging With Television," sponsored by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications. Those attending were offered a preview of the School's final report on a research project which has found that the elderly—like women and children—are seriously misrepresented in the nation's television programming, in ways that correlate with the attitudes of "heavy viewers." Some of the findings presented:

- "Old men have the highest ratio of *fatal* victimization among all male age groups," the Annenberg presenters observed. This connects with the fact that "old men in television drama, especially when in a major prime-time serious role, are more likely to be evil than any other age group. Evil must have power to be credible. But in a world of happy endings, evil must also perish—hence the high ratio of old men who are killed."
- Figures compiled by the researchers show "that, except for the children and adolescents, as males age, proportionately more are portrayed as 'bad.' For females, however, the situation is reversed and, except for elderly women, proportionately more girls are portrayed as 'bad' than young or middle-aged women. More older women, though, are portrayed as 'bad.'"

Publisher: Ed Brown

Editor: Henry Ebel

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- The Annenberg group studied the proportions of TV characters who are portrayed as successes or failures in terms of achieving or not achieving the goals to which they aspire within the dramatic framework. They found "that the percent of successful men increases with age but, as women age, the percent who are successful seesaws and then drops to a mere 16 percent. Older women are also the most likely group to be portrayed as unsuccessful or as failures. In fact, more older women are unsuccessful than are successful. We do not find this for any other group."
- The researchers found "that the elderly, especially older men, are less likely to portray serious roles than are young adult or middle-aged men....Women of all ages are less likely than the men to portray serious roles."
- "More older characters are treated with disrespect than characters in any other age group. About 70 percent of the older men and more than 80 percent of the older women are not held in high esteem or treated courteously." Moreover, "a much larger proportion of older characters are portrayed as eccentric or foolish. A larger proportion of older women than older men—two-thirds as compared to about a half—are presented as lacking common sense, acting silly or eccentric. This male-female distinction does not exist in the other age groups."
- The researchers found "that as characters age, the proportion who are married increases, but the proportion involved romantically declines....This says something not only about age-roles but also about the nature of marriage."
- "Message System Analyses" carried out at the Annenberg School revealed "that in the world of television, over 3 out of 10 elderly characters (37 percent) are likely to be victimized. In the real world, however, less than one out of a hundred elderly citizens is ever likely to be [the] victim of criminal violence, robbery or assault—which is less than the rate for other age groups."

ELDERLY ARE REACHABLE EVEN IN THE BIG CITY

Among those in attendance at the "Aging With Television" conference was Dolores Calaf of *Boston Seniority*, an attractive 16-page newspaper published monthly by Boston's Commission on Affairs of the Elderly and distributed through "little city halls," public libraries, supermarkets, social security offices, senior citizen clubs, hospitals, nursing homes, and other outlets. The newspaper is printed in large type for the benefit of those with impaired vision. The September 1 issue includes articles on such subjects as a screening program for the hard of hearing, steps being taken by the city government to cope with this winter's fuel needs, and tuition-free programs at area colleges and universities.

Boston Seniority was started two years ago as a CETA "special project," with funding for a period of one year. Its success led the City of Boston to agree to pick up the tab once the CETA grant had expired. Costs now run in the vicinity of \$200,000 a year.

The newspaper includes a 4-page Spanish-language insert for which Calaf—herself of Spanish origin—is largely responsible. Senior citizen and Hispanic interests overlap, she observed to the editor of *BT*, insofar as both represent groups that pose special problems of "making contact." She has broad interests in using both the electronic and print media for this purpose.

Contact: Dolores Calaf, Boston Seniority, 73 Hemenway St., Boston, MA 02115. Single Copies of the newspaper will be sent, free of charge, to *BT* readers who request them on letterhead stationery.

The seriousness of these findings, according to the Annenberg group, is suggested by the analysis of data from the National Council on Aging's "Myth and Reality of Aging" survey, conducted in 1974 by Louis Harris and Associates. "The main results are clear and consistent. The more people—and especially young people—watch television, the more they tend to perceive old people in generally negative and unfavorable terms." The serious underrepresentation of the elderly among the characters depicted on TV appears to be the reason that "heavy viewers believe significantly more than light viewers that old people are a vanishing breed"—a pattern referred to by one of the Annenberg researchers as "symbolic annihilation." Moreover, "those who watch more television believe that people (and especially women) become older earlier in life."

The researchers "did not find watching television to be associated with any positive images of older people. Heavy viewers believe that the elderly are unhealthy, in worse shape financially, not active sexually, closed-minded, not good at getting things done, and so on."

Contact: Dr. George Gerbner, Dean, Annenberg School of Communications, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA 19104.

NEGATIVE EARLY MOTHERING CORRELATED WITH HOSTILITY TO FEMALE AUTHORITIES

Studies of group behavior in a variety of settings have turned up remarkably consistent results, Dr. Edward B. Klein of the University of Cincinnati psychology department told *BT* in a recent interview. Invariably, female group leaders are perceived, by both male and female group members, in terms that are much more negative and generally hostile than those applied to male leaders. The pattern, according to Klein, is especially clear when the group is run by male and female co-therapists, a team that typically includes a *more* experienced female nurse or psychologist and a *less* experienced male psychiatric resident. The female co-leader "often gets left with a great deal of the negative affect" while the male leader ends the session "feeling much more liked and in control."

The reasons for this recurrent phenomenon, according to Klein, can be found in the work of the psychoanalyst Melanie Klein on early mothering experiences, which have seldom been optimal in Western culture or other human societies. Negative feeding experiences in particular lead the infant to split its perceptions of the mother into "good breast" and "bad breast" images, the latter associated with feelings of distrust and anxiety that resurface—unconsciously—in relation to women who occupy positions of power and authority. Since both males and females spend the earliest months of life relating to mothers or female mother-surrogates, Melanie Klein's work helps to explain the fact that female group-leaders are perceived almost as negatively by women as by men.

The subject of gender and leadership will be explored at a group relations conference that will be held at the University of Cincinnati on November 2-4 of this year, under the direction of Dr. Laurence Gould of the City University of New York. Klein noted that the conference "will have an excellent, interdisciplinary, interracial coed staff," and that this fact will be especially significant in terms of earlier experiences showing that *black* female group leaders arouse even more primitive affect in group members than their white counterparts.

Conferences of this type are now attracting between two and four female applicants for each male, Klein told *BT*, as well as disproportionate numbers of applications from minority-group members and those in low-status positions within their organizations. "They like our conferences the most," Klein observed to *BT*, "because they want to know what the covert dynamics are within groups and organizations—what happens 'under the table' that influences leadership effectiveness in men and women."

Contact: Dr. Edward B. Klein, Dept. of Psychology, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH 45221. Those interested in attending the conference should contact Donna Carroll, Group Relations Conference, POB 21053, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH 45221.

HOW THE PRIVATE PRACTITIONER SHOULD DEAL WITH HOSPITALS AND INSURERS

"All hospitals where psychologists are or might be utilized are a new arena for the 1980s that can be considered 'third parties' for our practices," Dr. John W. Baker of New Windsor, NY told the American Psychological Association symposium on "Establishing and Maintaining a Successful Professional Practice." Psychologists must recognize that despite the recent emphasis on deinstitutionalization, "a full range of care does include hospitalization, and patients are reassured by hospital staff privileges."

At the same time, hospitals—whose boards often include conservative community leaders—do require "patience and educative thrust." It is the private practitioner's task to

**CHILD-
ren's
TV:**

is it
GETTING
any
BETTER?



A report on how the networks have responded to the demands of pressure groups.

by Claire Safran

"Then," asked the philosopher Socrates in Plato's "Republic," "shall we simply allow our children to listen to any stories that anyone happens to make up, and so receive into their minds ideas often the very opposite of those we shall think they ought to have when they grow up?"

For asking such questions, Socrates was required to drink a cup of hemlock. Modern gadflies, though, buzz in safer times. They flourish. They organize and band together. They ask the classic question about a modern storyteller, television.

This year, they are putting the question more sharply than ever. There are Government hearings on Children's television in Washington, D.C., parent-teacher meetings everywhere, public forums sponsored by such groups as Action for Children's Television (ACT).

At times, the complaint is not about the storyteller's ideas but its lack of them. Children's TV is criticized for being silly, frothy, hour after hour of empty calories. There's a yearning to transform the storyteller into a schoolteacher, to send Daffy Duck waddling down Sesame Street.

"The nature of network television is that we are an entertainment medium," explains Mary Alice Dwyer, NBC Entertainment's vice president of children's programming, "not an educational medium." Some education is slipped in, of course. Pro-social values and positive content are not too hard to find. Still, the bulk of children's

programming at the networks continues to be the Saturday-morning cartoons and live-action adventures. An ABC executive explains that, after a hard week at school, "children deserve some bubble-gum time."

The three people most responsible for children's television, the vice presidents in charge of children's programming at each of the three networks—NBC's Dwyer, ABC's Squire D. Rushnell and Faith Frenz-Heckman of CBS—talk of being in a competitive "arena" on Saturday mornings. "We want to be Number One," says Rushnell. "As programmers, we're not successful unless most of the kids are watching us. But kids are a very fickle audience. They make very fast decisions. They switch channels quickly." Currently, ABC is No. 2, followed closely by NBC. Saturday's leader is CBS, and Heckman admits that the fierce competition leads to "a certain sameness" among the networks during those children's hours.

Cartoons, some old, some new, make up more of children's programming than everything else combined. "Animation is not a low form of entertainment," insists ABC's Rushnell. It is, though, a less expensive form. "Everybody knows that children's programming, daytime programming, is a lower cost than prime time," says CBS's Heckman.

The network vice presidents don't blush over their cartoons but they do prefer to talk about the creative exceptions they make, the quality programs they put on despite the Saturday ratings. CBS has reason to boast of *30 Minutes*, a junior version of *60 Minutes*. This year, NBC is introducing *Hot Hero Sandwich*, featuring visits with the real people whom children admire; and ABC is bringing the first weekly drama series to Saturday morning with its *ABC Weekend Specials*.

At each network, some of the best things come in the littlest packages, educational bits and pieces tucked between the shows, sprin-

kled like wheat germ in a chocolate brownie. Dividing the hours of *Popeye*, *Plasticman* and *Fred and Barney Meet the Thing* are imaginative, creative "short forms" that last from 30 seconds to five minutes. ABC provides minilessons on *Schoolhouse Rock* and a musical advice column on *Dear Alex & Annie*, along with a scattering of public-service announcements on health, safety and nutrition. Rushnell is especially proud of a young viewer who saved her friend's life with the Heimlich maneuver she learned on ABC. At NBC, the drop-ins are called *Ask NBC News* and *Time Out*, along with a bright new series of public-service announcements on "How to Watch TV." At CBS, there is *In the News*, with health, safety and ecology messages woven into the various cartoon programs.

Still, the critics focus on the rule, the bulk of children's programming, not the exceptions. There is, for example, the lingering problem of violence on children's programs. "That's passé," insists Heckman of CBS. "There are no real weapons shown on our children's shows," defends Dwyer of NBC, though she admits there are imaginary, science-fiction ones. Saturday morning does seem calmer than it did 10 years ago when my own child was watching; the worst of the mayhem has been edited out. Still, there are violent incidents, scenes of harm or threats of harm. The latest Television Violence Profile—prepared by a team of researchers led by Dr. George Gerbner of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania—shows a decreased number of violent incidents during the "family hour" of 8 to 9 P.M., but an increase over recent years in the number during the children's hours of Saturday morning.

Not surprisingly, the networks dismiss this research as "unscientific." They have a strong, even violent, quarrel with how "violence" is defined. If Bugs Bunny falls headlong off a cliff, splat!, is that violence? "Yes," says Gerbner. "Yes," says Dorothy G. Singer of Yale University, one of many

researchers who are finding a strong link between the watching of violent programs and aggressive behavior in children. "Preschoolers do not understand that it's fantasy," says Dr. Singer, "and they are affected by such violence." The noes come from the networks. "Bugs Bunny doesn't die," insists Heckman of CBS. "It's fantasy comedy. The audience understands that. That's why it's fun to watch the cartoons."

Curiously, the networks' own censors, the special departments that monitor what is "inappropriate," do seem to feel that cartoon comedy can sometimes be called violent. Squire Rushnell sighs over his endless battles with the ABC censor. Recently, they edited out an incident in which a cartoon character was knocked down by a giant wave. "Is that violence?" asks Rushnell. "We are sanitizing children's programs. We are taking some of the fun out of it."

There is a cumulative effect that worries many people about TV violence. It is the same effect—the numbers of messages—that concerns many people about the commercials that interrupt children's programs. Highly sugared foods such as candies and presweetened cereals are advertised as many as eight or nine times an hour on Saturday mornings. The FTC is currently considering whether it's proper to direct such advertising to young children who may interpret the commercial as "another kind of program."

At CBS, Heckman feels that children can make the distinction between advertising and programming. "I'm convinced that children know what a commercial is because every time they see one, they say, 'Can I have it?'" At NBC, Dwyer thinks that much of the problem has been solved by the new 5-to-10-second separations between programs and commercials, now part of the National Association of Broadcasters Television Code, and by advertising messages that have become "more careful, truthful and balanced." She notes, "It comes back to who buys the cereal, the child or the parent."

Obviously, advertisers believe that children have some say in the purchase. Still, Rushnell of ABC also would like to pass the problem to other quarters. "If there is something wrong with the product, that's a question for the Food and Drug Administration [FDA]. If there is something wrong with how it is advertised, that's a question for the Federal Trade Commission."

As he admits, it was also a question for him. "A few years ago, I didn't know what was wrong with sugared cereals. My children ate them. They seemed happy." Talking to nutritionists, he found his answer. "The problem was one of balance." If advertisers were selling only one type of food to young children—candies, soft drinks, pre-sweetened cereals—then the networks needed to balance that with their own messages for carrots, celery and cheese. The FTC is now considering a proposal to make such countercommercials mandatory, but beginning with ABC, each network now presents nutrition messages that are produced with the same verve and creativity as fast-food commercials. The countercommercials, though, continue to be outnumbered by the sugary ones.

The most sweeping proposal before the FTC is to ban all commercials directed at young children, on the premise that they're too young to understand and thus the commercials become "deceptive." The networks don't seriously expect that to happen, though they are bracing for a possible cutback in the number of commercials allowed on children's TV. On its own, ABC has moved to reduce that number on weekend mornings by 20 per cent, or two minutes, over the next two years. At NBC, Dwyer dismisses that as "a public-relations move." At CBS, Heckman refers all questions to the policy statement of the network president, James H. Rosenfield, who worries that cutting back could be seen as an admission that there is something wrong with commercials for children.

"If there were no advertising," says Dwyer of

NBC, "I'm afraid there would be less TV for children." Those who want to do away with all children's advertising, or with just the high-sugar advertising, know there is a price tag. Peggy Charren, founder and president of ACT, thinks it would be "no tragedy" to have fewer programs. Each network admits that a certain number of programs would remain as a public service.

With advertising, children's programming is profitable, and the center of those profits is Saturday morning. The money earned by cartoons helps finance the programs that are poorer in cash but richer in content. The only daily hour for young children on any commercial network, the award-winning *Captain Kangaroo*, has survived years of deficits because, in part, Bugs Bunny was ringing the CBS cash register.

Saturday-morning dollars have encouraged ABC to schedule *Kids Are People Too*, a Sunday-morning variety show. The pride of each network, though, is its afternoon dramatic series. "Special Treat is, quite honestly, not one of our profit centers," says NBC's Dwyer, "but we feel we have an obligation to do that kind of programming in that time period." So does each network. This year, CBS will scatter 28 very special children's programs on weekday and weekend afternoons. The ABC *Afterschool Specials* go into their eighth year. "The series has won eight Emmys and a number of other awards," says Rushnell, "but it still hasn't made a nickel."

The afternoon specials are where the networks deal with ideas, with feelings, with the reality of a child's world. Many people feel that, profitable or not, the networks ought to be bringing such quality programs to young people more often than once or twice a month. "I'd love that," says Dwyer of NBC. "Convince our management of it. Convince our affiliates." Beyond profits, there are problems with clearing the time. Some hours belong to the local stations, others to the network. Thus, the late afternoons

are usually a child's wasteland of reruns and game shows. Parents complain that the holiday superspecials, such programs as "Charlie Brown" or "The Wizard of Oz," are on too late in the evening for young children to watch. Educators fret that there aren't enough different programs for children of different ages. Though the networks have cleared more time for children in recent years, though they are now dealing with difficult and important ideas for children in dramas about divorce, the handicapped, the elderly, there are questions of priorities and children often take a place near the end of the line.

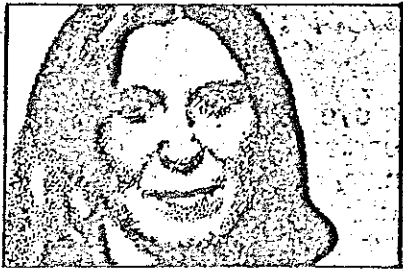
Children's programs are crisper, cleverer, more innovative than they used to be, but one by one, the network vice presidents call for selective viewing. Dwyer does not believe that parents will find ideas they might object to on NBC's programs, but she points out, "It's up to the parents. There is an 'off' switch that should be used if that is the family decision." As CBS's Heckman notes, "Too much television is not good for anyone."

Along with tuning out, parents can speak out. Most of the improvements on children's TV have begun with public protest; they moved along to Government hearings; finally, faced with the threat of new Government rules, the broadcasters have "voluntarily" changed their codes.

"When I was a child," says Squire Rushnell of ABC, "my mother told me to pick up my dirty socks. If she hadn't, I probably would have gone right on leaving them in the middle of the living-room floor. But I got her message and," he smiles, "I became neat, well-mannered and a good citizen. I think people like Peggy Charren and her friends at ACT play that role. Maybe children's TV was leaving its dirty socks around, not because it was evil but because it wasn't paying attention."

Currently, children's TV is paying attention, though there are still bits of dirty laundry lying around.

By DOROTHY STORCK



Brain drain, monster box

For a long time I denied, even to myself, that I was a TV addict.

I would sit in front of the set with a book. I'll just glance at television now and then, I'd tell myself, in between chapters.

I would pretend at parties that I didn't know what Johnny Carson said last night. When the TV survey people called me up I would lie to them. I would tell them the only thing I watched on television was "Nova" and the news.

Truth to tell, I recognized some time ago what was happening to me and everybody else I knew. We were being seduced by the availability, ease and absolute predictability of the tiny world on the other side of the television set.

It was so very much there for us. It was in our control, or so we thought. It would bore us sometimes, but it would never shock, discomfit or in any way invalidate us — the way the real world was prone to do.

It did occur to me, in a vague way, that there might be a danger here. Something to do with the warping of perception.

Midway in studying for my master's degree in journalism I switched to the study of television.

The New York Times was still listing radio at the top of the page, with TV below. The average viewing per household was not much more than an hour a day.

Tune in

Television had not yet become a national addiction, but it was on the way. And there had been the phenomenon of the McCarthy hearings.

The '60s was a decade of sifting and new focus. Most of us, from 1963 on, made that focus through our television sets.

Think back to the images that remain with you of the assassination of John Kennedy, and then Robert Kennedy, and Martin Luther King. Remember the riots in the cities of the north. Think of the space shots, and the national political conventions, and the protests, and the war.

Even I, who as a reporter was covering many of these events, remember most vividly the way they looked to me late at night as, bleary-eyed and aching from the shove of the crowd, I watched them on the flickering TV screen in my motel room.

A few people understood the kind of proxy we were handing to television. Not too many.

There was John Crosby writing in the old New York Herald Tribune. And there was George Gerbner, at the University of Pennsylvania, setting up his "cultural indicators" research staff and data bank.

Gerbner is dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the university.

Turn off

Ten years ago, Gerbner organized a research concept to study TV and society. Since then, with the help of government grants, he and his students — primarily master's degree candidates in communications — have studied 1,365 programs and 16,688 characters.

They have compiled a videotape data bank more complete than any other in the country. Networks come to them for information. So do sociologists, scholars and the government.

Gerbner and his research team have done studies on violence on TV. They discovered that heavy TV viewers (we are now a nation in which each household looks at TV on the average of six hours a day) think that the world outside their living rooms is much more hazardous to their health than it actually is. The "mean streets" syndrome.

And last month, Gerbner and his staff testified in Washington on the results of their latest study: "Aging with Television."

It is a sad summary. It is also not surprising in a society which continues to warehouse its elderly.

Drop out

On prime time TV shows, only 2.3 percent of the people are over 65. In "real life," people over 65 are 11 percent of our population. And the percentage increases every year.

Heavy TV viewers, and particularly those under 20 who have never lived without TV, also think, tutored by television, that: older people are eccentric, stubborn, non-sexual, ineffectual and often silly; that women grow old faster than men and are only valued under age 35 while men thrive until they are 50; that old men are likely to possess powers that are evil and are punished by death; and that old women are likely to be victimized.

It is, as George Gerbner says, a sadly skewed world we are learning to believe in as we sit in front of the tube. It is a world remarkably without grace, or respect, or the dignity of difference.

The danger comes when we turn from the small screen and look around us and see nothing but a reflection.

Chicago Tribune

CHICAGO, ILL.

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OCT 23 1979

Exhibit

Tempo TV

● A two-year research project by the University of Pennsylvania shows that although older persons are comprising a rapidly increasing portion of the American population, they continue to be "grossly underrepresented" on TV, particularly on dramatic programs. Dr. George Gerbner, a renowned social scientist at the university, theorizes that children are especially misled by TV's neglect of old people as dramatic characters. "Young people are the most susceptible to television's influence," he said. "Therefore, the best and possibly only time to learn about growing old with decency and grace is in youth, in the everyday social and cultural environment."

Study: TV Fuels Bias Against Women, Blacks

By MARTHA LERSKI

Women and minorities are victims of neglect and inequality on television, a ten-year study released yesterday in New York City by the Annenberg School shows.

Annenberg School Dean George Gerbner, who with research coordinator Nancy Signorelli wrote the study's report, said Friday that the most significant find of the project is that on TV "men outnumber women three to one. This clutivates a sexist attitude."

This study, released in cooperation with the Screen Actors' Guild, is part of a larger one called Cultural Indicators that is funded by various government and private foundations.

A sampling of 1,365 network dramatic prime-time and weekend daytime programs from the period 1969 to 1978 with 16,888 characters was used to trace women and minorities on television. The entire study entailed intensive research into program contents and sparked later

studies into the effects of television on veiwers' conceptions of reality.

The study found that children and old people were grossly underrepresented, that television promotes sexist attitudes, and that white males, in 68 percent of all prime-time character roles in 1968, held an equally dominant percentage—62 percent—nearly a decade later.

Researchers also found that underrepresentation leads to a restricted scope of action and diminished real life chances for neglected groups.

The researchers stressed that the goal of drama is not neccesarily to reflect a realistic representation of society but that these deviations should be justified. Gerbner said that the consequences of disproportionate representation should be taken into consideration in television drama.

The report states that "heavier viewers of television are more likely

(Continued on page 3)

Study Finds Bias on TV

(Continued from page 1)

to understand social reality in terms of the 'facts' they see on television."

The report states that, "for those groups who are generally less sexist, television viewing cultivates a more sexist view of the world. For the groups who are initially more sexist, television viewing may be a somewhat enlightening experience." Gerbner said that this is one of the most interesting finds of the study.

Compiled statistics of the research project show that Hispanics are the most under-represented, but Orientals appear more often than their real-life proportional share. Blacks, Hispanics and Orientals increased their porportional shares in the prime-

time population through the mid-seventies but these gains did not hold.

Weekend daytime (children's) programming was found to present even more inequities than prime-time shows. These inequities may have greater ramifications, as the report states that "younger viewers who were already born into a television world are even more imbued with its depiction of people and less likely to express an independent view of reality."

Gerbner proposes that more women, older women, non-white women and more minorities in general should be cast to lessen the present detrimental and inequitable portrayal of television characters.

OCT 30 1979

By the Editor

items and comments

Study says television misrepresents elderly

Older people in America are grossly under-represented and misrepresented on television drama, according to a two-year study by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications in Philadelphia, Pa.

The study showed that at a time when the older population in America is steadily increasing, very few of them are depicted in TV drama.

And when older persons are shown in TV drama, they are portrayed negatively as stubborn eccentrics, and persons who are less serious and less effective in most other ways than younger people.

The Annenberg study showed that TV viewers—especially those under 20—are strongly influenced by television images of older people. The study suggested that TV should make an effort to portray older people in a more positive light, as part of a necessary public education.

LA Times, 10/30/79

Commercial TV Still a White Male Club

BY HOWARD ROSENBERG

Times Staff Writer

Much of commercial television resembles an Aqua Velva commercial. It continues to be a predominately white male enclave laced with "masculine values."

By creating roles according to "status and power," television drama, furthermore, devalues minorities and females, perpetuating a sexist picture of the world. And the persons most susceptible to this picture are young viewers "born into a television society."

These are dominant themes of a major study of women and minorities in television drama prepared by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of

Study of Characters in Drama

Communications. The study was released Monday at a New York press conference sponsored jointly by the Annenberg School and the Screen Actors Guild AFL-CIO.

In most respects, the study paints an alarming picture of television as the "central and universal storyteller in our society," affirming statistically what many critics of television have been charging for years.

Covering prime-time and weekend daytime drama (including children's cartoon

series), but no comedy, the report is based on 10 years of monitoring 1,365 programs, analyzing 16,888 characters and conducting surveys of child and adult viewers.

The results tend to support reports by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights concluding that TV generally turns up its nose at women and minorities. Those reports, released in 1977 and last January, also focused on newscasting and covered employment practices in the industry. Some of the data for those reports also was developed by the Annenberg School.

The present study, bearing the names of Annenberg Dean George Gerbner and Nancy Signorielli, does not mention individual programs or networks.

Concerning gender, the researchers discovered male speaking characters outnumber females three to one in prime-time drama, even though females represent approximately 51% of the real population. The inequity increases in weekend programming, where male characters outnumber women five to one. Consequently, "children get the message in double doses," of a sexist society, say the researchers.

According to the study, the proportion
Please Turn to Page 11, Col. 1

Study of Women, Minorities on TV

Continued from First Page

of leading women characters in prime-time drama rose to a peak 37% in 1978 from 25% in 1975 and 1976, but the increase was primarily among white females, and female representation in all speaking roles has barely changed in the decade studied.

After white males, nonwhite males compose TV drama's most prevalent group, says the study, followed by white females and nonwhite females respectively.

The study contains data on minorities compiled by Mauricio Gerson Eidelman from the Cultural Indicator Archives, covering 1970 to 1976, showing Orientals as overrepresented in prime-time drama relative to their population and American Indians underrepresented in leading roles and "virtually absent" from weekend children's programs.

Blacks and Hispanics are underrepresented both in prime time and on weekends, according to the study.

The researchers found that TV drama largely reflects the age group most courted by advertisers, citing a "gross underrepresentation" of the young and old in such programs. Although persons older than 65 make up 11% of the real population, says the study, they make up only 2.2% of TV's fictional population. On weekends, the figure for the elderly drops to 1.4%.

Consequently, heavy TV viewers tend to believe "old people are disappearing," when in actuality their population is on the rise, say the researchers.

As part of TV's "rather gloomy picture of aging," they cite TV's likely depiction of elderly as "comic characters, to be treated with disrespect" and as "stubborn, eccentric and foolish."

They conclude also that women and minorities portrayed in TV drama tend to age faster than white males, and younger females are generally matched with older males.

Concerning stereotyping, moreover, the researchers found "limited opportunities" for women and minorities in serious roles. In general, they say, women and minorities are not portrayed as "evil or inept," but have "benign roles, limited but agreeable" fates and "diminished powers. . ."

Please Turn to Page 12, Col. 1

TV STUDY

Continued from 11th Page

"Marriage, romance and family" are the primary concerns of TV drama's females, according to the study. Moreover, it notes a link between white TV viewers and the traditional belief that woman's place is in the home, that males are more emotionally suited to politics than females and that voters would reject a qualified female candidate for President. However, the researchers also found that heavy viewing by nonwhites "tends to reduce sexism."

Reflecting its male dominance, "much of the world of prime time revolves around questions of power," says the study in a section on TV violence.

Defining violence as an "overt expression of physical force compelling action against one's will on pain of being hurt or killed, or actually hurting or killing," researchers measured five violent incidents per hour in prime time during the 10-year period and 18 in weekend programming, with elderly women the most frequent victims, and white males least vulnerable. The study does not indicate whether violence has increased or diminished during the 10-year span.

However, it concludes that the emphasis of violence on TV leads to a "mean world syndrome" among heavy viewers, "a heightened sense of danger, insecurity and mistrust" of the world around them.

LA Times 10/30/79

UNEQUAL JOB ACCESS

SAG Assails TV Inequity

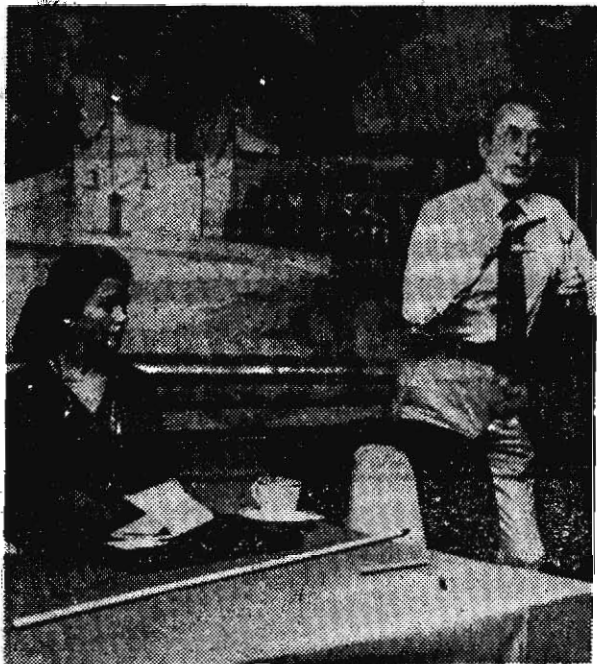
BY CLARKE TAYLOR

NEW YORK—The Screen Actors Guild intends to make equal access to employment on television a significant issue in next April's contract negotiations with the Assn. of Motion Picture Television Producers. SAG president Kathleen Nolan said minority access might even constitute a strike issue.

The SAG position was outlined here Monday at a press conference announcing the results of a 10-year study, "Women and Minorities in Television Drama," released by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications.

Nolan pointed out that the study of prime-time television programs showed the main viewing hours to be "dominated by males and masculine values." "Our actors are notoriously underemployed," she said of her 40,000-member union, "but women and minorities are employed even less than the norm, so it is our responsibility as a labor union to find ways to resolve the inequity."

The Annenberg report was a ringing indictment of network employment and programming practices, yet, ironically, not a single television camera was in sight at Mon-



REPORT—Kathleen Nolan, president of the Screen Actors Guild, listens as Dr. George Gerbner discusses women and minorities in TV.

AP Wirephoto

day's press conference at the Essex House on Central Park.

The message of casting on television—who gets the roles—was considered by the study's authors to be the most pervasive of all of TV's messages.

"Sexism and racism existed in this society before TV," acknowledged Dr. George Gerbner, coauthor of the Anenberg report, "but not on a universal, assembly-line level. Like religion, TV is a ritual, surrounded by interpretations of life. And there is no escape."

Gerbner didn't single out specific networks or programs guilty of what he termed the "symbolic annihilation" of women and minorities, concentrating rather on large-scale patterns which, he said, "are not the creation of single individuals or groups."

The researcher was especially critical of children's programming. "The crudest expression of our prejudices are projected to children," he said. "Whatever stereotypes exist in prime time are exaggerated in 'kidvid'—the cheapest, quickest production formula which is the cause of the poverty of programming."

Dr. Nancy Signorielli, Gerbner's co-worker, stressed the inequitable treatment of the elderly on television. "If we were to believe what we see on TV," she observed, "there would be fewer old people than is the reality, and they would be dying sooner!"

Nolan praised the "strong coalition" of labor, the academic community and government present as she introduced Helen Loukas, of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. As a fact-finding agency, said Loukas, the commission could do little more than lend public support to the current study and its findings.

SAG can do more than that, Nolan reiterated. She displayed picket signs for protests held earlier this month in Los Angeles, and she reminded the press that SAG has filed unfair labor practice charges with the National Labor Relations Board, to press networks to comply with what she said were contractual obligations to prove equal access for women and minorities.

"We must collaborate with consumer and advocate groups," said Nolan. "But SAG will reach far beyond past efforts at affirmative action. And as a union, collective bargaining is our clout."

Study Finds Stereotyping in TV Casts

By LES BROWN

Men are greatly overrepresented in television's dramatic programs in relation to the actual national population, and women, minorities, juveniles and the elderly are underrepresented, according to a study of network programming conducted for the Screen Actors Guild. A report on the study, based on the monitoring of 1,365 prime-time and Saturday-morning programs from 1968 through last year, was released yesterday.

The effect of television's representation of the society is to cultivate type-casting by age, sex and race and to reinforce social stereotyping, the report said.

The research, conducted by George Gerbner and Nancy Signorielli of the Annenberg School of Communications of the University of Pennsylvania, concludes that the effect of the stereotyping is to limit the opportunities of women and nonwhites to play serious roles. Beyond that, they maintained, television tends to foster such sexist notions in viewers, particularly children, that women should stay home and that men are better suited emotionally for politics.

Diminished Powers as an Issue

In the "world of television" dominated by males, masculine values and questions of power, the women's concerns are "marriage, romance and family," the study observed. "Benign roles, limited but agreeable fate and diminished powers are the favored role characteristics of women and minorities on prime-time television."

As for the elderly, the study found the more time people spent watching television the more they thought there were fewer older people around. It said:

"Television presents a rather gloomy picture of aging. Older persons are practically invisible. Elderly

women are also quite likely to be hurt or killed and to fail. Elderly characters are more likely to be cast as comic characters, to be treated with disrespect and to be portrayed as stubborn, eccentric or foolish."

"These patterns," according to the report, "are not the creation of single individuals or groups. They are the creation of a system of broadcasting and of storytelling with deep historical, cultural and commercial roots."

Central and Universal Storyteller

It goes on to say that television is the central and universal storyteller in our society and that it serves to cultivate in viewers the concepts of roles and values: "The message of all stories emerges from aggregate patterns of casting, characterization and fate."

The survey found men outnumbered women 3-to-1 in prime-time and Saturday-morning dramas, although males comprise 49 percent of the population. Blacks and Spanish-speaking people are underrepresented in proportion to their actual numbers, and whites get proportionately more leading roles than minorities. Moreover, the report said, "Weekend daytime children's programming both conceals and exaggerates the inequities reflected in prime time."

The study pointed out that although the largest real-life professional occupation for women was teaching, on prime-time, 59 percent of the teachers were men and 41 percent were women.

Additionally, more than half the characters in prime-time are in the 25-to-45 age group, and in reality that group represents 27 percent of the population. People under 19 comprise one-tenth the fictional population of television, but make up one-third the national population, and people over 65 are 11 percent of the actual population but 2.2 percent of the characters on television.

The study also found that television favored young girls and women under 30, and that in the older brackets women were more often portrayed as old than were men. "Among characters 65 and over," the report said, "28 percent of the men will still play settled adult roles with romantic possibilities and 72 percent will be cast as old, but 90 percent of women of the same chronological age will be cast as old."

Kathleen Nolan, president of the guild, said, "The world of TV is skewed through the underrepresentation of minorities and especially women, to the detriment of both actor and audience, a situation that the Screen Actors Guild finds unacceptable."

The networks declined to comment until their executives were able to study the findings, but one researcher said the research "conveniently" did not include daytime serial drama, a form of television that employs more women than men and portrays them in ways that are not stereotypical.

OCT 31 1979 *Epifila*

Behind the Mike

'Jennie' writer-director supernatural believer

Frank de Felitta, who directed and wrote the screenplay for "The Two Worlds of Jennie Logan," which plays on KOIN (6) at 9 p.m. Wednesday, doesn't believe the viewer has to go too far in suspending disbelief when it comes to ghost stories.

"I believe in the supernatural," he said. "I am positive about parapsychology and the supernatural."

De Felitta, who has written mysteries and directed films with supernatural themes, said in a telephone interview that he is sure "there is more to life than we understand."

Lindsay Wagner stars in the two-hour movie, which de Felitta said was made in 19 days. In the story, she falls in love with a man who had lived a century before. "It is a very complicated and extremely expensive story," de Felitta said.

"Fortunately, we were able to use our money where it counted, because we were able to find a house outside of Los Angeles instead of having to go on location." The story is set in upstate New York and the house, as in most good ghost stories, is an important element in the story.

Although the program will be airing as a Halloween special, de Felitta said it is a good enough love and ghost story to play at any time of the year. Still, he wouldn't mind at all if the playing of the program became a Halloween tradition.

A STUDY announced this week counted 16,888 characters in 1,365 network dramas from 1969 to 1978, and found that last year, 62 percent of the characters in television drama were white males, compared with 68 percent nearly 10 years ago. The study, done at the Annenberg School of Communications of the University of Pennsylvania, did not single out any particular programs, and found that children and the elderly are "grossly underrepresented on television."

According to the report, "television viewing seems to cultivate a certain level of sexist orientation." It said heavier viewers tended to hold more traditional views about the role of women than light viewers.



Peter
Farrell

Of course, it could be that heavier viewers include the elderly and women who are staying home, and that television had little to do with shaping their attitudes toward the role of women. In any event, non-scientific viewing would seem to indicate that more blacks are cast in positive roles today than 10 years ago, and that television has been doing a better job of providing women with good acting parts than the movie producers have.

As for children, my set seems to be overrun with cute, wisecracking kids. It may be a fact that there are more grownups than children on television, but it is open to debate whether that is a cause for alarm.

NOV DEC 1979

Byphallos

Screen Actors find tv sexist

New York, N.Y.—A ten-year study of television programming has yielded “a clear indictment of network policies and employment practices,” according to Screen Actors Guild President Kathleen Nolan.

The report traced women and minority representation in 1,365 network dramatic programs and was based on a study of 16,888 characters.

In the fantasyland of TV, the researchers found, men outnumber women, three-to-one; minorities are underrepresented, and children and the elderly are “grossly underrepresented.” The blacks and Hispanics made in casting during the mid-1970s have not been sustained.

The report also found that “television viewing seems to cultivate a certain level of sexist orientation.”

The study was authored by Dr. George Gerbner and Dr. Nancy Signorielli. Gerbner is dean of the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications. Signorielli is a research coordinator at the school. (PAI)

NOV 2 1979 *2/2*

Older women look easiest to hurt *TV shows few strong or wise women, minorities, elders or children*

by Howard Rosenberg

HOLLYWOOD — Much of commercial television resembles an Aqua Velva commercial. It continues to be a predominantly white male enclave laced with "masculine values."

By creating roles according to "status and power," television drama, furthermore, devalues minorities and females, perpetuating a sexist picture of the world. And the persons most susceptible to this picture are young viewers "born into a television society."

These are dominant themes of a major study of women and minorities in television drama prepared by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications. The study was released Monday at a New York press conference sponsored jointly by the Annenberg School and the Screen Actors Guild AFL-CIO.

In most respects, the study paints an alarming picture of television as the "Central and universal story teller in our society," affirming statistically what many critics of television have been charging for years.

Covering primetime and weekend daytime drama (including children's cartoon series), but no comedy, the report is based on ten years of monitoring 1,365 programs, analyzing 16,888 characters and conducting surveys of child and adult viewers.

It tends to support reports by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights that have concluded that TV generally turns up its nose at women and minorities. Those reports, released in 1977 and last January, focused also on newscasting and covered employment practices in the industry.

Concerning gender, the researchers discovered male speaking characters outnumber females three to one in primetime drama, even though females represent approximately 51 percent of the real population. The inequity increases on weekend programming, where male characters outnumber women five to one. Consequently, "children get the message in double doses," say the researchers.

According to the study, the proportion of leading women characters in TV drama rose to a peak 37 percent in 1978 from 25 percent in 1975 and 1976, but the increase was primarily among white females, and female representation in all speaking roles has barely changed in the decade studied.

After white males, non-white males comprised TV drama's most prevalent group, says the study, followed by white females and non-white females respectively.

The study contains data on minorities showing Orientals over-represented in primetime drama relative to their population and American Indians under-represented in leading roles and "virtu-

ally absent" from weekend children's programs.

Blacks and Hispanics are under-represented in both primetime and on weekends, according to the study.

The researchers found that TV drama largely reflects the age groups most courted by advertisers, citing a "gross under-representation" of the young and old in such programs. Although persons older than 65 comprise 11 percent of the real population, says the study, they make up only 2.2 percent of TV's fictional population. On weekends, the figure for the elderly drops to 1.4 percent.

Consequently, heavy TV viewers tend to believe "old people are disappearing," when in actuality their population is on the rise, say the researchers.

As part of TV's "rather gloomy picture of aging," they cite TV's likely depiction of elders as "comic characters, to be treated with disrespect" and as "stubborn, eccentric and foolish."

They conclude also that women and minorities portrayed in TV drama tend to age faster than white males, and younger females are generally matched with older males.

Concerning stereotyping, moreover, the researchers found "limited opportunities" for women and minorities in serious roles. In general, they say, women and minorities are not portrayed as "evil or inept," but have "benign roles,

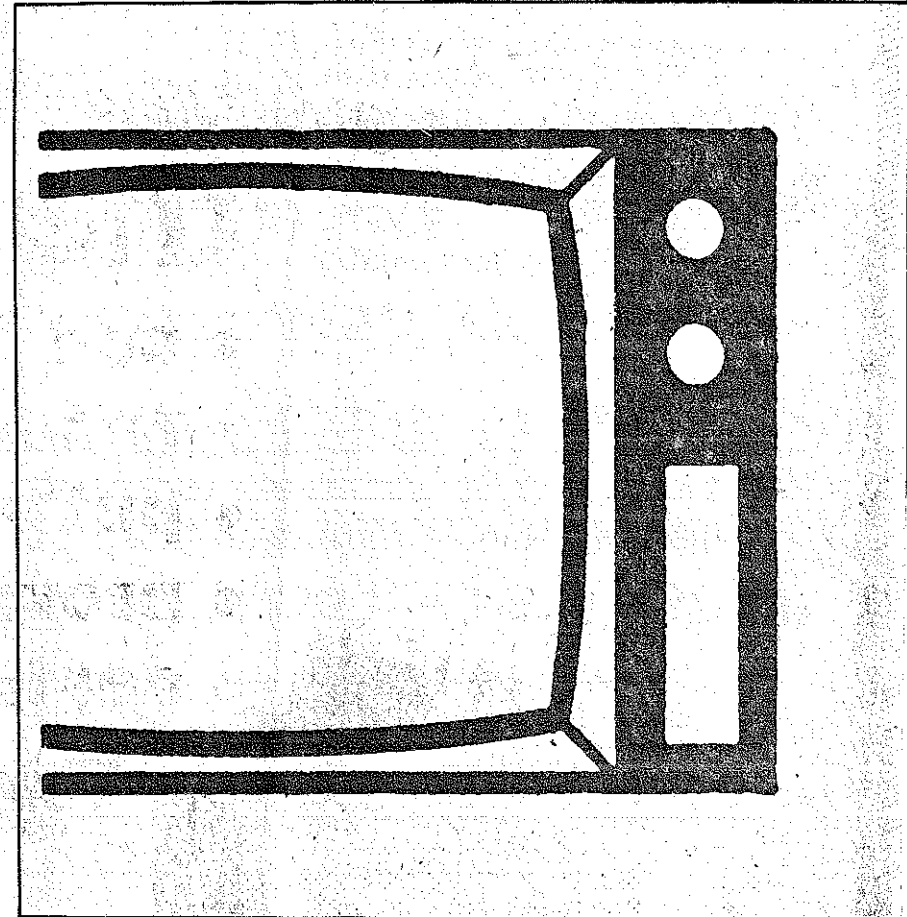
limited but agreeable" fates and "diminished powers."

"Marriage, romance and family" are the primary concerns of TV drama's females, according to the study. Moreover, it notes a link between white TV viewers and the traditional belief that woman's place is in the home, that males are more emotionally suited to politics than females and that voters would reject a qualified female candidate for president. However, the researchers also found that heavy viewing by non-whites "tends to reduce sexism."

Reflecting its male dominance, "much of the world of primetime revolves around questions of power," says the study in a section on TV violence.

Defining violence as an "overt expression of physical force compelling action against one's will on pain of being hurt or killed, or actually hurting or killing," researchers measured five violent incidents per hour in primetime during the ten-year period and 18 in weekend programming, with elderly women the most frequent victims and white males the least vulnerable. The study does not indicate whether violence has increased or diminished during the ten-year span.

However, it concludes that the emphasis of violence on TV leads to a "mean world syndrome" among heavy viewers, "a heightened sense of danger, insecurity and mistrust" of the world around them.



Omaha World-Herald
OMAHA, NEBR.
(MORNING)

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NOV 4 1979

Engle

What Viewers Prefer

Some University of Pennsylvania researchers have come up with a report saying, among other things, that children and elderly people are grossly underrepresented in television dramas.

They say that a 10-year study of 1,365 programs and 16,888 characters shows that more than half of the prime-time characters are between 25 and 45.

This, the report implies, is bad.

We disagree.

Why should x percent of the characters portrayed be past 45 just because x percent of the people in real life are?

We believe that most of us don't really want the tube more populated with grandfathers and grandmothers, however lovable they might be. Nor would we like it if children were represented in proportion to their actual numbers.

Viewers, we submit, prefer to see people on the screen who are in the prime of life, looking good, feeling great.

Young, white males dominate roles in television, says academic study

Annenberg's Gerbner and Signorielli report on TV characters over decade, find that women, minorities and those over 65 are not represented according to numbers in society

Men outnumber women three to one. Blacks and Hispanics are underrepresented. The more a person watches television, the more likely that person is to believe in the traditional role of women and to think that older people are a "diminishing segment of society."

Those are among the findings of "Women and Minorities in Television Drama," a study of 1,365 television programs and 16,888 character parts from 1969 to 1978 by Drs. George Gerbner and Nancy Signorielli of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania.

The study, released last Monday at an Annenberg/Screen Actors Guild press conference in New York, tracked one week of prime time and weekend daytime (8 a.m.-2 p.m.) in the fall 1969-78, as well as spring samples in 1975 and 1976. In addition, a six-year sample (1970-76) was analyzed to determine the ethnic background of characters.

Gerbner and Signorielli said they "do not wish to imply that faithful proportional representation of reality is necessarily fair or just. Artistic and dramatic functions require selection, amplification and invention, all of which may deviate from what the census reports or what independent experience reflects."

However, they also said "the important question is not so much whether there are deviations" but rather "what kind and with what consequences for thinking, action and policy."

As for the impact of television drama, Gerbner and Signorielli said that "story-telling . . . is essential to human socialization, the introduction to and cultivation of concepts of roles and values. Television is the central and universal story-teller in our society."

In general, they found that "dominant social groups tend to be overrepresented and overendowed" while minorities have "less than their proportionate share of values and resources."

The division of roles between males and females was found to be disproportionate to their numbers in real life. While women make up 51% of the census, they have only 27% of all parts and 29% of major roles. Men, on the other hand, get 73% of all parts and 71% of the lead roles. Female leads do show a gain from 31% to 37% over the 10-year period; however, the number of female parts has risen only 1%.

In weekend-daytime—children's programming—females get even shorter shrift,

An agreement. Underrepresentation of Hispanics on television was found in a report issued last week from Michigan State University. According to MSU's Bradley S. Greenberg, professor of communications and telecommunications, and Pilar Baptista-Fernandez, a doctoral candidate in sociology, "television has yet to do much with or for the Hispanic-American either as a television character or as a viewer."

Using sample weeks during the 1975-76, 1976-77 and 1977-78 TV seasons, the report turned up only 53 characters identifiable as Hispanics out of 3,549 speaking parts—about 1.5%. That was said to compare with estimates of 20 million Hispanics in the U.S., or about 9% of the population. Studied were prime-time and Saturday children's programming (8 a.m.-1 p.m.). This included "fictional series" and not news, variety shows and movies.

"A dozen of the characters were identified as bandits, thieves, junkies, extortionists and other criminal types. Nearly an equal number—10—were cast as law enforcers, e.g., sheriff, inspector, patrolman. Thus, the most common work context in which Hispanics could be seen on television for three seasons with any consistency was in a regulatory or anti-regulatory role, either breaking the law or helping to maintain it," the report said. For the first two seasons studied, the researchers found no Hispanics on Saturday morning, and in 1977-78, only two. Only 11 of the 53 prime-time characters were classified as having major roles, and of those, only two characters showed up more than one season. Particularly few were Hispanic women. Men from that minority group were said to outnumber women on television four to one.

according to the study. Men, for example, show up with 81% of the major roles.

In terms of their relative numbers in American society, Orientals have been overrepresented in television drama, the study said. American Indians are on par in all roles but underrepresented in leads and virtually absent from weekend children's programming. Blacks and Hispanics are underrepresented across the board.

The reports showed a "slow, slight and halting" increase in the television presence of nonwhites, who fared best in minor roles. Over the 10-year period, major nonwhite characters fluctuated be-

tween 4% and 13% but in 1978, it was back to 5%.

Worse off, according to the study, were nonwhite females, who had only 1%-4% of the leads over the 10 years and only 1% in 1978.

Underrepresentation, Gerbner and Signorielli warned, "means restricted scope of action, stereotyped roles, diminished life chances and underevaluation ranging from relative neglect to symbolic annihilation."

For women, the stereotyped message being presented in TV programming was said to be that "marriage, romance and

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October, 1979

family are women's concerns."

Television too was said to give a distorted picture of the population's age spread. "Only 27% of the real population but more than half of the prime-time population is between 25 and 45," the report said. Similarly, in real life, a third of the population is under 19 but on television only a 10th. Older people may appear to be a diminishing segment of society because they only represent 2.2% of the characters in prime time, although those people over 65 make up 11% of the real population.

Weekend-daytime, however, gives children in their mid-teens more than their proportional share of numbers, said the study. But persons over 65 appear even less frequently in children's programming than in prime time, accounting for only 1.4% of the characters.

TV programming also was said to reinforce the notion that "men age slower and enjoy life longer." For example, among characters in their twenties, 26% of the men but 33% of the women can be classified as "settled adults."

The pairing of young women with older men was also said to be disproportionate. But that phenomenon works against minorities. "Unlike older white men," the report said, "older nonwhite men have a very hard time finding younger women of any races."

The report also dealt with violence over the 10-year period (defined as an "overt expression of physical force compelling action against one's will on pain of being hurt or killed, or actually hurting or killing"). It showed five violent incidents per hour of prime time and 18 violent incidents per hour from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.

Of all the characters, 56% in prime time are involved in violence and 80% of those during the weekend time. More prone to be victimized by television violence are young women, nonwhite women and particularly old women.

Jones to cable: provide alternatives

Commissioner tells CATV group they must offer viewers more than just network programming

Speaking before representatives of the cable television industry, FCC Commissioner Anne Jones agreed with criticism that cable television "has not solved its software problem" and urged the group to insure that the medium fulfills its promise to provide alternative programming.

Jones told some 60 officers of state and regional cable television associations (meeting under the aegis of the National Cable Television Association in Washington last week) that she wasn't concerned about matters of taste and culture. But, she said, she was "concerned about the failure of television, both broadcast or cable, to offer much more, on a regular

ABC settles on its sweeps shows

Network waits until last minute to announce November specials

ABC-TV has finally released a full schedule of November ratings sweeps programming, and 20 of the 31 nights of the month offer specials or promotable episodes of regular programs. The Oct. 31-Nov. 30 contest opened last Wednesday with the network's regular line-up, and it will close with a night of boxing. Unlike the other networks, ABC had not announced the bulk of its November schedule until last week (BROADCASTING, Oct. 22).

Last week's sweeps opener featured special episodes of *Laverne & Shirley* on Thursday and of *Fantasy Island* on Saturday. Friday was given over to a two-hour *Battle of the Network Stars* and a one-hour *The New and Spectacular Guinness Book of World Records*.

Last night (Sunday, Nov. 4), ABC presented the commercial television debut of *Jaws* as well as the first of a two-part premiere of the reincarnated limited-run series, *Salvage 1*.

Highlights of the network's schedule this week are: a two-hour *Eight is Enough* on Wednesday; an *All-Star Family Feud Special* on Friday, and a two-hour *Love Boat* featuring the Dallas Cowboys

cheerleaders, Ginger Rogers and Douglas Fairbanks Jr. on Saturday.

The week of Nov. 12 will lead off with a special Monday-night edition of *20/20*; a one-hour *Laverne & Shirley* and the opening segment of the three-part miniseries, *The French Atlantic Affair*, on Thursday; a *Celebrity Comedy Football Classic* and part two of *Atlantic* on Friday, and *The Story of Esther* special, a one-hour *Mork & Mindy* featuring Raquel Welch and the conclusion of *Atlantic* on Sunday.

The fourth week of the sweeps (beginning Nov. 19) features Henry Fonda starring in *A Special Family Thanksgiving* on Tuesday, Nov. 20, and "Birth of the Beatles," a made-for-television movie on Friday. After "Beatles," ABC will air the *Playboy Roller-Disco Pajama Party*. Sunday Nov. 25 will have a 90-minute *Rudolph and Frosty's Christmas in July* special as well as a *Mork & Mindy* that has the Orkan cavorting about with the Denver Broncos cheerleaders.

The closing week of November has only two specials on the network—a Thursday night (Nov. 29) edition of *ABC's NFL Monday Night Football* and the Nov. 30 *Night of Fights* with the world welterweight championship match heading a three-fight card.

basis, than a fairly meaningless choice between *Laverne & Shirley* and *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century*.

"Why in the name of good sense should a great national resource like the electromagnetic spectrum be primarily devoted to presenting situation comedies, action adventure shows and occasional big time sports," Jones asked.

Jones excused network television for the sameness of its programming, saying that it is inherently a mass medium and, therefore, "necessarily ... a provider of lowest common denominator programming.

"But," she said, "the cable industry holds hope of offering the public something different. The promise of cable is ... it can also offer dozens of meaningful alternatives. In addition to the *Gong Show*, it can offer Shakespeare, introductory French or refresher courses of professional or technical skills.

Jones said that her main concern with cable is whether it will "remain primarily a conduit for current and 'warmed-over' network fare ... or begin offering the American public, for the first time, the truly diverse programming which it wants and needs."

In her opening remarks, Jones said she would refrain from discussing syndicated exclusivity and retransmission consent, both subjects of current FCC rulemakings. "Unless or until the courts conclude, as I am hopeful they will, that commissioners can have open minds without having blank ones, I don't want to risk being 'Pertschuked' out of those important rulemakings," she said.

CBS reading program gets good grades

A study of the effectiveness and appeal of a CBS television reading program shows that both students and teachers found the project beneficial.

The field work for the study was done by Child Research Inc., New York, and conducted in association with the Office of Social Research of CBS Inc. on commission from CBS. Surveyed were 262 teachers, 921 students and 95 parents in 11 metropolitan areas who were questioned on their experiences with the reading program for CBS-TV's presentation of *The Corn Is Green* (broadcast in January 1979).

Teachers were reported to find the program providing worthwhile reading materials that utilize the student's interest in television as the motivating factor. Pupils reported that the TV script was "more interesting" than other material usually read in class; their interest in the scripts led them to read more carefully, and they gained greater understanding of the program content by reading the script before broadcast.

CBS started the reading program in 1977. Since that time, more than five million students in schools throughout the country have been involved. Students in the classroom read matched-to-broadcast scripts of selected CBS presentations and refer to the scripts at home. Teachers use reading enrichment guides, prepared by CBS educational consultants.

'White male enclave'

Study's statistics back TV criticisms

By HOWARD ROSENBERG
L.A. Times-Wash. Post Service

HOLLYWOOD — Much of commercial television resembles an Aqua Vella commercial. It continues to be a predominantly white male enclave laced with "masculine values."

By creating roles according to "status and power," television drama, furthermore devalues minorities and females, perpetuating a sexist picture of the world. And the persons most susceptible to this picture are young viewers "born into a television society."

These are dominant themes of a major study of women and minorities in television drama prepared by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications. The study was released Monday at a New York press conference sponsored jointly by the Annenberg School and the Screen Actors Guild AFL-CIO.

In most respects, the study paints an alarming picture of television as the "Central and universal story teller in our society," affirming statistically what many critics of television have been charging for years.

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It tends to support reports by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights that have concluded that TV generally turns up its nose at women and minorities. Those reports, released in 1977 and last January, focused also on newscasting and covered employment practices in the industry. Some of the data for those reports also was developed by the Annenberg School.

The present study, bearing the names of Annenberg Dean, George Gerbner and Nancy Signorielli, does not mention individual programs or networks.

Concerning gender, the researchers discovered male speaking characters outnumber females three to one in prime-time drama, even though females represent approximately 51 percent of the real population. The inequity increases on weekend programming, where male characters outnumber women five to one. Consequently, "children get the message in double doses," say the researchers.

According to the study, the proportion of leading women characters in TV drama rose to a peak 37 percent in 1978 from 25 percent in 1975 and 1976, but the increase was primarily among white females, and female representation in all speaking roles has barely changed in the decade studied.

After white males, non-white males comprised TV drama's most prevalent group, says the study, followed by white females and non-white females respectively.

The study contains data on minorities compiled by Mauricio Gerson Eidelman from the Cultural Indicator

Archives, covering 1970 to 1976, showing Orientals as over-represented in primetime drama relative to their population and American Indians under-represented in leading roles and "virtually absent" from weekend children's programs.

Blacks and Hispanics are under-represented in both primetime and on weekends, according to the study.

The researchers found that TV drama largely reflects the age groups most courted by advertisers, citing a "gross under-representation" of the young and old in such programs. Although persons older than 65 comprise 11 percent of the real population, says the study, they make up only 2.2 percent of TV's fictional population. On weekends, the figure for the elderly drops to 1.4 percent.

Consequently, heavy TV viewers tend to believe "old people are disappearing," when in actuality their population is on the rise, say the researchers.

As part of TV's "rather gloomy picture of aging," they cite TV's likely depiction of elderly as "comic characters, to be treated with disrespect" and as "stubborn, eccentric and foolish."

They conclude also that women and minorities portrayed in TV drama tend to age faster than white males, and younger females are generally matched with older males.

Concerning stereotyping, moreover, the researchers found "limited opportunities" for women and minorities in serious roles. In general, they say, women and minorities are not portrayed as "evil or inept," but have "benign roles, limited but agreeable" fates and "diminished powers ..."

"Marriage, romance and family" are the primary concerns of TV drama's females, according to the study. Moreover, it notes a link between white TV viewers and the traditional belief that woman's place is in the home, that males are more emotionally suited to politics than females and that voters would reject a qualified female candidate for president. However, the researchers also found that heavy viewing by non-whites "tends to reduce sexism."

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NOV 1 1979

Family Weekly Special Report

The Impact of TV Violence On Your Children

Children watch television an average of 3½ hours each day, and what they see is not all fun and games. According to one new study, children view up to 25 incidents of violence per hour. And what is even scarier is that it may make them violent, too.

By John Mariani

the House Subcommittee on Communications and the American Medical Association. One of the most persistent teams of researchers is located at the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania. In April 1979, it released "Violence Profile No. 10," a statistical analysis of the amount of violence on television. The researchers found that, while violence on television was reduced in 1977, the fall 1978 programming brought a nearly 100-percent increase in the incidence of violence

The Annenberg study has come under criticism for lumping together the most extreme forms of violence with the most marginal. Accidents and even cartoon slapstick are counted along with murder. Dr. Atkins feels that "degrees of realism" must be taken into account. "Cartoons and Westerns are fairly unrealistic for the average viewer," he says, "whereas cop and gangster shows are more realistic. The real problem is that a constant barrage of various kinds of violence can make people insensitive and less likely to respond."

One CBS spokesman, Dr. David Blank, a vice president and chief economist, called the Annenberg study "a piece of junk," and CBS' vice president Van Gordon Saulter has argued, "A rabbit pouring a pitcher of milk over the head of a chipmunk is not an act of violence. It is nonreal, highly fantasized entertainment with no negative impact on the viewer or his perception of society."

Nevertheless, the networks are extremely cautious about the subject of TV violence and have even funded their own research projects on the subject. ABC commissioned a five-year study in which a child's tendency to hit with force an electronic pounding platform was measured after his exposure to TV violence. "Under certain conditions," the report concluded, "and depending on the types of violence portrayed, exposure to televised violence is capable of producing increased inclination toward aggression in children." And in 1972 CBS awarded a grant to sociologist William Belson of the London School of Economics' Survey Research Center. After six years of testing, Dr. Belson concluded that long exposure to television violence did indeed increase the tendency towards some antisocial activities. The network dismissed the findings as "nothing of consequence."

Still, fearful of public reaction, the networks have made a token gesture toward reducing the level of onscreen violence of the most virulent kind. In mid-1978, ABC decreed that its children's shows could have no more than three "acts of aggression" per episode.

Studies are now appearing that suggest TV may have a distinct narcotic effect on children who watch it a great deal. Ed Kittrell, Chief of the Department of Communications at the American Academy of Pediatrics, insists his research has shown remarkable similarity between the classic posture of the drug addict and that of the child viewer. "Both actions serve to remove the child from his environment," writes Kittrell, "to blot out the real world."

Professors Jerome and Dorothy Singer of Yale University's Family Television Research Center studied three- to five-year-olds who watched TV heavily and found evidence that supports the theory that television-viewing actually stunts the growth of a child's imagination.

More research will have to be done to fully determine the effects of TV violence and sex on children. When additional facts are in, the networks may be willing to change their programming. Until then, it is up to parents not only to pressure the networks — by mail as well as group efforts — but also to closely monitor their children's TV-viewing.



During the fall of 1974, NBC televised a sensational made-for-TV movie special called *Born Innocent*. It was the story of a teen-age girl in a reformatory who is attacked in a shower room by a group of inmates. A few days after the program was aired, a nine-year-old girl was raped in a similar manner by a gang of teen-agers who admitted that *Born Innocent* had given them the idea. The girl's mother brought an \$11 million suit against NBC, but the court, citing the First Amendment (freedom of the press), protected the network from prosecution. NBC, for its part, denied that the program had been designed to incite violence in real life.

Is there any real evidence to suggest that television — which the individual American watches up to 29 hours a week — actually affects a person's actions? Do children get their values and their notions about life, sex, justice and violence from a medium that takes up more of their time than school, recreation or family discussion?

It may be impossible to ever prove that an act of violence has been touched off by something seen on TV. But more and more parents and social scientists are becoming concerned about the effect of TV violence and sex on children, and evidence is mounting that a constant barrage of TV shootings, fistfights, rapes, murders and mayhem has specific effects on young people. The networks are feeling the heat from P.T.A. groups. Government agencies and sociologists who charge that TV violence may be dangerous because it either promotes aggressive behavior or because it may cause children to become insensitive to violent acts and their effects.

Drs. Charles Atkins and Bradley Greenberg of the Department of Communications at Michigan State University have done extensive studies on the behavior of children in grades six through eight. "We analyzed how kids behaved in an aggressive fashion on a day-to-day basis," says Dr. Atkins, "and we found that those kids who watched violent TV programs gave more aggressive answers to questions about how to solve day-to-day problems. And children ages eight to 15 are those most vulnerable to the violence-level factor on TV. The so-called 'Family Hour' no longer works because kids no longer stop watching TV at 9 o'clock."

Two other researchers — Dr. Shirley L. O'Bryant of the Department of Family Relations and Human Development at Ohio State University and Dr. Charles R. Corder-Bolz, director of psychological research at Southwest Educational Laboratory in Austin — found that TV specifically influences the attitudes of young children and that parents must act to modify such conditioning.

A number of organizations are involved in studying the effects of TV violence on children's mental health; among them are the National Institute of Mental Health.

over the previous year's shows on all three major networks.

The study also showed that women and minorities bear an unequal burden of victimization and that young people who watch television are more apprehensive about their own safety and more likely to think that people are mean and selfish. Schoolchildren who watch more television are also more likely to believe that the police frequently use force and that the average policeman will often use his gun. And heavy viewers in general overestimate the amount of violent crime present in everyday life. Dr. George Gerbner, who heads the research team, feels strongly that it is not terribly important to show that TV violence begets aggressive behavior; rather, his study indicates that television influences viewers to "become more fearful and dependent on authority and to grow up welcoming repression in the name of security."

In a follow-up study also in the report, Dr. Gerbner asked junior high-school students, "How often is it all right to hit someone if you are mad at them?" A significantly higher percentage of students who were heavy TV viewers answered, "Almost always."

John Mariani is a free-lance writer whose special interest is television.

Social Stereotyping: How We See Women and the Elderly

By Les Brown

San Francisco Examiner

11/11/1979

New York

MEN ARE greatly overrepresented in television's dramatic programs in relation to the actual national population, and women, minorities, juveniles and the elderly are underrepresented, according to a study of network programming conducted for the Screen Actors Guild.

A report on the study,

"Benign roles, limited but agreeable fate and diminished powers are the favored role characteristics of women and minorities on prime-time television."

As for the elderly, the study found the more time people spent watching television the more they thought there were fewer older people around. It said:

males comprise 49 percent of the population. Blacks and Spanish-speaking people are underrepresented in proportion to their actual numbers, and whites get proportionately more leading roles than minorities.

Moreover, the report said, "Weekend daytime children's programming both conceals and exaggerates the inequities reflected in prime time."

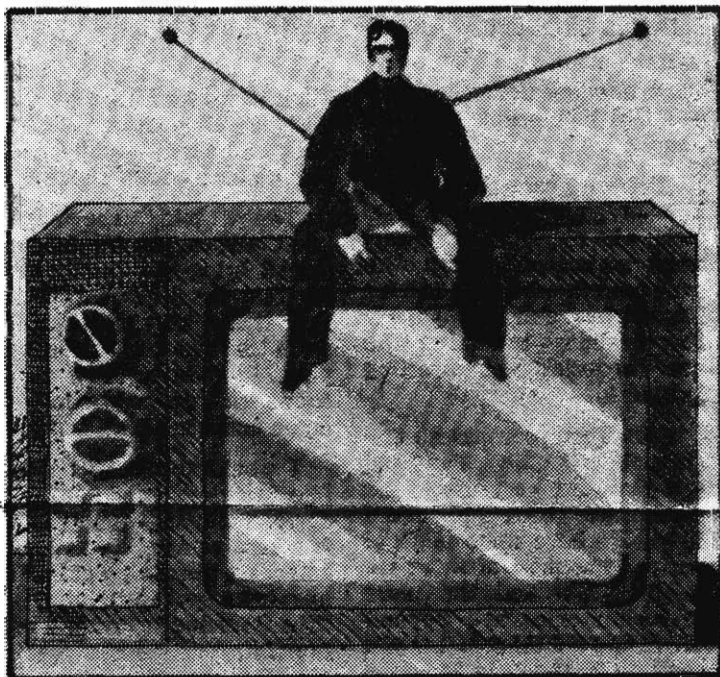
The study pointed out that although the largest real-life professional occupation for women was teaching, on prime time, 59 percent of the teachers were men and 41 percent were women.

Additionally, more than half the characters in prime time are in the 25-to-45 age group, and in reality that group represents 27 percent of the population. People under 19 comprise one-tenth the fictional population of television, but make up one-third the national population, and people over 65 are 11 percent of the actual population but 22 percent of the characters on television.

The study also found that television favored young girls and women under 30 and that in the older brackets women were more often portrayed as old than were men. "Among characters 65 and over," the report said, "28 percent of the men will still play settled adult roles with romantic possibilities and 72 percent will be cast as old, but 90 percent of women of the same chronological age will be cast as old."

Kathleen Nolan, president of the guild, said, "The world of TV is skewed through the underrepresentation of minorities and especially women, to the detriment of both actor and audience, a situation that the Screen Actors Guild finds unacceptable."

The networks declined to comment until their executives were able to study the findings, but one researcher said the research "conveniently" did not include daytime serial drama, a form of television that employs more women than men and portrays them in ways that are not stereotypical.



based on the monitoring of 1365 prime time and Saturday morning programs from 1968 through last year, was released Monday.

The effect of television's representation of the society is to cultivate typecasting by age, sex and race and to reinforce social stereotyping, the report said.

The research, conducted by George Gerbner and Nancy Signorielli of the Annenberg School of Communications of the University of Pennsylvania, concludes that the effect of this is to limit the opportunities of women and nonwhites to play serious roles.

Beyond that, they maintain, television tends to foster such sexist notions in viewers, particularly children, that women should stay home and that men are better suited emotionally for politics.

In the "world of television" dominated by males, masculine values and questions of power, the women's concerns are "marriage, romance and family," the study observed.

"Television presents a rather gloomy picture of aging. Older persons are practically invisible. Elderly women are also quite likely to be hurt or killed and they frequently fail. Elderly characters are more likely to be cast as comic characters, to be treated with disrespect and to be portrayed as stubborn, eccentric or foolish."

"These patterns," according to the report, "are not the creation of single individuals or groups. They are the creation of a system of broadcasting and of storytelling with deep historical, cultural and commercial roots."

It goes on to say that television is the central and universal storyteller in our society and that it serves to cultivate in viewers the concepts of roles and values: "The message of all stories emerges from aggregate patterns of casting, characterization and fate."

The survey found men outnumber women three to one in prime time and Saturday morning dramas, although

NOV 12 1979

Byfaller

WARPED VIEW OF THE OLD FOLKS

The image of America's elderly is being grossly distorted by prime-time television. That's the finding of a ten-year study of situation comedies and dramas conducted by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications. At a time when older people comprise an increasing percentage of the U.S. population, their TV ranks are approaching the vanishing point. Only one out of every 50 fictional TV characters is over 65; in real life one out of every ten persons has passed that age.

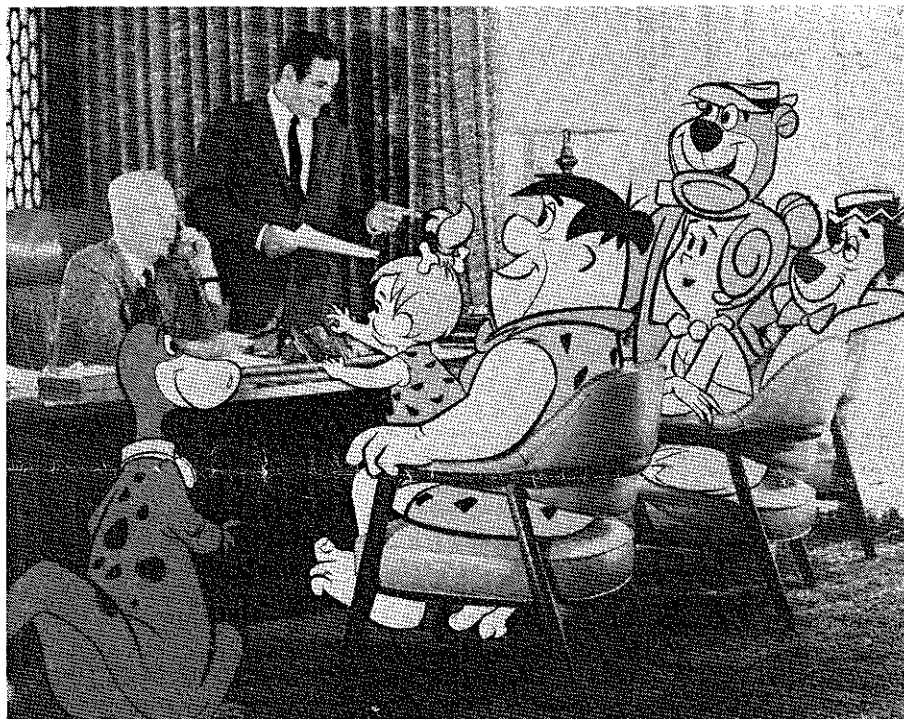
When oldsters are allowed to show up on the tube, they are almost invariably portrayed in negative ways. The Annenberg study, which analyzed 1,365 nighttime programs, reports that the aged on TV come across as stubborn, eccentric, ineffectual, sexually inactive and often downright silly. The picture also displays a sexist tinge. Since younger women usually are chosen to play opposite older men, they seem to be valued only under the age of 35. Older women who do appear generally are assigned roles with fewer romantic possibilities than are male characters of the same age. Old men, on the other hand, are more likely to possess evil powers and to suffer fatal punishments. The report's indictment of television's treatment of the elderly overlooked one irony. According to A. C. Nielsen, men and women over 55 watch more TV than any other age group. If the industry keeps on this course, it could end up alienating its most loyal customers.

THE ARTS

HANNA-BARBERA

The Cartoonists Who Own Saturday Morning

by John Mariani



Hanna, Barbera, and friends—Dino, the Flintstones, Yogi Bear, Huckleberry Hound.

ONE HOUR out of every 24, a Hanna-Barbera cartoon entertains some segment of the world's population, capturing an international audience Walt Disney never even dreamed of. Yogi Bear, Fred Flintstone, Huckleberry Hound, and Scooby-Doo are embraced by 500 million people in 80 countries. Hanna-Barbera's parent company, Taft Broadcasting Company, manages the largest merchandising operation of its kind in the world, with more than 1,500 licensed manufacturers turning out some 4,500 different products based on Hanna-Barbera characters, including everything from Fred Flintstone window shades to Banana Splits bubble bath.

Were you to turn on the tube on a Saturday morning this winter, you would be hard put to escape the "Funtastic World of Hanna-Barbera," created by the studio that this season has sold the networks seven hours of children's program-

ming over a four-and-a-half-hour schedule. Hanna-Barbera cartoons run the gamut of children's fare, from lovable-dopey animal characters like Scooby-Doo and his "rascal side-kick" Scrappy-Doo to classic epic heroes like Superman and Wonder Woman. There are black characters (the Super Globetrotters), and monster characters (Godzilla), and supernatural characters aided by liberated females (Casper and the Angels). Most of these shows are interrupted by drop-in safety tips and educational admonishments, and for those children who are too dumb to know when to respond to a joke, there are laugh tracks. The CBS network bought Hanna-Barbera's *The Popeye Hour*, while ABC has *The World's Greatest Superfriends* and *Scooby and Scrappy Doo*. NBC is filling out its entire 7:30 to noon slot with Hanna-Barberisms: *Casper and the Angels*, *Fred and Barney Meet the Thing*, *The Super*

Globetrotters, *The New Shmoo*, *Godzilla*, *Johnny Quest*, and *The Jetsons*.

Every Saturday, Bill Hanna and Joe Barbera babysit for an audience of 25 million American children, a situation some would call a stranglehold. As babysitters Hanna and Barbera would claim a benign influence on the children who sit mesmerized by their cartoons from dawn to noon, but the total command Hanna-Barbera has over the networks at those impressionable hours troubles the people who see themselves as guardians of the children during that four-and-a-half-hour period. Peggy Charren, president of Action for Children's Television (ACT), argues, "Our organization has always been against censorship of any kind and for all kinds of diversity in children's programming. But if you want diversity you don't hire Hanna-Barbera to produce 77 percent of your children's schedule, as NBC has done. The networks have all that money and they could be making the finest children's programs in the world, yet they come up with a schedule that in its entirety—not in any individual show—is an insult to children."

Joe Barbera, who is generally credited with being the creative member of the Hanna-Barbera team, responds to such citizens' group criticism by saying, "The networks themselves have killed all the creativity in Saturday morning animation. They won't make a decision on the fall schedule until late in the spring, and then they send down directives that force us to alter the characters we've created, even down to their voices. Bill Hanna and I were the first to do Tom and Jerry back at MGM in the Forties—we won seven Academy Awards for those cartoons. Now we're told those Tom and Jerry shorts are too violent, even though in syndication on local channels they've scored very high ratings. We can't do slapstick anymore. Every year the network tells us what we can and can't do. This year Popeye can't hit Bluto with his fist. Characters may not use guns, but they may use lasers. It's crazy—you simply can't plan a character that way. We



Two other good ideas of Hanna and Barbera—Scooby-Doo and Scrappy-Doo (in an upcoming program).

haven't had real violence in our cartoons for a decade, but the networks still find something to complain about."

ACT's Peggy Charren shakes her head at such statements: "For Joe Barbera—whom I know very well—to say he's not allowed to be creative anymore just because he can't show killings is a cop-out of the first order. We've never asked the networks or Joe to cut out violence in cartoons. All great fairy tales have violence in them. But when I turn on the first episode of *Jabberjaw* [a 1976 Hanna-Barbera series about a talking great white shark that walks on its tail] and see an Oriental villain drawn like a Fu Manchu stereotype right out of my own childhood, well, I wonder if that's what Joe is trying to justify as creativity."

The networks' defensiveness about Saturday morning cartoon shows borders on paranoia, and they bristle at the charge that the shows are not diverse or that they stifle creativity. NBC's Vice-President of Children's Programs, Mary Alice Dwyer, insists that the cartoon characters do in fact differ from one another and that NBC does other kinds of children's programs at other hours. "We find we can better capture children's attention with live-action characters at other times in the schedule, and we do drop *Ask NBC News* into the cartoon



The Globetrotters eavesdropping on Snow White's folks (in an upcoming program).

shows." Miss Dwyer explains that the network has a "panel of social scientists" who advise producers how to make animated shows more educational. After Hanna-Barbera made the Harlem Globetrotters into super-heroes with individual powers in their *Super Globetrotters* show, the panel suggested that stories be developed in which the Globetrotters "help each other to solve problems," a swell lesson for the children to pick up between the superantics. "So, rather than putting a lid on creativity," says Dwyer, "we are really asking Hanna-Barbera to perform the difficult task of coming up with more interesting characters and story lines instead of just

The storm over the effects of TV violence on children has raged for more than a decade ("Ever since Bobby Kennedy was shot," says Barbera), but none of the numerous studies on the subject has come up with anything approaching hard evidence against it, especially with regard to animated cartoons.

This past spring the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications released its annual Violence Profile of trends in network television from 1967 to 1978. The study contended that violence on television during weekend children's programming was way up in 1978. But the statistical tally of violent acts made no distinction

Joe Barbera has lost most of his original New York accent. Second-generation Italian, he grew up in New York, attended New York University and took some banking courses, worked for the Irving Trust Company, and, in his free hours, hawked cartoons to magazines. After a modest success selling cartoons to *Collier's* and other journals, he sent off a batch to Walt Disney and requested a job. That was in the Thirties, when animation at the Disney Studios was burgeoning into a remarkable art form at a thousand drawings per minute. Disney's hallmarks were perfection and experimentation. The studio drew the finest talent and most dedicated animators in the world and plowed its profits back into new animation techniques. Joe Barbera never even got an interview, but found work at Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, where he met Bill Hanna, an engineer from New Mexico, in 1937. At MGM the two animators developed the *Tom and Jerry* cartoon series that usually played with the studio's double-feature programs at a time when the big studios owned the theaters.

The *Tom and Jerry* cartoons were based on the theme of cat meets mouse, cat chases mouse, cat gets blown to smithereens. But the animation was excellent, the characters were well delineated, and the slapstick was inventive, if sometimes a bit grizzly, as when the cat was sliced into salami sections after hitting a wire fence. No matter. He was back together in the next scene, ready to be hit by a truck.

In the early 1950s the studio system broke down, and the antitrust laws dissolved their hold on distribution and theaters. Short animated cartoons were among the first casualties. Only Disney continued to make animated shorts throughout the Fifties. Hanna and Barbera were let go by MGM, with no financial claim on *Tom and Jerry*.

Meanwhile, Disney was moving into television—producing the Disneyland series of live shows, including *Davy Crockett*, as well as animated speculations on the future of space travel, and *The Mickey Mouse Club*—and was continuing to make feature-length cartoons like *Lady and the Tramp* and *Sleeping Beauty*. But, Hanna and Barbera realized, Disney had not conceived of an animated TV series specifically tailored to the economy and pressures of getting a show on the air weekly. (Disney's own TV shows were either live-action or reruns of old animated shows.)

Using the newly developed technique of "limited animation"—(invented by United Productions of America, a cartoon factory) in which only certain simplified movements are animated, thereby giving the characters a more stilted, less lifelike action—Hanna and

(continued on page 45)



Boo-Boo and Yogi—You know where that beehive's going to end up.

going with the first thought that comes to mind."

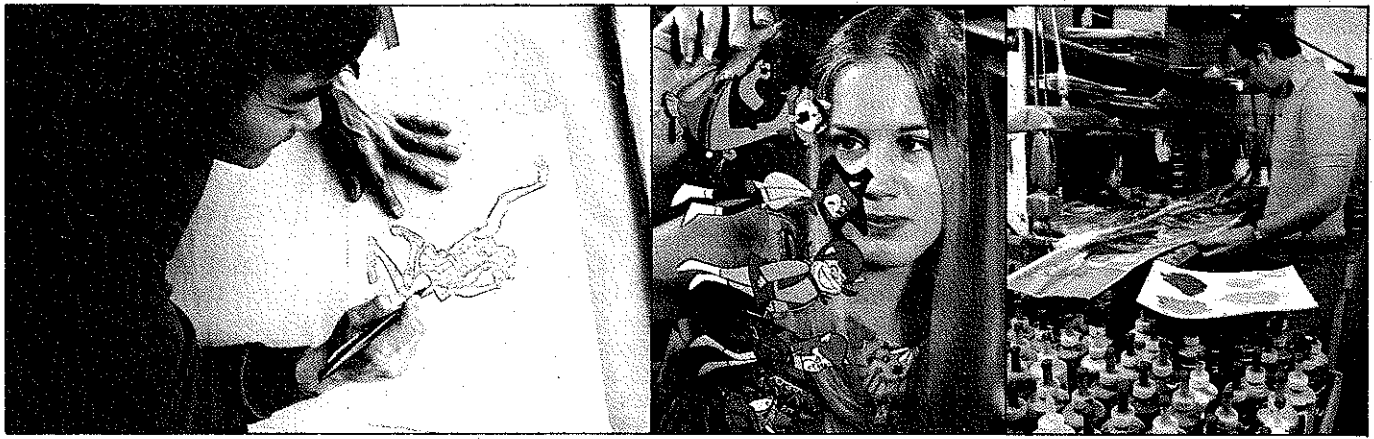
ABC's Vice-President of Children's and Early Morning Programming, Squire Rushnell, sides with Joe Barbera, but he puts the blame on his own network's Broadcasting Standards and Practices Department for what he calls a "sanitizing" of Saturday morning cartoons. "I'm continually fighting alongside Joe Barbera on this issue," says Rushnell. "Organizations like ACT and the PTA caused an awakening at the networks some years back, and they've made a positive contribution. We had been inattentive. Recently we turned down the *Road Runner* series [produced by DePatie/Freleng Enterprises] because the main characters are always trying to kill each other. Nevertheless, I think we've gone too far if we begin to question whether Scooby-Doo getting hit by a wave at the beach is an act of violence. TV doesn't turn out criminals. But if you take a rotten kid and put him in front of a rotten TV show, maybe he'll be more rotten."

between Fred Flintstone tripping over a dinosaur bone and Superman blowing up an alien spaceship. (The study argued that accidents in scripts "victimize characters who fall prey to them, and the message of victimization is one significant aspect of exposure to violence.")

Such arguments make Joe Barbera do a double take followed by a slow burn of the type that has made Popeye so often turn to spinach.

Barbera is one of the cuddlier studio tycoons you'll ever meet. He is a big man, though not tall, given to white shoes, shiny shirts open at the neck, and dark glasses—which he wears even in dark Italian restaurants of the kind he frequents near the two-and-a-half-acre Hanna-Barbera studios in North Hollywood, where I met with him recently to discuss the past, present, and future of Saturday morning TV.

"Y'know, Frank Sinatra comes to this restaurant," he said. "Try the veal something-or-other with the artichokes on top. The chef'll make it special for me. It isn't on the menu."



Some of the people in the cartoon tycoons' vast empire—animation director, ink and paint artist, background man.

(continued from page 28)

Barbera could cut down the number of drawings shot per minute from 1,000 to about 300 or less. By 1959 Disney animator Ub Iwerks had also developed a more practical method of turning out cartoons: a Xerox process for copying animators' original drawings onto transparencies called "cels." Although this technique compromised the line and modeling of the figures, it eliminated a costly, laborious, separate inking process.

These two techniques allowed Hanna and Barbera to produce animated television series on a weekly basis, first for children's shows, then for prime-time television. "Our first prime-time series, *The Flintstones*," says Barbera, "was about a cave man, his family, and friends. We had all this clever stuff with dinosaurs and everyday objects made out of stone, and it wasn't violent either. Well, I took it around to the networks and they thought I was nuts—a cartoon show in prime time? I told them this was an *adult* cartoon show. I must have told the story line five times a day. Finally ABC took a chance for the fall schedule of 1960. The show was a smash. It won an Emmy."

The Flintstones was innovative insofar as the characters were human beings rather than animals; in fact, they were modeled on the Jackie Gleason-Art Carney series, *The Honeymooners* (which had gone off the air in 1957), and plots involved Fred Flintstone's struggle to make ends meet in the Stone Age town of Bedrock. What started out as an adult show was certainly enjoyed by children, and subsequently *The Flintstones* was tailored for Saturday morning, where it now appears on NBC.

Other animation studios emerged in the Sixties and Seventies to claim a share of the Saturday morning market, but none even approached the output of Hanna-Barbera, which has produced more than a hundred different animated series to date, among them series based on Laurel and Hardy, *The Three Musketeers*, and *Moby Dick*. The studio now also produces live-action shows and

movie features, including the Emmy Award-winning *The Gathering*, which starred Maureen Stapleton and Edward Asner. Currently in production are *Jesus at XVI*, about Christ as an adolescent, and, the project dearest to Hanna-Barbera's heart, *Heidi's Song*—a full-length animated feature that will depend on animation techniques more reminiscent of the Golden Age of cartoons than of the dreary Saturday morn-



Superfriends—Heroes will never be out.

ings of children's programming.

"We're so proud of *Heidi's Song*," says Barbera from behind his sunglasses. "We're really spending our own money on this one—\$8 million—to make it truly special and wondrous. The animation will be the finest we can make, sometimes better than the old Disney days because we know so much more about special effects now. It's the kind of project I'd like to do more of, but the economics are just too rough."

After lunch Joe Barbera and I returned to the studio and I was shown around the facilities by master animator Harry Love (the prime force behind Bugs Bunny and the Road Runner), an old-timer who worked with Disney, Friz Freleng (whose X-rated cartoons of the Sixties were followed by nightmarish

adult fantasies of the Seventies), Ralph Bakshi (creator of Fritz the Cat), and other legends of the business. "In the old days," said Love, "an animator would be expected to turn out maybe eight to 10 feet of cartoon a week. For this Saturday morning stuff we've got to turn out 70 feet a week! Some of the old guys used to have their specialties: They'd only draw one character, or they'd just do water, or fire, or something like that. Now, that's all changed. Animators today just make things move."

"Back in the Forties Warner Bros. would spend \$35,000 on a cartoon, while Disney would spend \$120,000. And it shows. You can't compare them to the Saturday morning cartoons. Another problem is that there just aren't enough animators around today. We were training 200 people in a school right here, but we suspended that program because a lot of the graduates were stolen by the other studios."

We walked through the hallways flanked by small offices full of idea men, story men, master animators, producers, and directors. Then into the cavernous rooms full of background artists, layout artists, inkers, painters, paint checkers, camera operators, Xerox operators, film editors, sound scorers, music scorers and arrangers, dubbing engineers, special-effects people, and then on and on through the labyrinth.

Harry Love pointed out the old-timers who had worked with him at Warners or Disney or MGM. Men who had drawn the original Popeyes, or a sequence in *Fantasia*, or specialized in Daffy Duck. Harry Love himself was one of the original animators of Krazy Kat cartoons, now artifacts in a cinemabilia somewhere. Scholars at the University of California, the American Film Institute, and the French magazine *Cahiers du Cinéma* are cataloguing these men's accomplishments, looking for the story boards used to illustrate an early Mickey Mouse cartoon, plotting the rise and the fall of Gerald McBoing-Boing cartoons, and investigating the sociological significance of Betty Boop in

relation to the adolescent sex drive.

Harry Love rambled on: "Y'know, Disney spends \$8 million on an animated feature and takes two-and-a-half years to make it. That's 90 minutes of animation. For the Saturday morning cartoons Hanna-Barbera turns out *seven* hours of animation every single week. You can't get real quality. But, if the networks said to us, 'Make good cartoons,' we would. We can do it; it just takes time and money. That's why we're all excited about *Heidi's Song*, which won't be ready until 1981. And Disney's making *The Black Hole*—an outer space film combining live action with animation. These things will be beautiful to see."

As we walked through the studio I wondered if the amount of animation viewed by children on Saturday morning might in fact have dulled their appreciation of the wondrous possibilities of beautifully modulated animation. Do

children see the difference between a Hanna-Barbera character done in limited animation and a rounded, shadowed, richly colored Hanna-Barbera Tom and Jerry cartoon from the 1940s? Will these children care very much for *Heidi's Song*?

As I passed by a recording session in which a black actor was dubbing a voice onto the animated Black Falcon character, I picked up some safety tips in the dialogue. The Black Falcon was telling a little boy (dubbed by a grown woman) about being careful with electric sockets. I was suddenly struck by the facile condescension of the idea that animated cartoons should be educational, that a panel of "social scientists" should force health and nutrition tips out of the mouths of Black Falcon or Superman or Porky Pig. I could only imagine a Pollyanna world in which Pinocchio cannot be swallowed by a whale because such

a plot would be a cruel stereotyping of the leviathan.

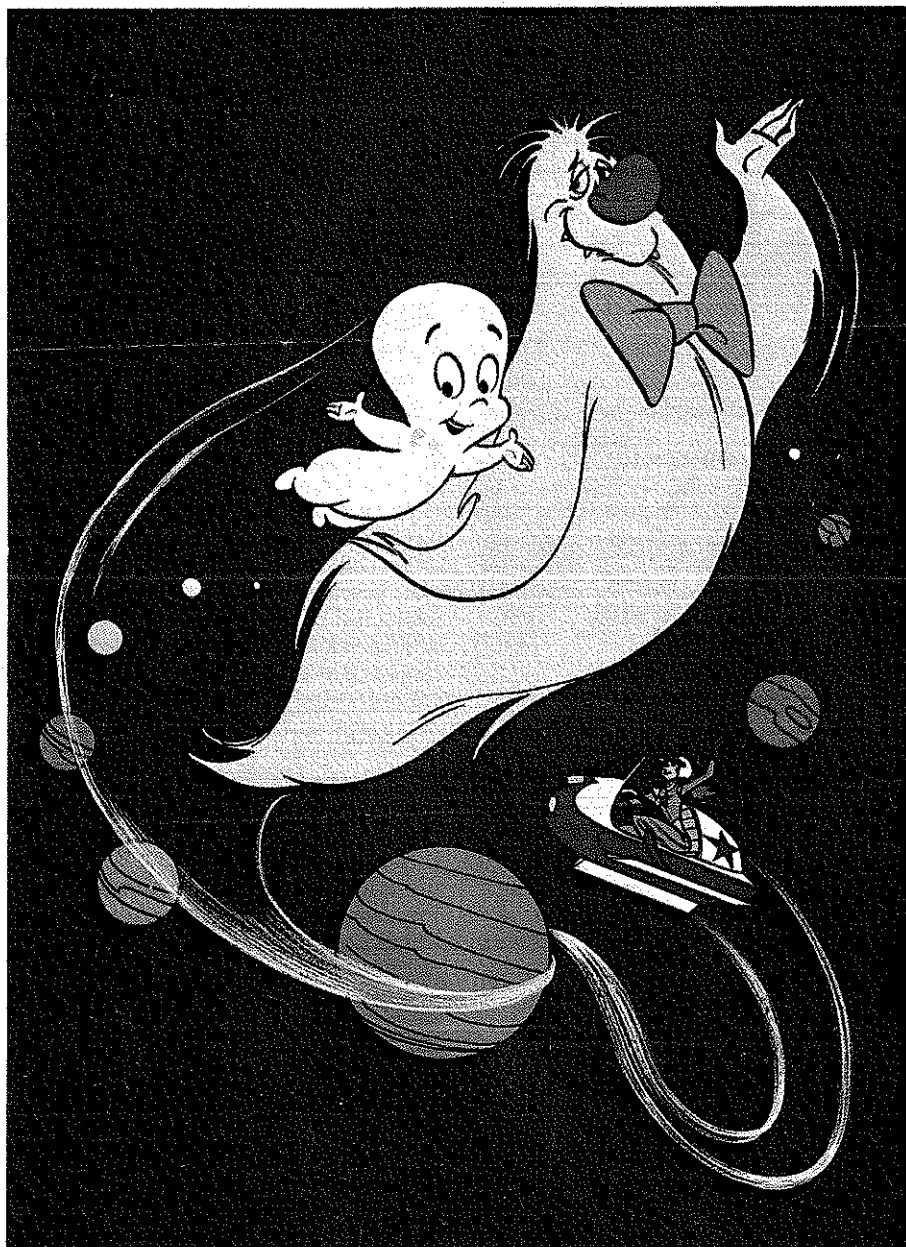
Later on, I was encouraged to learn that the truly harmful aspect of cartoons—their mass, and unimaginative, production—is perhaps not so bad as I'd thought. Despite Hanna-Barbera's domination of the Saturday morning schedule, despite their ability to churn out seven hours of animation a week, despite all the wringing of hands over citizens' group pressure, the most popular of all the Saturday morning cartoons is still *The Bugs Bunny—Road Runner Hour*—for reasons, I suspect, that have little to do with cannons, pistols, dynamite, and other instruments of animated destruction. Those characters never condescend to children; indeed, Bugs Bunny and Daffy Duck are closer to the Marx Brothers than to Captain Kangaroo.

Children realize at once that Bugs, Daffy, and Wile E. Coyote are playing out their own fantasies of revenge, aggression, and fair play, as opposed to the current crop of cartoons wherein characters like Casper the Friendly Ghost and Scooby-Doo are reflections of all the imbecilic human characters on prime-time situation comedies. The characters on *The Bugs Bunny—Road Runner Hour* series are sophisticated, but, beyond that, the drawing, the backgrounds, the way a character lifts his foot and casts a shadow still have the ability to rivet the attention of the child and adult because of the stretch and elasticity invested in the flesh of wisecracking rabbits, daffy ducks, and lipping cats.

Joe Barbera remembers how he used to draw Tom and Jerry back at MGM. "The cat would rig up an anvil over the mouse," he says, "and somehow the cat would get in the way and he'd get hit with the anvil—a 10,000-pound anvil!—and the mouse would peel him off the ground, and you'd hear it like a Band-Aid, right? But the cat was in perfect condition in the next sequence. We can't do that stuff anymore. They tell me it's not good for kids to see. I don't understand what they're talking about!"

It occurred to me that the men who own Saturday morning have become too successful at what they once loved best—drawing characters who seem not only lifelike but true to life's complications—and now there's little heart left in them or the characters they create. Which is the definition of television itself: success at the expense of the ineffable quality of true fantasy. For true fantasy, especially in animated terms, gives us the world as it should be, a place where witches get thrown in ovens and cats, just scraped off the sidewalk, bounce back to rounded life again and again and again.

John Mariani is a freelance writer and frequent contributor to *Saturday Review*.



Casper (the friendly one) and his liberated friends, the Angels.

DEC 13 1979

B. J. Keller

Educators Hear Talk On Influence Of TV

The faculty of Germantown Academy, and faculty members from Upper Dublin High School, Wissahickon High School, Plymouth-Whitemarsh High School, Germantown High School, Oak Lane School, Springside School, Chestnut Hill Academy and Germantown Friends' School, gathered in Braun Lecture Hall at G.A. on Dec. 10 to hear University of Pennsylvania educator, George Gerbner, speak on the implications of the age of television on education.

Gerbner, professor of communications and dean of The Annenberg School of Communications, has directed numerous national and international communications research projects and is currently doing research on "cultural indicators," including television's "Violence Profile and Index" through a grant from the National Institute of Mental Health.

"MOST PEOPLE don't watch TV by the program, but by the clock," said Gerbner. "It is a ritual . . . an enormous enrichment for some and an enormous impoverishment for others," he added.

The historic axis of power used to be Church and State — now it is TV and State, said Gerbner. The more television children watch, the lower their scores are on standardized testing, including I.Q. testing. Children from deprived cultural environments, however, have scores on standardized tests that are somewhat improved.

Educators must counteract the negative influences of television by



GEORGE GERBNER

beginning to make independent, creative, constructive moves to promote its positive aspects, explained Gerbner. Children must be taught to be selective and analytical viewers.

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„Dumme Alte und Sexobjekte“

Eine Studie über das
amerikanische Fernsehen

Das amerikanische Fernsehen nährt Vorurteile gegenüber Frauen, Jugendlichen, alten Leuten und Minderheiten. Es vermittelt ein Weltbild, in dem (weiße) Männer dominieren, die sozialen Verhältnisse als unveränderbar erscheinen, alte Menschen entweder starrköpfig, exzentrisch oder dumm sind und Frauen Sexobjekte, „die besser zu Hause bleiben sollten, wenn ihre Männer sie ernähren können“. Das ergab eine Untersuchung der beiden Kommunikationswissenschaftler George Gerbner und Nancy Signorelli von der Annenberg School of Communications in Philadelphia. Es handelt sich um eine Zehnjahresstudie, der die Analyse von 1365 Sendungen mit 16 888 Charakteren zugrunde liegt.

Gerbner/Signorelli stellten weiter fest, daß im amerikanischen Fernsehen Männer gegenüber Frauen drei zu eins dominieren. Im vergangenen Jahr waren 83 Prozent aller TV-Charaktere zur Hauptsendezeit weiße männliche Erwachsene, obwohl auch in den USA mehr als die Hälfte der Bevölkerung weiblichen Geschlechts ist. Ähnlich schlecht kommen Leute über 65 weg, elf Prozent der Bevölkerung, auf dem Bildschirm jedoch nur in 2,2 Prozent der Rollen vertreten. „Das Fernsehen“, schreiben die Wissenschaftler dazu, „präsentiert ein ziemlich deprimierendes Bild vom Altwerden. Alte Leute sind praktisch unsichtbar oder werden karikiert.“ Die Bevorzugung des weißen Mannes zeigt sich dem Betrachter zufolge am deutlichsten in der Analyse der Fernsehkrimis: Bei der „sozialen Hierarchie des Verbrechens“ finden sich weiße Männer ganz unten auf der Opferliste. Vor ihnen liegen farbige Männer, dann Frauen aus den unteren Schichten, junge Frauen und schließlich farbige Frauen.

(epd)

See p 3.

TV in the



From Left, Farrah Fawcett, Bill and Birby and Lou Ferrigno (*The Hulk*), Jean Stapleton, Madge Sinclair and John Amos in "*Roots*," Richard Nixon, Louise Lasser and Miss Piggy.

Cops and Jiggle, a Bloody Ratings War Video Games and the Great Hugathon

By Tom Shales

On television, the 1970s were the decade of sex and violence, t & a, Mork and Mindy, Laverne and Shirley, Archie and Edith, Begin and Sadat, Farrah Fawcett, Deng Xiao-peng, Kermit the Frog, Mr. Cholesterol, Pope John Paul II, Mike Wallace, Kunta Kinte, Mary Hartman, Richard Nixon, Ayatollah Khomeini and Fred Silverman.

It was the second-best of times, it was the second-worst of times. It was Down Time. It was Primal Time. It was a time of video synthesizers, video beams, video discs and video games—all in the vanguard, we were persistently told, of a video revolution that will liberate us from the grips of "Happy Days," Sheriff Lobo, Geraldo Rivera and the Incredible Hulk.

Like all decades, this one was cyclical. Cop shows came in a wave and left in a hail of bullets. Jiggle girly shows bounced their way into America's lap. At the beginning of the 1970 prime-time network TV season, there were 15 hours of musical-variety programming in the schedule each week.

At the beginning of the 1979 season, there were none.

In some senses, the decade was full-circular. As it began, public TV's imported serial, "The Forsyte Saga," was just making its impact. Soon a new TV form, the mini-series, was being hailed as the medium's salvation, a respite from humdrum weekly shows. Programs like "Roots," "Rich Man,



Poor Man" and "Holocaust" lured as many as 130 million viewers.

But by the decade's end, mini-series flops like "The Dain Curse" and "Blind Ambition" had producers and networks convinced the format was too costly and risky, and it was back to the ostensible sustenance of meat-and-potatoes weekly shows.

Beyond the usual mercurial trends in programming, the '70s may represent a much larger cycle nearing its end—the era of network domination of television. Technological breakthroughs involving cable TV, pay TV,

and national cable networks linked by satellite became so clearly a threat to the networks that ABC started advertising its prime-time movies with the legend, "Another Outstanding Movie on Free Television."

In 1970, there were only 2,490 cable TV systems in the United States, serving 4.5 million subscribers. By the end of the decade, the number of systems had risen to 4,150 and the number of subscribers to 15.5 million. There could be 30 million by 1984 and in addition to the viewers siphoned off by cable, network audiences will be offered such other diversions as the video disc, video cassette recorders, home computer terminals and over-the-air pay TV.

No one knows exactly which kind of television will dominate the '80s. But it is very unlikely the networks will retain as much of the pie as they have profitably enjoyed during TV's first three gold-mine decades.

At the same time, the networks showed during the '70s the ability to expand their audiences to take in new, converted constituencies. NBC's "Saturday Night Live" staked out fresh territory in TV demographics,

'70s



And for the '80s: 'Knots Landing,' Soaping Up With Lather From 'Dallas'

By Megan Rosenfeld

luring back to TV members of a generation that had largely abandoned it. Advertisers found their socio-economic profile irresistible, and products rarely advertised on TV previously—stereo systems, wines, sports cars, motor oil, Perrier water, pregnancy tests—were added to the list of TV conquests.

Television permeated American society as never before, with broadcasting terms like "feedback," "interface" and "input" finding their ways into secular vocabularies. Rock groups with names like Television and The Tubes made albums with titles like "Remote Control." Some incorporated TV into their stage appearances: The Tubes with six TV sets displaying pictures on stage, the Electric Light Orchestra performing the ritual act of smashing TV sets to smithereens at the conclusions of their performances.

Although Nielsen reported a 3-percent decline in prime-time viewing in 1977, and although a Washington Post poll in late 1978 found a greater percentage of viewers than ever expressing dissatisfaction with TV, the indus-

"Knots Landing," the offspring of but not the heir apparent to "Dallas," wastes no time in getting down to dis-aster. In the opening scene we see a Daddy coming home in the afternoon. Everyone knows that nothing good happens to Daddies who come home unannounced in the middle of the afternoon.

In this show (who knows what may

TV Preview

happen in future episodes if the show's a hit) his estranged daughter from a first marriage is frolicking in the bedroom with what appears to be a male person. And "Knots Landing," premiering tonight on Channel 9 at 10, is off to an appropriately soap-opera start: sex (daughter in bedroom) and violence (angry father).

The apparent premise of this new prime-time soap opera is that the long-lost Ewing brother, Gary, has



Ted Shackelford and Larry Hagman

See AIR, D11, Col. 1

See KNOTS, D7, Col. 5

TV in the '70s: From Cops and

AIR, From D1

try as a whole suffered no economic aches whatsoever. It appeared to be inflation-proof and recession-proof, and non-profitable hours of the broadcast day had all but disappeared.

Still, each new season's wagon train of flops cast further doubts on the efficacy of the network entertainment operation. In 1973, not one of the new series introduced in September made it into Nielsen's top 20 programs for the month. In 1979, more than half of the new programs that bowed in the fall were bow-wows by Christmas.

For the TV networks that gave America "Me and The Chimp," "The Montefiscos," "Supertrain" and "Mr. T and Tina," the 1970s may have been a last hurrah, with a decade of reckoning only a station break away.

Presidents of the three television networks began the '70s on a note of har-dee-har-har. In 1970, they told a New York TV critic that in the golden decade ahead, there would be much less stress on Nielsen ratings and the breakneck competition the ratings encourage.

This was followed immediately by the bloodiest 10 years of ratings warfare in the history of broadcasting.

But if it was a decade in which television persistently ward off all attempts at reform—including a valiant stab by the House Communications Subcommittee to rewrite the antiquated Communications Act of 1934—it was also a decade in which TV became more of a political issue than ever. TV was a battered football for assorted coalitions of newly emerging media activists armed to the teeth with cleats.

Action for Children's Television (ACT) was the most productive. Though a frequent indulger in doctrinaire rhetoric, ACT succeeded in getting through new rules governing TV directed at kids and at ads used to sell them products their parents would have to buy. But efforts by the Federal Trade Commission merely to investigate the effects of ads on children were crushed by a timid Congress under heavy pressure from the powerful broadcasting lobby.

TV was blamed for much in the 1970s, especially violence in American society. It was claimed (but rejected in court) that an incident depicted in the NBC movie "Born Innocent" led to an attack on a teen-age girl. It was contended that ABC's telecast of the movie "Fuzz" inspired juvenile delinquents in Boston to imitate the immolation of winos—just as they had seen it done in the film.

And in a landmark Florida trial, a defense attorney argued that his client, a shy teen-age boy, murdered an elderly neighbor because, while robbing her house with friends, he found a gun in a drawer and, conditioned by years of exposure to violent



Suzanne Somers

TV cop shows, proceeded to use it. A jury found the boy guilty nevertheless.

Dr. George Gerbner, at the University of Pennsylvania, revealed research that found heavy TV viewers more susceptible than others to what he called the "mean world syndrome"—a TV-warped concept of everyday life as such hostile terrain that one felt lucky to get through a day without assault. Near the decade's end, TV was also labeled a key factor in sharply declining scores registered by high school students on standardized Scholastic Aptitude Tests.

In 1972, a report by the U.S. Surgeon General established for the first time a "causal link" between violence on television and violent behavior in children. Concern over TV violence became so pronounced that in 1975 FCC Chairman Richard E. Wiley and network executives unveiled the allegedly voluntary family viewing plan. It restricted televised rapes and murders until after 9 p.m. Eastern time.

The plan was a fiasco from the start—as network censors bowdlerized scripts into vanilla pudding for fear of public reaction—and a judge later ruled the scheme unconstitutional.

The networks were attacked as well for a relatively new TV format called the docudrama, which ransacked headlines for fact-based fictions. Where the facts ended and the fiction began was an iffy proposition in programs like "King," "Helter Skelter," and "Tail Gunner Joe." Legal complications eventually doomed the form to near extinction, though a conference of Hollywood producers pleaded that the docudrama be kept alive.

Fear of controversy haunted the TV decade, but occasionally networks



Cindy Williams

showed true grit. Though it nervously postponed a planned telecast of the anti-Vietnam War drama "Sticks and Bones," CBS was also the network which stood by the revolutionary Norman Lear comedy "All in the Family," which ABC had previously rejected as too hot. It turned out to be the most significant and best-written TV series of the decade.

And though the so-called Tiffany network saw its 20-year domination of the ratings crumble before lacky competition from ABC, CBS at least had the satisfaction at decade's end of seeing its innovative "60 Minutes," an nonfiction, informational, CBS News magazine, become, frequently, the No. 1 show in the nation.

In programs like "Fernwood 2Night," "NBC's Saturday Night" and "Second City Television," TV showed a new receptiveness to satire and ridicule of itself. Television loosened up considerably in the '70s, and occasionally the subject of TV was allowed a few moments of exposure on the almighty airwaves.

But more potent attacks on television came, as usual, from outside. In 1976, MGM released Paddy Chayefsky's sensational and combustible "Network," a condemnation of the TV business all the more forceful for being written by a veteran of its golden age—the author, indeed, of the TV classic "Marty."

Jiggle to the Great Hugathon



id Penny Marshall

In Martin Scorsese's film "Taxi Driver," mass murder "Travis Bickle" seems placated until his television set, at which he is playfully aiming a gun, falls to the floor and explodes. And in "Looking for Mr. Goodbar," a character nearly Bickle's equal in degree of psychosis refers to television in a way that is both its exoneration and its condemnation: "That box," he says, "keeps me company. Even when I'm sleeping."

We leave the '70s wrapped in the security blanket of American television. A decade in which violence on TV was one of the most-discussed of all communications matters goes out not with a mugging but a hugging.

These were the sensitivity '70s, and on television, as they ended, the thing to do was to hug somebody else in order to help "get in touch with your feelings"—one of the decade's golly-whomper clichés—and, presumably, to get in touch with someone else's feelings, too. TV has become a hugathon staged to help soothe psyches in an Age of Anxiety that television itself has helped bring about.

On comedy shows like "One Day at a Time," studio audiences cheer when combative or jeopardized characters make the great statement of hugging one another. On game shows like "The \$20,000 Pyramid," "Family Feud" and "Match Game," it is now



Robin Williams

de rigueur for contestants to hug each other or celebrity guests upon winning anything. The hug is now a basic phrase in the vocabulary of television behavior.

And television behavior has a definite influence on viewer behavior. Consciously or not and willingly or not, people learn how to behave from television and the movies. Phrases like "go for it" and "give it your best shot" are popularized and promulgated by TV. The notion that to hug someone else is a triumphal humanist gesture is put across through endless repetition on programs of fact and fiction.

Significantly, one of the big song hits of the decade was "Feelings," a tune that states with ersatz bravery how acceptable it is to experience emotions. On his syndicated talk show, Phil Donahue repeatedly thanks guests in distress for "sharing their feelings" and "sharing their pain" with the unseen audience at home.

It's just ironic -- not necessarily outrageous—that an essentially dehumanizing instrument like television, with its impersonal one-way communication from Them to Us, should be so heavily populated with people telling us how to feel and to be proud of how we feel.

In the '70s, the Prob Drama told viewers how they should deal with intimate problems like impotence, homosexuality, mental retardation, autistic children, deaths in the family, infidelity, child abuse and spouse battering. PBS offered "Footsteps," a series on how to be a parent — "parenting" was the newly coined verb—while Mister Rogers continued to tell children how to be children.

Evangelical television experienced a tremendous boom; 24-hour-a-day, all-religious channels emerged, as did global evangelical networks linked by satellite. On these programs, prayers are applauded, confessions are cheered, and declarations of repentance get ovations. One faith healer actually tells viewers to place their hands on the television screen in order to receive their own little miracles over the air.

In a sense, all television is evangelical, because characters and personalities serve as role models whether they want to or not. In addition, TV is crowded with public service announcements that give counsel to alcoholics, druggies, depressives and virtually anybody with any kind of problem. By the end of the decade, the "Have You Hugged Your Kid Today?" bumper sticker had been replaced with the more insistent, "Kiss Your Baby."

Television not only filled the roles of counselor, shrink, confessor and companion but also, according to one of the most arguable but fitfully persuasive TV books of the decade, that of doctor and pharmacist. Marie Winn called her book, and television, "The Plug-In Drug," and said that people use television for escape in a virtually mind-altering way.

Winn said people go into trances when watching television and in effect equated that habit-forming drug called television with the decade's most frequently prescribed pill, Valium. With either one you could mellow out and float.

The most dominant theme in commercials during the '70s had to do with the way we should want to feel: "It's nice to feel so good, about a meal," "Feelin' good about yourself, the way you should about yourself," "You feel good about serving your family" such-and-such cereal, and so on. Why just shave, one ad asked, when you can "get stroked" in the morning?

Television did a lot of stroking in the '70s, and it seemed like every half hour the phone company was urging us to "reach out, reach out and touch someone"—not physically, as in the big TV hug-in, but electronically, through the impersonal medium of the telephone.

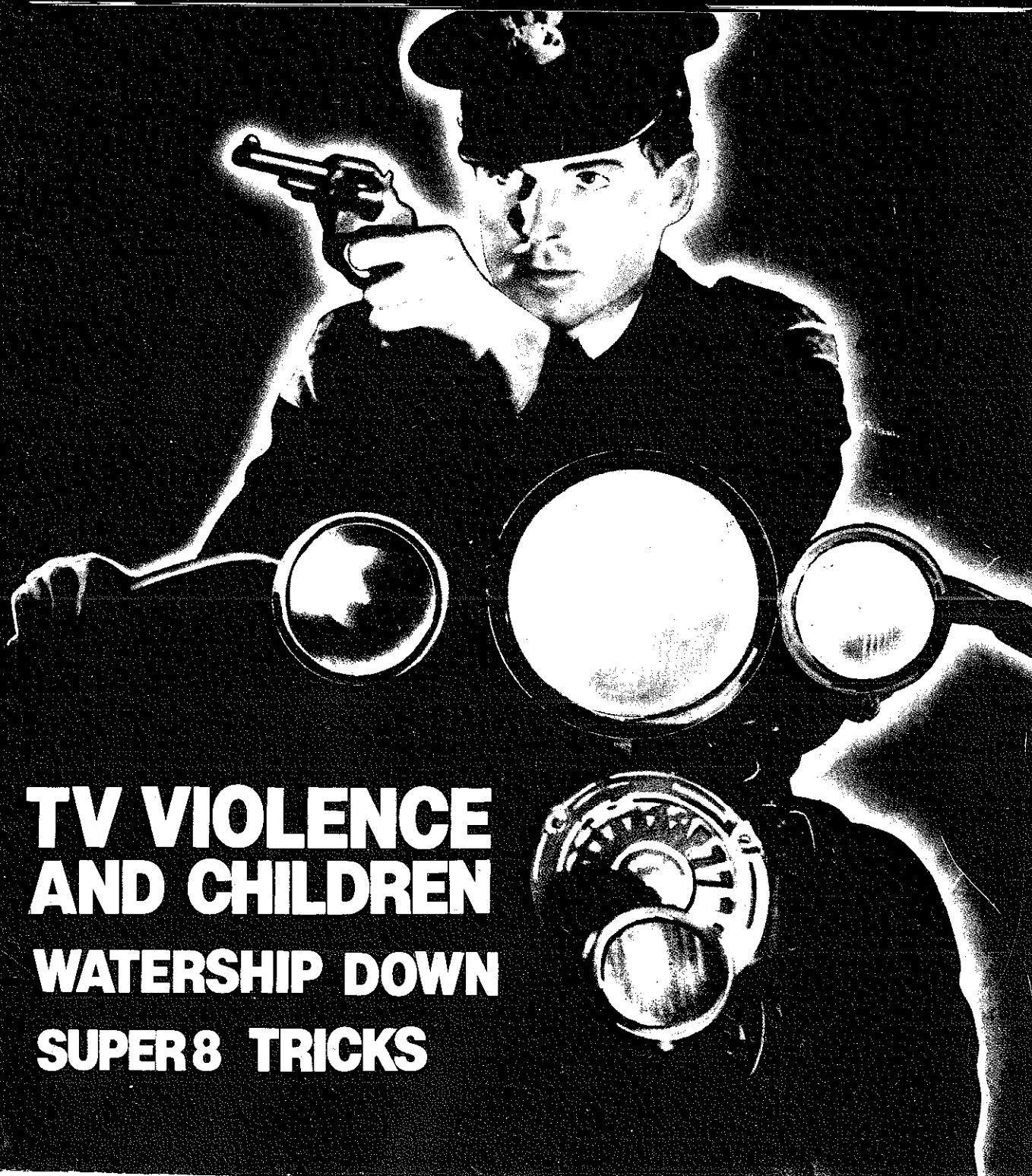
All this carries the warning label that television's role in our lives is growing and growing more intimate with each passing year. In a public TV play called "Home," by Megan Terry, a future society was shown as organized into human bee-hives, with TV the only link from one hive to another and to what remained of the outside world.

As we enter a decade in which fuel shortages may keep more Americans trapped at home than ever before, Terry's fantasy seems less like science fiction than a soberly realistic prognosis. Have you hugged your television set today?

METRO

NO 47
Autumn 1979

MEDIA & EDUCATION



**TV VIOLENCE
AND CHILDREN
WATERSHIP DOWN
SUPER 8 TRICKS**



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Association of Teachers of Media Quarterly

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In this edition, **Metro** celebrates the *International Year of the Child* by developing a special coverage of the theme: *Children and the Media*.

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VIOLENCE AND TELEVISION



**New
Research Findings**

In one and the same edition of the *American TV Guide*, two articles appeared concerning television and violence. They were titled **DOES TV VIOLENCE REALLY AFFECT VIEWERS?**¹ and **DOES TV VIOLENCE REALLY AFFECT VIEWERS? NO!**²

This strange situation is typical of the polarisation of ideas that has developed concerning the effects of television violence. Some researchers have told us that it definitely does have an effect on viewers whilst others have just as adamantly assured us that it has no effect. My guess is that a number of us are just a little tired of hearing and reading about the whole thing.

Perhaps I should speak for myself and say that I was getting to the stage of skipping articles concerning television violence until I came across reports of the work of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania, USA. Under the co-directorship of George Gerbner and Larry Gross, the School is conducting a project called **Cultural Indicators** which is investigating the trends in network television dramatic content and viewer conceptions of social reality.

What was it about their work that motivated me to continue reading after I encountered the words 'television violence'? Well, it was that they seriously, and convincingly, questioned the value of most of the research conducted in the area to date on the grounds of inappropriate research design. Before looking more closely at their claims of inappropriateness and their own alternative research, it may be worth taking the risk of boring you by *briefly* looking at the development of the two traditional stances. (If you are like me and just a little tired of the whole television violence issue, please don't put the magazine down, but skip to the paragraph with the heading — "*But now!*").

Research Smorgasbord

A publication of several volumes would be required to report in full the

entire history of research into television violence. What I propose to present instead in this article is a smorgasbord of research findings which represent as much of the entire spectrum as possible.

The first major field study into the effects of television was conducted by Himmelweit, Oppenheim and Vince, a team of British investigators, in the mid 1950's.³ Because television was not available in all areas of England at that time, they were able to compare children who were exposed to television with those who were not. They were also able to compare children before and after television was introduced into their lives. Diaries, detailed questionnaires and interviews with parents were employed to assess the children's exposure to television and teachers were asked to check whether or not each child was aggressive. The researchers reported that they found no difference in aggression between viewers and non-viewers in terms of their own aggressive behaviour.

In 1963, in their now classical study of the effects on nursery school children of watching filmed aggressive behaviour of adults, Bandura, Ross and Ross⁴ produced results which indicated that aggressive models supplied the children with examples for learning new aggressive behaviours. Furthermore, they claimed that aggressive models also reduced the children's inhibitions against performing aggressive acts which they had previously learned even though they were not shown in the experiment.

Another dimension was added by Meyerson in 1966.⁵ He found that the greater the similarity between the setting portrayed on the screen and the child's actual surroundings the more likely the child was to imitate televised aggressive behaviour.

Up to this time most studies had employed relatively short films in which motivations for and/or consequences of violence were closely related, especially in time. Television programs, on the other hand, usually last half an hour or more. The motivations of the characters are less explicitly stated and the consequences

to the aggressor may occur long after the aggressive acts themselves. Hence, Leifer and Roberts⁶ examined how children of various ages would resolve interpersonal conflicts after watching full half-hour programs which contained varying amounts of violence. They reported in 1972 that they had found that children who saw the more violent programs were more likely to resort to aggression. This effect was most marked in children twelve years of age or younger and diminished as children matured.

Aggression

However, in 1971, Feshbach and Singer⁷ provided evidence that contradicted most of the claims made prior to its publication. They asked adolescent boys attending various schools to watch one of two television schedules for six weeks. The first schedule contained aggressive programs such as *Superman* and *The F.B.I.* and the second consisted of non-aggressive programs such as *Bewitched* and *The Flintstones*. The non-aggressive schedule had to be modified to include *Superman* because the boys complained bitterly about its omission. Teachers and observers rated the boys' physical and verbal aggression before, during and after the experiment. Feshbach and Singer concluded that boys who watched aggressive programs continued in their usual patterns of behaviour while boys who watched non-aggressive programs became more aggressive.

Feshbach has also been largely responsible for the work based on the cathartic effect of watching televised violence.^{8,9} As a result of his research he has claimed that watching televised violence can serve the desirable function of releasing a viewer's aggressive energies through the vicarious experience of viewing someone else's aggression. This argument has often been used by television broadcasters to justify their practice of maintaining a high degree of violent content.

Lefkowitz, Eron, Walder and Huesmann¹⁰ conducted a study over a period of ten years. They in-

vestigated the television viewing habits and aggressive behaviour of 460 children when they were in third grade and again when they were nineteen. Their results indicated that for boys aggressive behaviour at nineteen was linked with violence viewing in the third grade. These results have been interpreted as supporting the view that televised violence is a long term cause of aggressive behaviour. However, they have also been interpreted to support the alternative view that already aggressive boys prefer to watch violent programs.

Many, many more studies could be cited but broadly speaking, the current research opinions fall into three basic schools of thought:

1. Televised violence is a stimulant to violent behaviour.
2. Televised violence acts as an emotional release for the viewer's violent tendencies.



3. Televised violence has little effect one way or the other.¹¹ Thus we have the two opposing stances of 'effect' and 'no effect' and a third 'cathartic' stance which is largely discredited by both the other approaches, and which receives most of its publicity from the media industry itself.

!!!!!!

I have presented these research findings without evaluation or criticism and I have done so for a purpose. Few educators are simultaneously experts in research design and so when we read or hear about research findings we often have little choice other than to accept them at face

value. When they are inconclusive and contradictory the non-expert is often left feeling confused and frustrated and I wanted to remind the readers of **Metro** who share these feelings with me, of what that confusion and frustration feel like. The inconclusiveness has been a source of concern for me because as an educator I feel it is an area I could or should be doing something about, but... whose advice should I act upon?

Interestingly enough a number of governments have acted upon the research findings they have at hand. Dr. John Murray¹² of Macquarie University, Sydney has reported that of sixteen countries under investigation only Australia, Canada, Japan and the United States do not have firm, restrictive policies concerning television violence.

In the United States as a result of extensive research from 1969 to 1971 conducted by the Surgeon General's Scientific Advisory Committee on Television and Social Behaviour, it was concluded that there was a need for a reduction in the level of violence portrayed on television.¹³ This recommendation has not, however, developed into an enforced policy.

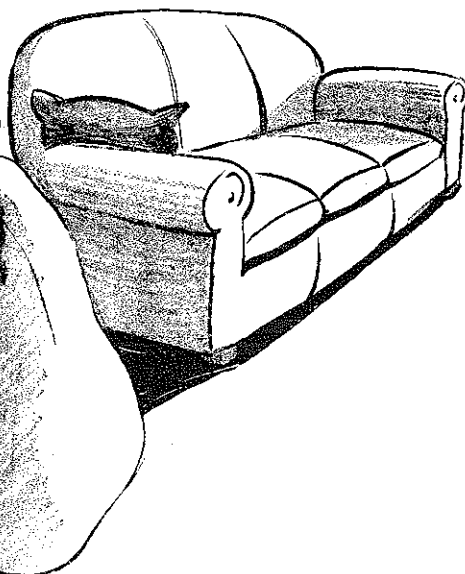
Dr. William Belson, who visited Australia in 1978 to report his recent research into the effects of long term exposure to television, also spoke very strongly of the need for a cut-back in televised violence.¹⁴ However, he emphasised that it is unlikely that we will ever have absolute proof that it effects the behaviour of viewers.

And what is happening in Australia?

The Australian Senate Standing Committee on Education and the Arts conducted an inquiry in 1978 into the impact of television on the development and learning behaviour of children.¹⁵ Citing the work of the Canadian F. Scott Anderson who has written a review of relevant research from 1956 to 1976,¹⁶ the Committee acknowledged the overall inconclusiveness of the findings but also agreed that the balance of evidence would seem to be tipping in such a way as to support the view



1. What have they to say about the research designs employed in most of the television violence studies?
2. How do they perceive the role of television and televised violence in society?
3. How have they approached their alternative research?
4. What findings have they to report?



that violence does affect the viewer. Consequently the Committee recommended that there be a reduction in the extent of televised violence on Australian television. Groups such as the Australian Children's Television Action Committee (ACTAC) and Justice in Broadcasting have been applying pressure for some time both to the broadcasters and the Government to bring about such a reduction, and they certainly made their presence felt at the recent inquiry.

But now . . .

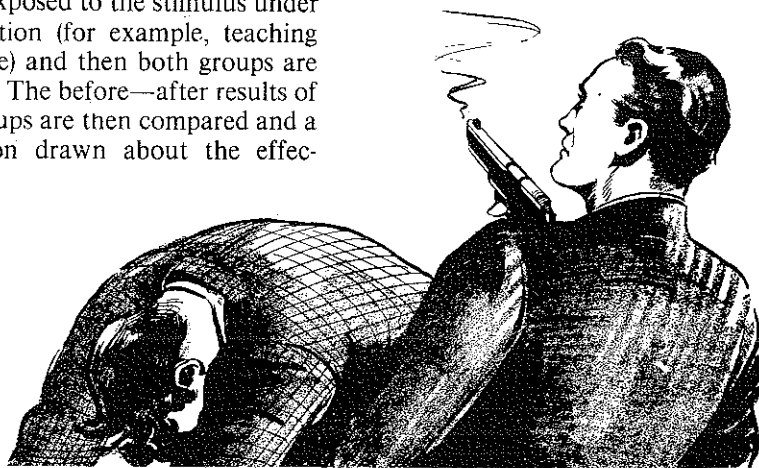
It was with this background of knowing something of the research findings and consequent actions of government bodies and interested groups that I came across the work of the Annenberg School of Communications. I will present an overview of the work of the educationalists involved in the CULTURAL INDICATORS project by looking at four questions.

Inappropriate Research Designs¹⁷

Social science researchers have developed a method for the identification and measurement of the effects of exposure to a stimulus and this method is now well-established and respected. In its simplest form, two groups of children, for example, are tested for a certain skill or attitude or knowledge. One group only is then exposed to the stimulus under investigation (for example, teaching technique) and then both groups are re-tested. The before—after results of both groups are then compared and a conclusion drawn about the effec-

tiveness of the stimulus for that particular age group or socio-economic group or for whatever variable is held constant. This basic design has been used both in field studies, where the researchers study viewers in their natural settings, and in laboratory experiments where the settings are contrived. You have probably recognised this method in the studies cited earlier in this article.

Apart from the few remaining corners of the earth still unexposed to television, the Annenberg team propose that this method is inappropriate and of very limited value in the study of the effects of television. They make this claim on the grounds that no matter how clean the research design or clear the results this type of research ignores a fundamental fact that "*. . . the world of television drama consists of a complex and integrated system of characters, events, actions and relationships whose effects cannot be measured with regard to any single element or program seen in isolation.*"¹⁸ A child does not normally see just one episode of *Hawaii Five-O*, nor does he normally watch only *Hawaii Five-O*. Hence, if a child does manifest an increase in aggressive behaviour the researcher cannot pinpoint the cause to any one program. If the researcher does isolate one episode and use it as the stimulus in the research design just discussed, he may produce significant results but he may not claim that those results say anything about the effects of the child's normal diet of television.



What Then?

The stimulus, then, that the Annenberg team are investigating is the *entire system of messages* of television drama. Before looking further into their research let us briefly look at the world of television from their eyes.

How Do They Perceive Television?¹⁹

All societies have evolved ways of explaining the world to themselves and their children. Hence, they have been able to give a clearer picture of

what exists, what is important, what is related to what, and what is right. Television serves this role in today's society, but more than that, it is the first centralised cultural influence to permeate both the initial and final years of life — as well as the years in between. Further, never before have all classes and groups and ages shared so much of the same culture and the same perspectives while having so little to do with their creation.

Television, indeed, is the cultural arm of the established industrial order. As such it serves to enculturate the masses into the acceptance of the legitimacy and maintenance of established power and authority.

Unlike other previous dominant agents of enculturation such as religion and the print medium, television does not require the viewer to leave his own home, nor does it require literacy. Unlike the movies it is free, and unlike radio it shows as well as tells. Television, hence, has a seductive credibility. Have you ever been in a court of law? Do you know what goes on there? How do you know?

Where Does Violence Fit?

Television violence is a dramatic demonstration of power which communicates much about social norms and relationships, about goals and means, about winners and losers, about the risks of life and the price for transgressions of society's rules. The team claims that *violence does not so much beget violence, but rather begets fear and acquiescence*. Further, the lessons seem to work. The power structures and social order of our society are only rarely or peripherally threatened.

Have They Evidence?

The *Cultural Indicators* project involves two different methods of research.²⁰ The first consists of a periodic analysis of large and representative aggregates of television output. This enables the team to establish the composition and structure of the entire system of messages of television. It should be noted therefore that the project is not only concerned with violence. It looks at other issues also, for example stereotyping. In terms of violence this 'message system analysis' looks at the prevalence of violent programs, the prevalence of violence within programs and the roles portrayed by violent characters, with a breakdown into who is successful and who is not.

(The project has been in progress for more than ten years and has progressively received more and more attention from social scientists. Each year it produces a Violence Profile which is based on the components just mentioned).

The second method of research is designed to determine what, if



anything, viewers absorb from living in the world of television. This is called 'cultivation analysis' and it inquires into the assumptions that television cultivates about the facts, norms and values of society. The findings of the 'message system analysis' are turned into questions about social reality. To each of these questions there is a 'television answer', which is like the way things appear in the world of television, and another and different answer which is biased in the opposite direction, closer to the way things are in the observable world. The questions are directed to both adults and children. The responses to the questions allow the team to assess how often the more frequent television viewers may be more likely than the less frequent viewers to give answers reflecting the television image of the world. These patterns are also examined in the light of various controls such as age, sex, education, occupation and so forth.

The Annenberg team has reported the details and findings of their research periodically and it would be impossible in this article to reproduce all of those. I have, however, listed references you may like to follow up. Just to whet your appetite, though, I will report some of their findings. These particular findings are reported in an article written in 1976.²¹ Similar findings have been reported in 1977²² and 1978.²³

Message System Analysis

Television presents an exaggerated impression of the actual number of law enforcement workers. Eight out of every ten children's hours' programs (nine out of every ten on weekends) contain some violence. More than half of all characters in television drama are involved in some violence, at least one tenth in some killing.

According to television, old men, married men, lower class, foreign and non-white males are more likely to be killed than to inflict lethal injury. 'Good guys' are more likely to be the killers. Among females, more vulnerable than men in most categories, both young and old



women, as well as unmarried, lower class, foreign and non-white women bear especially heavy burdens of victimisation. Old, poor and black women are shown only as killed and never as killers. Interestingly, 'good' women, unlike 'good' men, have no lethal power, but 'bad' women are even more lethal than 'bad' men.

Cultivation Analysis

One of the questions generated from the 'message system analysis' is "Can most people be trusted?" Heavy viewers chose the 'television answer' "Can't be too careful" in significantly greater proportions than did light viewers in the same age, sex and education groups. Not surprisingly, women are more likely to absorb the message of distrust than men.

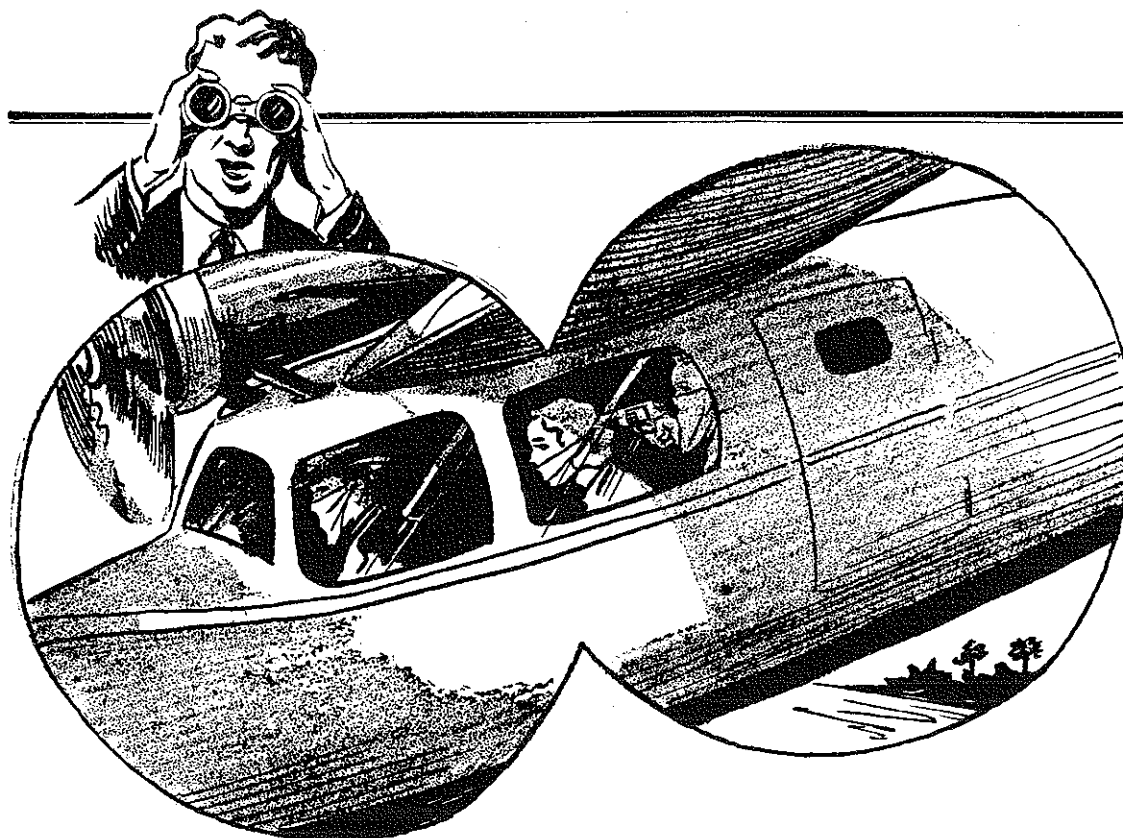
Another question is "During any given week, what are your chances of being involved in some type of violence — one in ten (the television answer) or one in a hundred (the 'real world answer')?" The results for this question also showed that heavy

viewers were more likely to choose the 'television answer'.

Television certainly seems to condition the world view of the generation that knew no world without it. All the results show that the 'under 30' respondents exhibit consistently higher levels of television responses despite the fact that they tend to be better educated than the 'over 30' respondents.

The Overall Effect

The Annenberg team suggest that the effects of televised violence are a heightened sense of risk and 'insecurity' (different for groups of varying power) and that this situation is more likely to increase acquiescence to and



He grabbed up a pair of binoculars. What he saw in the seaplane cabin made him gulp

dependence upon established authority, and to legitimise its use of force, than to threaten the social order through occasional non-legitimised imitation. "Risky for their perpetrators and costly for their victims, media-incited criminal violence may be a price industrial cultures extract from some citizens for the general pacification of most others."²⁴

Where does it leave us?

As educators what can we do? I wouldn't attempt to pretend to have an exhaustive answer to that question. May I risk sounding trite by saying that I think we have the responsibility of raising the awareness of our students to the 'realities' being exposed by the Annenberg School of Communications team. How we translate that into classroom experience is yet another issue.

It seems to me though something that we can get our teeth into. I feel much less confused and frustrated than I do when I consider the traditional approach to television violence.

Jan Smith,
Media Advisor,
All Hallows Primary School,
Fivedock, N.S.W.

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Opinions on FACTS

We have republished extracts from the **Inquiry into the Impact of Television on the Development and Learning Behaviour of Children** by the Senate Standing Committee on Education and the Arts. (AGPS, 1978).

This excellent Report is available from the AGPS — it's a very readable, often entertaining document. It should be read by all media educators.

These extracts are from Chapter 6 **The Role of Research**.

6.7 It was therefore disappointing to receive lengthy submissions from the Federation of Australian Commercial Television Stations and from Australian advertising associations devoted almost entirely to a negative defence of the status quo.

6.10 In what purported to be documents that were presenting a sensible and balanced view, there was a tendency to trivialise serious and complex issues by setting these up as straw men and knocking them down with carefully selected quotations from various researchers and other 'authorities'.

6.11 In tracing quotations back to their source, we found numerous cases where they were taken out of context and used in a manner which gave a completely misleading impression of the researcher's intent. In some cases only part of the researcher's conclusions was used because the other did not agree with the user's views. For example, SSC&B:Lintas end their submission with a quotation from a 1961 study by the American researcher Dr Wilbur Schramm and others:

'For MOST children, under MOST conditions MOST television is probably neither particularly harmful, nor particularly beneficial.' (26)

6.12 This statement, however, omitted the first two sentences of this conclusion which read:

'For some children, under some conditions, some television is harmful. For other children under the same conditions, or for the same children under other conditions, it may be beneficial.' (27)

6.13 When asked to explain the significance of leaving out these words, the witness on behalf of SSC&B:Lintas replied:

'Again, I was keeping with a majority opinion. This is my point of view that all of these findings — conflicts or findings — support the effect of television and television advertising on the majority as being not harmful; I think that is the major thing to be kept in mind.' (28)

6.17 We are not questioning FACTS' right to quote from any researcher to support an argument but the basis on which it is done. For example, if Dr Noble can be quoted in support of the Federation's arguments about the prosocial effects of television, why is he not quoted in the context of televised violence? For example, Dr Noble could be quoted as saying:

'Where possible, I would try to prevent my young child from watching news violence and violence seen in the neo-realistic police and detective programmes. These latter types of violence, I fear, do show that violence is normal and accepted in every day life and possibly define the targets at whom aggression can be directed.' (30)

6.19 There were also other instances where we could only conclude from the manner in which research was presented that the user not only had little or no idea of the point of the researcher's findings but was deliberately misrepresenting it to suit his arguments.

MEDIA & EDUCATION

**NO 48
Winter 1979**

METRO

See pp 44-47

**THREE
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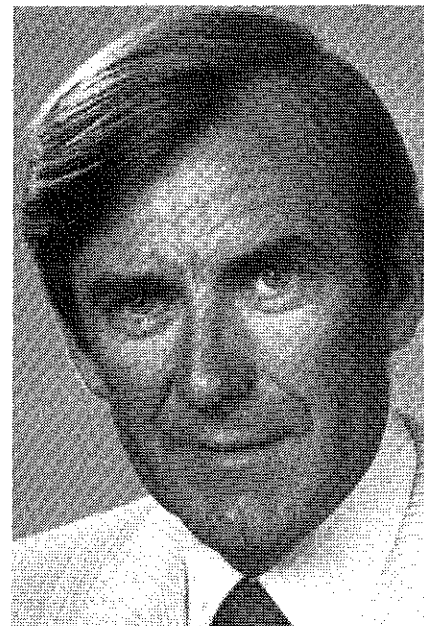
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REGGAE—

NO FUTURE ?



TEACHERS ALERTED TV STATS DANGER!



Like Jan Smith in her lucid article, "Violence and Television — New Research Findings" (*Metro* No. 47), I too have become a little tired of hearing and reading about the whole thing. In my case, however, the weariness derived less from the specific matter of violence on TV than from that whole perspective which sees television solely and single-mindedly as a Threat. It is hard to escape the impression that for many educators the only possible context into which television can be placed is one festooned with such labels as Sexual and Racial Stereotypes, Capitalism and the Consumer Ethic, False Consciousness and the Masses, and so on. Jan Smith's article suggests some

new directions of thought within that context, but it doesn't (nor of course was it meant to) bring the context itself into question.

As I risk being misunderstood here, let me hasten to say that trying to establish cause/effect relationships between television programs and their habitual viewers is a rational activity, if it's felt there is something useful to be gained from it. The evidence that this activity has gone along with a good deal of zealotry and, at worst, plain hysteria can be set aside as an unfortunate aberration. There are cool questions to be asked about the mass media in modern society, and one welcomes equally cool responses to those questions. But what troubles me is the largely unquestioned assumption that talk about television must on all occasions be taken as a branch of discourse in the statistical sciences.

At least one consequence of this highly circumscribed view of TV as a cause of some effect or another is the tone of mild helplessness that marks Jan Smith's closing paragraphs. If a Social Influence called television is assumed to be acting upon those social units we call 'our children' in some unique way that sets it apart from a host of other influences, then, with Ms Smith, we can indeed wonder what the educator should do about it. I see no alternative: The teacher must act like a Christian missionary amongst primitive tribesmen and save the children from themselves. He/she is required to train their scepticism, pointing out that American families don't all live lifestyles like those seen in *Family* and *Eight is*

Enough, or that the things that go on in hospitals and police stations are unlike what happens in *The Young Doctors* and *Policewoman*, or that we oughtn't think that the G.P. up the street is as wise and courageous as Marcus Welby. Unavoidably, the teacher-as-saviour must sharpen the children's suspicions, hoping that they will come to recognise there are differences between what applies in the fictive worlds of TV narratives and the real world in which the children spend their lives.

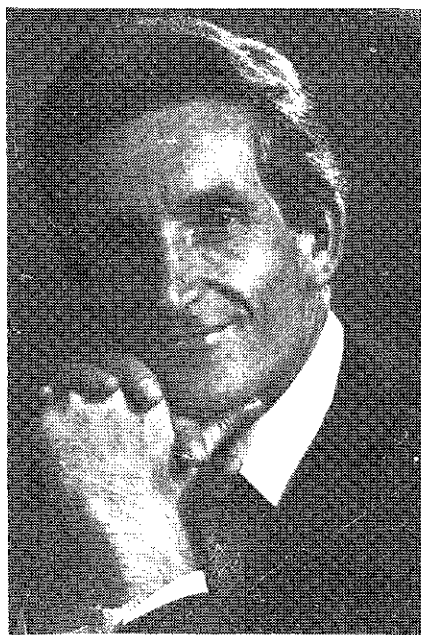
The trouble with this strategy is that, apart from its deadeningly negative character, it runs the risk of wasting everyone's time, for no better reason than that children seem pretty much aware of the distinction between fact and fiction without a crusading teacher's intervention. Children do appear to pick up a consciousness of what is true in reality and what is a fictional 'truth'. And when they might be confused, kids tend to adopt the eminently sensible course of asking an adult whether what they've seen is "real" or not. It is surely one criterion of a normal child's intellectual development that he or she progressively becomes more capable of making correct distinctions between the logic of everyday experience and the special logic that governs fictions and fantasies without continually calling on an adult's confirmation.

But even if we imagine a case where a teacher found a class * of kids who were incapable of separating fact from fiction, are the defensive lines of action I mentioned the *only* ones that ought to be adopted? Is that as far as the teacher's treatment of television should go — res-



cuing the children from their innocent but dangerous ignorance? I think not. For what the redemptive view of media teaching singularly neglects to touch on are certain far more immediate elements in children's television experiences — the formal patterns which are constitutive of the various dramas and comedies they choose to watch. Different kinds of series have different structures, styles and emphases. Different series have different sorts of characters in different types of relationships with each other. The heroes and heroines in television narratives are not all the same. Quincy and Jim Rockford may be akin in that each has a conscience and a concern for the truth, but they function in the respective series as different sorts of men-with-a-conscience. Frank Spencer is a comic figure, and so too is Judge Walter O. Franklin in *The Tony Randall Show*. But they are amusing in quite distinctive ways. *Bless This House* and *Happy Days* are both family-situation comedies. What does such a label imply about their narrative patterns, and does it mean that there are few differences between them? One way of grouping *M.A.S.H.*, *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* and *Barney Miller* together is on the basis of their 'family' structure; and we could include *Welcome Back Kotter* for much the same reason. Yet, true though that might be, those 'families' still function and interact differently.

Does anyone think that using statements and questions like these as a focus for talk about television is somehow irrelevant to viewers' experiences of the medium? It seems to me that they come very close to the heart of our cor-

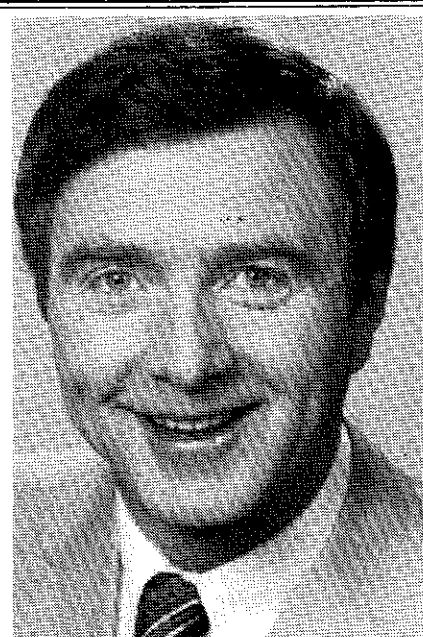


respondences with TV, serving to clarify what we think about what we see. However, positive and illuminating though discussions about the nature and form of television series can be, talk of this kind is excluded if a teacher's position is limited by the belief that viewers, whether children or adults, are being got at — mere passive targets for television's influences, manipulations and pressures, unwitting victims of a Power Structure conspiracy. The Television-as-a-Threat proponent is no more capable of dealing incisively with the formal specifics of television's dramas and comedies than a PLO guerilla is likely to enlighten us on the dynamics of Israeli folk dances.

But the siege conception of media teaching dismisses more than I have indicated so far. Whether the defensive forts are manned by educators from the Right or Left (there being little difference in tone between the Festival of Light's position on TV and the Student/Worker Alliance's), both must reject what, as an article of faith, I hold to be the validity of popular culture or of the "vulgar" tradition in the arts. If television in its common, commercial manifestations is kicked out the back door of the House of Intellect, then so too are popular magazines, paperback thrillers and romances, formula movies, comic books, mass-spectator sports like VFL football, and — to widen the historical perspective — radio serials and theatrical melodramas. To reject television as it is experienced and understood by the great bulk of people, children included, is to reject a whole history of popular forms which have meant a great deal within the private and corporate lives of generations of ordinary human beings.

I don't want that last statement to be read as a patronising of popular culture. The use made of popular or vulgar forms by the historical public, and the specific patterns those forms have taken over time, are complex: they represent an involved network of interrelationships which deserve to be taken seriously and treated without condescension. Certainly it is wholly proper for a teacher to talk with children about their contacts with popular culture, clarifying and legitimising their experiences of that culture. Amongst other things, such talk can open up the perception that the culture has a history which connects the children with the past. Your *Eight is Enough*; Mum's *Father Knows Best*; Grandma's *Martin's Corner* . . . This is what it is like for you now; that's what it was like for them then.

Yet this species of talk with kids, con-



centrating on specifics but opening out into a wider stream of interests, is languishing in the woodshed. And it's doomed to stay there while educators continue to see themselves as social/moral/political protectors, sharpening their swords with the latest empirical study on the effects of television on our children.

Jan Smith's article concluded by saying that the Annenberg Reports provided something she and other educators could at last get their teeth into. The famine, Jan, my love, has been of your own making. The very existence of popular forms offered a blow out banquet, but you kept looking the other way.

John C. Murray
State College of Victoria at Coburg

No set of comments like this would be complete without a bibliography. I offer the following modest list, and add the remark that there's not a statistical table or graph to be found in any of them.

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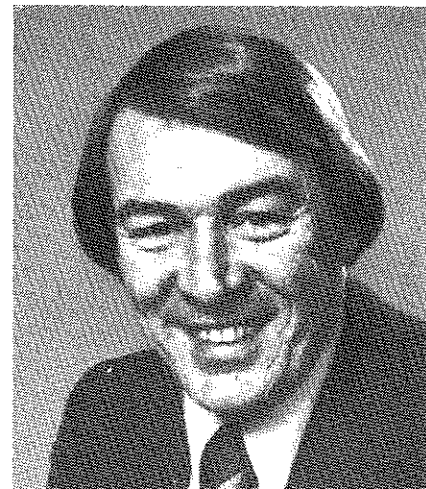
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STATS-JAN HITS BACK



Dear John,

Thank you for commenting on the lucidity of my article *Violence and Television* published in the last edition of **Metro**. Unfortunately, from the content of your response, it would seem that it was not as clear as I had wanted it to be.

When I heard of your intention to respond to my article I welcomed the promise of informed criticism. I was, however, a little disappointed that your criticism was largely based on an assumption about my underlying philosophy of media education and motivation for writing such an article and not on the actual material I presented.

Before responding to the issues you concentrated upon let me briefly reiterate the thrust of my article.

There is a growing general concern about the effects of televised violence on children and hence a growing pressure on educators to 'do something about it'. The point of my paper was to encourage teachers *not* to get bogged down with facts and figures purported to reveal the so-called effects and non-effects of televised violence, but, rather, to take a broader view of the role of television in our society. To this end, I introduced the Gerbner and Gross **Cultural Indicators Project** which is an attempt to consider the meaning of television in society from both the humanistic and social scientific viewpoints. I suggested that their findings and subsequent interpretation of the total message of television offers a far more valid starting point for television studies. The *assumption* you have made is that in doing so I believe and am suggesting that television is an evil force which must be fought to the last episode and against which our children must be protected. This could not be further from the truth and I support your criticisms of such an

approach.

However, I consider myself a realist, and, as such, am prepared to face the possibility that in television we not only have an agent of popular culture, and hence a tremendous resource, but also a potential agent of attitude and value formation of both individuals and the masses. I too, have enjoyed the writings of Newcomb and Gans, some of whose works you cited in your bibliography. The same Horace Newcomb has also written what is probably the most extensive criticism of the Annenberg Project (The Cultural Indicators Project). This criticism was published in **Communication Research**, Vol. 5, Number 3, July, 1978 and was called, "Assessing the Violence Profile Studies of Gerbner and Gross. A Humanistic Critique and Suggestion". In this criticism Newcomb has written "... the fictional worlds [of society] can be constituted around both negative and positive meanings; they can maintain themselves around repression as well as liberation. But I think it is more likely that most societies are radical mixtures of both. Symbol systems speak of both. Indeed, they speak of both simultaneously" (p.281). Surely realistic education can, and indeed should, expose children to both sides of an issue. Hence, I believe that media education can and should expose children to both the view of television which you propose *and* to the view that the television world is a distortion of reality.

I have little doubt that classroom teachers would join me in my reservations about your rather general statements concerning children's perceptions of facts and fantasies. Certainly children may accurately dismiss as unreal a particular incident portrayed on television, but whether children, or adults, dismiss as unreal the underlying

total message is, I believe, highly questionable. At this point, I can only refer you again to the work of Gerbner and Gross and also invite you to read the published criticisms of their research. I have already cited Newcomb's article. In addition, the 1977 Summer edition (Vol. 21, Number 3) of the **Journal of Broadcasting** was largely devoted to an appraisal of the project. I offer these references because I believe that we, too, should expose ourselves to both sides of an issue.

You expressed concern at the use of statistics in the discussion of television. Again let me quote Horace Newcomb whom you have cited in your bibliography and pointed out that in the cited work he did not include the use of statistics — "The usual dismissal of the Annenberg Projects as 'body counts' or 'number studies' are thoroughly insufficient whether offered by humanists or magazine journalists". (p.266). Any further comments in defence, or attack, of the use of statistics in the social sciences would only add to the already long-standing debate and would, I believe, be a misuse of the publication space of **Metro**.

The last paragraph of my article evoked a response from you on two occasions in your paper. I am happy to say that I feel far from helpless in my work as a media educator. I find the challenge of maintaining a balance in offering two sides of an issue to our children quite exciting. I did suggest in my last paragraph that the translation of this challenge into classroom experiences is yet another issue. I would be only too happy to write at greater length about the enjoyment and satisfaction that the teachers with whom I work, their students and myself derive from attempting to meet that challenge. (You spoke of 'talking to children'. Would

you not agree with me that talking with children is a sometimes useful but often limited source of learning experiences?)

In conclusion, John, let me say that I am sorry that in your last paragraph you could not resist the temptation to be patronising. This, I believe, was regrettable because the use of such a technique can only serve to limit the value and credibility of what could otherwise be seen as cool, questioning comment.

Jan Smith,
Media Advisor
All Hallows Primary School,
Fivedock N.S.W.

RUBBISH FOR LITTLE MINDS!

Editor,

The introduction to *Primary Program — Advertising* by Mr. Darby Munro (Metro No. 47), spurred me on to further explore how ads... "offer an effective means of encouraging aspects of critical thinking".

But, unfortunately the rest of the article didn't live up to this excellent opening. The author took himself and his commercials too seriously and then in a direction which I consider to be superficial.

It is already a sad fact that Australia is one of the most commercially conscious countries in the world, where "flogging" consumer goods on or off the T.V. screen is the most lucrative business to be in. At a time when community groups, educators and other concerned bodies are protesting against the excessive advertising in our daily media, especially on television, the author of this article wants us to maintain the status quo with the classroom exercises he prescribes.

His concern does not go beyond the immediate content or appearance of an advertisement. That's only a halfway mark in the educational process of the "acquisition of critical thinking".

While I tend to agree with some of his educational principles in acquiring language skills, I strongly reject his ideas of using commercials for this purpose, without exploring some facts about advertising. Isn't one of the aims of a beautifully shot, well directed, well casted, well researched and expensive television commercial to reduce the

human brain to an empty, greedy rubbish bin, into which you must pour all the products they tell you you must? (Is that really "cool"?)

In my experience, children very rarely take commercials seriously. Although, I don't doubt that in some cases their subconscious already belongs to the "manipulator's" power, when it comes to making a T.V. commercial they prefer to see it as a comical, satirical send-up, rather than a serious exercise. I feel that's due to their ability to be honest, critical, and perceptive. Why should we adult teachers work against these abilities and make them believe in a commercial fairyland before they even understand the full process?

It is known that television commercials in this country rarely exceed the one minute duration. We also know how they constantly interrupt any worthwhile film, documentary, news and etc. in every 5—8 minutes, hence interfering with our concentration power.

Kids watching hours of commercial television already display the symptoms of this process, i.e. they get bored by programmes using less high key presentation.

While we are concerned about "critical thinking", we should also consider all the distortions the commercials intrinsically portray. For example that the correct Australian family consists of two blonde haired children with young parents, driving Holden or Falcon cars and having Kellogg's Cornflakes for breakfast. Migrants are shown as "idiots" or funny harmless people, and, generally, all young Australians are physically beautiful and brought up on "Vegemite" and Coca Cola. Our mature women are mostly housewives prone to headaches, excessive cleanliness and are here to serve their children and husbands.

Shouldn't we question the content of these commercials as well as their effect on the community?

Seeking and understanding the truth about commercials and the way they work on us should be our first aim. Only after such a learning process should one consider attempting to follow, if one must, Mr. Darby Munro's suggested exercises.

Ivan Gaal
AVEC Film Unit

Darby Munro will reply in Metro 49. Darby, by the way, is studying for his Diploma in Educational Technology at Toorak SCV. He is on leave from the Catholic Education system after developing his valuable primary media programs at Sacred Heart, Mildura.

SUPER DE- NIRO SAVES AMERICA

The Editor,

Apparently God is back in heaven and still on America's side. In a grindingly humourless film, *The Deer Hunter*, the heretics of the left have been silenced.

Michael Cimino has directed America's God (curiously reticent of late) to rescue the country from the morass of truthfulness. A white, square-jawed saviour-soldier emerges like an argonaut from the furnaces of industrial America. Robert DeNiro. He sacrifices a deer to the lesser deity, Sport, and, blooded, moves into battle-greens to worship the much greater deity, Patriotism.

In a ceremony lasting two and a half hours and costing fourteen million, America cauterizes its guilt.

With Patriotism in this heaven, the enemy, once again, is *The Enemy*. That enemy is anything or anybody outside the Patriotic pall, which of course includes Vietnam. (Even the water in Vietnam is evil).

This film is the most offensive that I have ever seen. Not because it reeked of gratuitous violence, nor because it was viciously racist, and not even because of its ridiculous posturing with vacuous symbols... no, I've seen 'em all before and they alone are not going to disturb my sleep this time. The reason that *The Deer Hunter* has so deeply offended me is because it works. Audiences scream their delight as the heroes, starved and tortured by gibbering guards, shoot their way out against all the odds. A touch of post-mortem face bashing before they make their escape elicits no less delight.

Yes, *The Deer Hunter* does work. A simple-minded and brutal reaction against the pain of America's self-doubt is underway. *The Deer Hunter* and films like it which undoubtedly will follow, allow America to be vindicated by the soft myth of yet another superman, yet another hero beyond blame.

Do other Metro readers share my view that this is a film which should be studied closely in colleges where teachers are interpreting the signs of the times?

Stephen Bourke
North Fitzroy

Study Finds Stereotyping in TV Casts

By LES BROWN

Men are greatly overrepresented in television's dramatic programs in relation to the actual national population, and women, minorities, juveniles and the elderly are underrepresented, according to a study of network programming conducted for the Screen Actors Guild. A report on the study, based on the monitoring of 1,365 prime-time and Saturday-morning programs from 1968 through last year, was released yesterday.

The effect of television's representation of the society is to cultivate typecasting by age, sex and race and to reinforce social stereotyping, the report said.

The research, conducted by George Gerbner and Nancy Signorielli of the Annenberg School of Communications of the University of Pennsylvania, concludes that the effect of the stereotyping is to limit the opportunities of women and nonwhites to play serious roles. Beyond that, they maintained, television tends to foster such sexist notions in viewers, particularly children, that women should stay home and that men are better suited emotionally for politics.

Diminished Powers as an Issue

In the "world of television" dominated by males, masculine values and questions of power, the women's concerns are "marriage, romance and family," the study observed. "Benign roles, limited but agreeable fate and diminished powers are the favored role characteristics of women and minorities on prime-time television."

As for the elderly, the study found the more time people spent watching television the more they thought there were fewer older people around. It said:

"Television presents a rather gloomy picture of aging. Older persons are practically invisible. Elderly

women are also quite likely to be hurt or killed and to fail. Elderly characters are more likely to be cast as comic characters, to be treated with disrespect and to be portrayed as stubborn, eccentric or foolish."

"These patterns," according to the report, "are not the creation of single individuals or groups. They are the creation of a system of broadcasting and of storytelling with deep historical, cultural and commercial roots."

Central and Universal Storyteller

It goes on to say that television is the central and universal storyteller in our society and that it serves to cultivate in viewers the concepts of roles and values: "The message of all stories emerges from aggregate patterns of casting, characterization and fate."

The survey found men outnumbered women 3-to-1 in prime-time and Saturday-morning dramas, although males comprise 49 percent of the population. Blacks and Spanish-speaking people are underrepresented in proportion to their actual numbers, and whites get proportionately more leading roles than minorities. Moreover, the report said, "Weekend daytime children's programming both conceals and exaggerates the inequities reflected in prime time."

The study pointed out that although the largest real-life professional occupation for women was teaching, on prime-time, 59 percent of the teachers were men and 41 percent were women.

Additionally, more than half the characters in prime-time are in the 25-to-45 age group, and in reality that group represents 27 percent of the population. People under 19 comprise one-tenth the fictional population of television, but make up one-third the national population, and people over 65 are 11 percent of the actual population but 2.2 percent of the characters on television.

The study also found that television favored young girls and women under 30, and that in the older brackets women were more often portrayed as old than were men. "Among characters 65 and over," the report said, "28 percent of the men will still play settled adult roles with romantic possibilities and 72 percent will be cast as old, but 90 percent of women of the same chronological age will be cast as old."

Kathleen Nolan, president of the guild, said, "The world of TV is skewed through the underrepresentation of minorities and especially women, to the detriment of both actor and audience, a situation that the Screen Actors Guild finds unacceptable."

The networks declined to comment until their executives were able to study the findings, but one researcher said the research "conveniently" did not include daytime serial drama, a form of television that employs more women than men and portrays them in ways that are not stereotypical.

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