TELEVISION | JACK THOMAS

Programmed for violence

Public TV examines the networks

U of Penn. 6/70

Television's most appalling failure has nothing to do with its lack of imagination or the banal, repetitive rubbish that fills prime time night after night.

Television does the greatest disservice to viewers and to the nation as a whole by its refusal to confront overwhelming evidence that the millions of acts of violence depicted on television exert a debilitating effect upon viewers.

Daily exposure to brutality depersonalizes and desensitizes us. It subjects adults to fears and anxieties, and it subjects children to nightmares. It leaves us with an unrealistic perception about life, and in some cases it induces us to violence.

Just as cigarette smoking, toxic waste and acid rain are dangerous to physical health, violence on television is dangerous to mental health.

It's not a subject the commercial networks like to talk about.

But public television tackles the subject tonight in a one-hour documentary, "On Television: The Violence Factor" (in Boston on WGBH-TV, Ch. 2, at 10:30).

It's the first of a series of 13 hourlong programs that will examine television and its significance as teacher, marketplace, political arena, public information system, intercultural exchange, multifaceted art and servant to the public interest.

In answer to criticism of violence on television, the three networks are as deaf, dumb and blind as the tobacco industry.

When federal studies link cigarette smoking and cancer, the tobacco lobby covers its ears, closes its eyes and shakes its head.

That's what the networks do, too, as tonight's documentary shows.

They dismiss studies by the Surgeon General in 1972 and the National Institute for Mental Health in 1982 that con-

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Boston Globe

Lee Van Cleef, in NBC's "The Master," portrays the first American to learn Ninja, the deadly art of Oriental warriors.

William Shatner is dedicated detective in ABC police drama, "T.J. Hooker."

Lisa Eichhorn in CBS TV movie "The Wall."

Gladiators draw blood for sport in this episode of ABC miniseries "The Last Days of Pompeii."

Study: TV effects vary

PHILADELPHIA (AP) – A new study indicates sharp differences in the effect of television viewing on children of different social groups, with youngsters from more affluent homes suffering more academically from heavy television watching than disadvantaged students.

The findings, taken from a 1981 survey of more than 10,000 California sixth graders, were recently published in the Journal of Communication at the University of Pennsylvania.

The study showed the drop in academic performance among heavy television watchers was "greater and more consistent" among those from socially advantaged classes.

"Students who viewed more than six hours of television each day had sharply lower achievement scores in all three content areas (reading, writing, mathematics)," researcher Mark Fetler wrote in the article, "Television Viewing and School Achievement."

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state briefs

Study: TV evangelists don't hurt churches

PHILADELPHIA (AP) – People worried about the "erosion" of church attendance and financial contributions shouldn't blame television evangelists, according to researchers who conducted a two-year study of religion and TV.

Contrary to what many may feel, the researchers said, the growth of TV evangelism has not caused many people to stop attending or donating money to their local churches.

Television ministries have attracted millions of viewers, but those audiences are usually comprised of people with long-standing allegiance to organized religion, according to researchers from the University of Pennsylvania and the Gallup Organization of Princeton, N.J.

The researchers, working out of Penn's Annenberg School of Communications, were to release a report on their two-year study today.

FRONTIERS

RELIGION SCIENCE EDUCATION

The Round-the Clock Experts

IN the General Semantics magazine, *Et Cetera,* for last June, George Gerbner, a communications researcher, proposes that Television is "The New State Religion." He lists these characteristics of the medium (in the United States):

> Television consumes more time and attention of more people than all other media and leisure time activities combined. The television set is on for six hours and fifteen minutes a day in the average American home, and its sounds and images now fill the living space and symbolic world of most Americans.
>
> Unlike the other media, you do not have to wait for, plan for, go out to, or seek out television. It comes directly to you at home and is there all the time. It has become a member of the family, telling its stories patiently, compellingly, untiringly. Few parents, teachers, or priests can compete with its vivid demonstrations of what people of all kinds are like and how society works.
>
> Just as television requires no mobility, it requires no literacy. . . . Television now informs most people in the United States—many of its viewers simply do not read—and much of its information comes from what is called entertainment. . . . Television is truly a cradle-to-grave experience. . . . Only a minority of children and older age groups watch the few programs (none in "prime time") especially designed for them. . . .
>
> Television is essentially in the business of assembling heterogeneous audiences and selling their time to advertisers or other institutional sponsors. . . . Heavy viewers of television are more apprehensive, anxious, and mistrustful of others than light viewers in the same age, sex, and educational groups. The fear that viewing American television seems to generate, the consequent quest for security and protection by the authorities, the effective dissolution of autonomous publics, and the ease with which credible threats and scares can be used (or provoked) to justify almost any policy create a fundamentally new cultural situation. The new conditions of synthetic consciousness-making pose new problems, difficulties, and challenges for those who wish to realistically analyze or guide public understanding of society.

In a paper on the modernized poverty of consumerism—to be part of a book scheduled for publication next year—Ivan Illich comments broadly on the psycho-social effects of this "new cultural situation":

> Fifty years ago, most of the words which an American heard were personally spoken to him as an individual, or to somebody standing nearby. Only occasionally words reached him as the undifferentiated member of a crowd—in the classroom, church, rally or circus. Words were mostly like handwritten, sealed letters, unlike the junk that now pollutes our mails. Today, words that grope for one person's attention have become rare. Engineered staples of images, ideas, feelings, and opinions, packaged and delivered through the media, assault our sensibilities with round-the-clock regularity. Two points now become evident: (1) What occurs with language fits the patterns of an increasingly wide range of need-satisfaction relationships; (2) this replacement of convivial means by manipulative industrial ware is truly universal, and relentlessly makes the New York teacher, the Chinese commune member, the Bantu school boy, and the Brazilian sergeant alike.

Both George Gerbner and Ivan Illich would, we suspect, see an almost direct connection between this need-and-consumption-dominated regime of synthetic consciousness and the concerted attack on the dietary changes recommended for Americans in a report prepared by the Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human needs. The proposed diet reforms are given in a *Manchester Guardian* report (Sept. 4):

> —increase complex carbohydrate (vegetables, fruits, grains) consumption to account for 55 to 60 per cent of caloric intake.
>
> —reduce over-all fat consumption from approximately 40 per cent to 30 per cent.
>
> —reduce saturated fat consumption to account for about 10 per cent of total calories; and balance that with polyunsaturated and mono-saturated fats, which should account for about 10 per cent of calories each.
>
> —reduce cholesterol consumption to about 300 milligrams a day.
>
> —reduce sugar consumption by about 40 per cent to account for about 25 per cent of total calories.
>
> —reduce salt consumption by 50 to 85 per cent.

What can be wrong with this modestly sensible program?

> First, the cattle producers protested because the goals recommended reducing the consumption of meat and increasing the consumption of fish and poultry. Then the sugar interests said the recommendation for reducing the intake of sugar by 40 per cent had no scientific basis.
>
> The National Canners' Association is upset because the report suggests using fresh and frozen instead of canned vegetables.
>
> The egg producers had their say: the nutrition committee heard from them that cholesterol levels are not lowered by a reduction in egg consumption.
>
> The most sweeping attack on the dietary goals, however, came from the American Medical Association. The AMA said they should not be adopted because there is no proof that diet is related to disease and, besides, changing American eating habits might lead to economic dislocation. The National Dairy Council endorsed the AMA's statement.

What are the elements of this situation? Obviously, there are the good experts and the bad experts. The good experts have our ear and our agreement, but the bad experts are retained by the media and therefore control a large part of the public mind.

How shall we replace the dominance of bad experts with the persuasion of good experts? Since intelligence and discrimination are decisive in achieving the common good, persuasion and example are the only available means. Social pressure (of the sort the town meeting once exerted) is not available in a mass society. Coercion never works in matters where intelligence must rule. No one has ever successfully legislated intelligence into authority by political activity alone. One can sometimes legislate the *result* of intelligence, but only after general understanding and assent have been achieved.

TV in the court: the debate grows hotter

By PETER W. KAPLAN
New York Times News Service

The image was one that no one who saw it would forget: the courtroom where six men were on trial for raping a woman on a pool table in a New Bedford, Mass., bar.

The case, unlike many rape cases, became a national event. The television lens in the courtroom cast an image into the millions of sets reached by the Cable News Network, which televised the proceedings. Although the matter of televising trials had been intensively debated before the trial, no case had as yet dramatized the matter as this one did.

The debate moved on past Massachusetts, as television — which as a medium finds nothing more comfortable than to repeat what it has just done succesfully — looked for more trials that might be in synch at least with the public's fascination. And at the center of the debate was the question: Should rape trials be televised?

The opening up of trials to a gallery outside the courtroom first became a matter of dispute before the electronic age. In 1937, in reaction to the photographers' mobbing of the Bruno Hauptman trial in the kidnapping of Charles Lindbergh's infant son, the American Bar Association entered into its Canon of Professional Ethics a passage stating that the taking of photographs in the courtroom and the broadcasting of court proceedings "are calculated to detract from the essential dignity of the proceedings."

Although the passage had no legal effect, members of the bar association worked to enact its principle into state law and court regulations in many states. One of the sharpest restatements of the association's position came when, in 1965, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the fraud conviction of the financier Billy Sol Estes, saying that Estes had not received a fair trial in Texas because the proceedings had been televised. "The evil of televised trials," Chief Justice Earl Warren wrote, "lies not in the noise and appearance of the cameras, but in the trial participants' awareness that they are being televised."

The court's decision was influential. A poll of 483 judges in 1976 showed that 92 percent did not want cameras in their courtrooms. But then, in 1977, the state of Florida, in an experiment, allowed the televising of the murder case in which 15-year old Ronny Zamora was the defendant. Television technology, with the advent of small cameras that needed no additional lighting, had come into a new age of unobtrusiveness, and in an extensive two-year experiment, the State of Florida found the televising of trials compatible with its judicial system. More states began allowing cameras into their courtrooms. In 1981, in a reversal of its decision in the Billy Sol Estes case, the Supreme Court accepted the televising of trials.

When the Cable News Network brought its cameras into the New Bedford rape case, which was tried in nearby Fall River, Mass., the proceedings turned into a daily event for many. But when the name of the defendant was mentioned in open court, on the air, and several news organizations reprinted it, opponents of broadcast trials felt that their worst suspicions had been confirmed.

Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa., held extensive subcommittee hearings on the issue this spring after the trial, and the debate entered a new stage.

Opponents of broadcasting rape and other sex-crime trials say that the press is free to cover the trials. They are concerned, however, with the danger of . . . creating an emotional response among viewers that might have unfavorable repercussions on the participants.

"Some hard thinking has to be done in protecting the rights of witnesses and defendants," Specter said. If this could be achieved, he added, "it would be highly desirable to televise rape cases, child-abuse cases and other crimes."

Those who agree with him think that the failure of the Cable News Network technical crew to make use of television's seven-second delay capability to delete the rape victim's name was harmful to their cause. But most voice some version of Specter's belief that the televising can be "adequately structured to protect rights of the participants."

"I don't think the presence of a camera has any real meaning," the senator has said. "I think the defendants will generally act as though it's not there."

Susan Brownmiller, who has written on both rape and women's issues, agrees with Specter and believes that there is a cleansing effect in the televising of sex-crime trials because, in her view, such trials can present the crime as a matter of criminal evil and not of the victim's shame.

Steve Nevas, a former counsel to the National Association of Broadcasters, Engineers and Technicians who now works for CNN, contends that the depiction of the judicial process is one of the great services that television can perform. "Judges are accustomed to making their own rules, and trial lawyers want to control the atmosphere in courtrooms, but if there is no per se violation because of the presence of the camera, it should be permitted," he said.

Opponents of broadcasting rape and other sex-crime trials say that the press is free, as it always has been, to cover the trials. They are concerned, however, with the danger of turning the courtroom into a forum and creating an emotional response among viewers that might have unfavorable repercussions on the participants. Critics are also anxious about the effect of television on the judicial process.

Although there are those who think, as Specter does, that the general courtroom scrutiny provided by television would involve the public in a healthy way, adversaries of broadcasting trials believe, as does Dr. George Gerbner, dean of the School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania, that "because of the potential dramatic appeal of the most notorious kind of trials, they can become the kind of affairs that executions were in medieval times, that are enormously entertaining."

CNN recently asked permission from Judge Aviva Bobb in California to broadcast the pretrial hearings in the McMartin Preschool child molestation case in Los Angeles, in which seven people were accused of sex crimes against 18 students in the Manhattan Beach, Calif., school.

Ed Turner, senior vice president of CNN, said that the network prepared a videotape, for the court, setting out its technological safeguards — including its seven-second delay capability, its backup recorders and a policy whereby bureau chiefs watching the hearing would make sure that no names got out.

Nevertheless, Bobb refused to allow any television in the courtroom except to televise exchanges between lawyers and the judge, the summations and the judge's decision. The network had a strong desire to broadcast the testimonies of the child witnesses. Bobb, however, is refusing them the opportunity, which Turner says "strips the story of its value as a live event."

Affluent children hurt more by television, study suggests

A new study indicates that youngsters from affluent families may suffer more academically from heavy television watching than do poor youngsters.

The findings, taken from a 1981 survey of more than 10,000 California sixth graders, were published recently in the University of Pennsylvania's Journal of Communication. "Affluent homes are more likely to contain books, magazines, stimulating games and parents who encourage their children to read, do homework and do well in school," the report said. "The more time spent watching television in these homes, the less time could be spent in activities that sharpen skills relevant to success in school."

For children of less affluent families, the study found that a moderate amount of television watching provided some intellectual stimulation by exposing the students to new ideas and vicarious experiences that could help the children academically.

In the case of Pakistan, the scheme was uncovered in time to prevent shipment of the krytrons outside the country in violation of U.S. export controls. In the case of Israel, however, the scheme apparently began in 1981 and remained undetected until last January, with the result that 810 krytrons are now in the hands of the Israeli defense ministry. U.S. officials have publicly accepted Israeli claims that the krytrons were intended for use in tests of nonnuclear weapons, such as lasers and antitank projectiles. Privately, they are skeptical that such a large number could be needed for such tests. Efforts are under way to reclaim roughly 400 of the devices, all that the Israelis say they can presently lay their hands on.

Leonard Spector, a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and a specialist on nonproliferation, said that despite the discovery of this scheme early this year, the Reagan Administration has since "agreed to establish a free trade zone with Israel, to provide it advanced technology for the Lavi fighter, and to allow it to participate in the R&D phase of the Strategic Defense Initiative." According to Gerard Smith, an ambassador at large for nonproliferation under President Carter, these actions expose the United States to charges that it has followed a double standard by failing to seek punitive sanctions similar to those applied to other proliferators. "Here's a case where we've had lots of early warning. We have acquiesced in this program and . . . you may be sure we'll hear" about it in Geneva.

Archelaus Turrentine, deputy assistant director of the bureau of nuclear weapons control at the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, responded that although "the United States is obviously very concerned about the Israeli nuclear program and nuclear capability . . . private, quiet diplomacy is frequently more effective than public posturing." He added that a variety of nuclear issues and concerns had been discussed with the Israelis "at senior levels."

Along with others at the symposium, Turrentine agreed that the United States will face "an extensive and tough debate" in Geneva over compliance with a provision of the treaty that commits the superpowers to substantial limitation of their nuclear arsenals. Frustrated by the lack of progress in this area, the delegation from Sweden is apparently planning to offer an amendment to the treaty that sets a specific timetable for weapons reductions. The delegation from Japan is expected to push for a reduction in the existing limit on nuclear test yields. The Reagan Administration is working furiously behind the scenes to dissuade both groups.

Turrentine says that the Administration's goals at the conference will be modest: "To seek a reaffirmation of the treaty and to preserve as positive an attitude toward it as possible." Smith, however, believes that the U.S. delegation will be entirely preoccupied with mere "damage limitation."

—R. JEFFREY SMITH

TV Scientists

More Good Than Bad

Scientists are warmer and more attractive, but less sexy, than other professionals, and they are rational beings. They tend to be a bit older and "stranger" compared to other professionals and they carry with them a more foreboding image "touched with a sense of evil, trouble, and peril." At least that is the portrait of fictional scientists conveyed by television, according to a University of Pennsylvania study reported at the AAAS meeting.

The findings were reported at a panel discussion on the image of science and scientists on television and in film. The participants included Leonard Nimoy, who plays Mr. Spock in the "Star Trek" movie series.

On the whole, scientists come across with a positive image in prime time television, according to the study, which was headed by George Gerbner, dean of the university's School of Communications and was funded by the National Science Foundation. The study was based on a review of 2 years of prime time television and a national survey of more than 1600 people.

For example, for every villainous scientist in a major role, there are five virtuous ones. The image of physicians fares even better. "Television doctors are the most valued characters in prime time," the report stated. For every bad doctor, 19 are good. (For every bad law enforcer, 40 are portrayed as good.) Curiously, television scientists are killed more often compared to soldiers, private investigators, and the police.

In films, science and innovation are rarely a central theme, according to Syracuse University researchers. George Comstock and Ni Yang found that only about 4 pecent of the films made between 1938 and 1984 dealt with these two subjects based on a sampling of 6700 films. More often, film-makers made use of the products of innovation or fantasized about them in science fiction movies.

Nimoy, who both directs and acts in the Star Trek films, says that he strives for scientific credibility and, in fact, has personally interviewed scientists from Harvard and Massachusetts Institute of Technology and other campuses to get ideas. But, he says, entertainment is the primary goal.

An official from the National Broadcasting Company, J. Ronald Milavsky, told the audience not to worry about the image of scientists on television, which is a positive one, he said. Instead, scientists should be more concerned about informing the public about science. "There is a great scarcity of people to communicate it to the public," he said. "Scientists need to get involved in the production of news reports. There is considerable interest in science and technology."

Whether scientists are interested in their image or the depiction of science in the arts is unclear. Out of about 150 people who attended the panel discussion, only about 15 scientists were present by a show of hands.

—MARJORIE SUN

Biotechnology

Focus on Viruses

With the help of genetic engineering, scientists are now trying to exploit certain properties of viruses to produce a broad range of commercial products for agriculture and medicine. Farmers eventually may replace some chemical pesticides with genetically modified viruses that are toxic to pests, and pharmaceutical companies may use viruses as biological factories to produce drugs such as interferon, according to scientists who spoke at a session on biotechnology at the AAAS meeting. So far, most commericial development in biotechnology has focused on the use of bacteria rather than viruses.

A key to the development of products based on the manipulation of viruses is whether they can be safely released into the environment, an issue that some scientists at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are beginning to address.

Of the wide range of viruses that commonly exist in nature, one type of virus,

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TELEVISION HOMOGENIZES POLITICAL BELIEFS OF HEAVY VIEWERS, SAYS PENN RESEARCHER

Whether they claim to be liberal or conservative, Americans who watch a lot of television share similar political views on a variety of issues ranging from taxation to crime.

By creating a mainstream of political thought among heavy viewers, television has created a "New Populism," says Dr. George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania. His report on how television influences the politics of viewers appears in the Oct. 20 issue of TV Guide magazine.

According to Gerbner, television's heaviest viewers constitute a media-induced political mainstream. "In short, television is blurring traditional orientations and shifting the way people define themselves politically," he said.

This homogenized group of "New Populists," says Gerbner, often expresses opinions that are inconsistent and paradoxical.

"New Populists think like conservatives, want like liberals and call themselves moderates," he said. "They shun what they see as 'extremism' but demand harsher verdicts -- although not the death penalty -- in the most jail-happy criminal justice system in the civilized world. They hate revolts, except tax revolts. They want to cut taxes but improve education, medical care and social security. They distrust Big Government but want it to fix

(MORE)

the economy, make the streets safe for their daughters and the world safe for democracy.

"New Populists scorn 'the establishment,'" Gerbner continued, "but dote on the rich and famous. They graciously permit women to work both inside and outside the home, and allow that minorities have made some progress, but resent and resist any loss of privilege. They praise freedom but fear anyone who uses it in an unconventional way. They are losing confidence in people who run virtually all institutions, including religion, but express trust in God, America -- and television."

Responses to numerous surveys of men and women of various racial groups, economic status and education levels have confirmed television's ability to moderate the views of individuals who define themselves as liberal or conservative. These heavy viewers, who watch more than four hours of television daily, are likely to share the same perceptions of the world, Gerbner said. "Regardless of their race, gender or social-economic status, heavy viewers tend to think like each other."

Research by Gerbner and his colleagues showed:

* Heavy television viewing results in a more sexist outlook among those who call themselves liberals

* However, television's mainstreaming effect is also seen in a small group of highly prejudiced individuals who are less sexist as result of heavy viewing

* Heavy viewers representing both low-income and high-income groups are more likely than light viewers to regard themselves as ordinary working people of "average" income

* Republicans who watch a lot of television are more likely than light viewers to say they are moderate rather than conservative in viewpoint

Also, the researchers found that heavy viewers are more likely than light viewers to oppose communism, homosexuality, abortion and legalizing marijuana.

(MORE)

"The difference in political orientation between light and heavy viewers is most apparent among self-described liberals who are generally the most distant from the television mainstream," said Gerbner. "Far from being a liberal conspiracy, television viewing signals the virtual collapse of the liberal stand on political, but not economic, issues."

According to Gerbner, these research findings relate to the common needs of television producers, advertisers and political parties. Because each must appeal to the broadest possible audience, the creators of TV programs construct a symbolic world that appeals to a large group of people with a wide range of social views.

"In each case," he said, "this shared need means shunning political (and most other) extremes, presenting conventional consumer values and striving for a safe, respectable, middle-of-the-road balance in most things.

"Thus, television tends to blend otherwise divergent social orientations -- and to modify political extremes -- by pulling them into the current of its own broad mainstream."

PERSONALS/ LEAH GARCHIK

UPI Telephoto

LUCKY SURVIVOR: Five-year-old Jimmy Tontlewicz had his hair brushed by Caroline Brenner, his teacher at the Tikvah Institute for Childhood Learning Disabilities in Chicago, before the boy appeared on the CBS Morning News yesterday. In January, Tontlewicz was rescued from Lake Michigan after being submerged under the ice for 20 minutes. Doctors plunged the boy into a weeklong drug-induced coma while he thawed out. By April, he was well enough to leave the hospital, although he suffers from visual and learning problems.

FINDINGS

Feeding the Mouth That Bites You

The July issue of Consumers Digest reports that if you think you're doing your dog or cat good by investing in, for example, all-beef or tuna pet food, you're wrong. A diet too rich in protein will make the pet fat, hyperactive, and wear out its kidneys.

The magazine recommends switching from canned food (which may cost as much as $5.84 per pound of nutritious dry content) to good dry food (which costs something like 15 cents per pound of nutritious dry content).

Be sure the package indicates that the pet food is labeled "complete and balanced."

Machismo Dies Hard

The official Cuban news agency, Prensa Latina, reports that despite Fidel Castro's best efforts to equalize the sexes in Cuba, there is still "a big gap between the theoretical equality in the family code and practice."

Although many a Cuban woman has marched out of her kitchen and into the workforce, her place at the stove has not been filled by her husband 50 percent of the time, as mandated by a 1969 family code.

Things are changing, Prensa Latina said; after 25 years, Cuban men have just begun to ask for "time to learn how" to help with the chores of housekeeping.

Watch Out

A University of Pennsylvania study of 10,000 California sixth-graders has determined that heavy TV viewing is more harmful to children from affluent homes than it is to the disadvantaged.

The adverse affect is probably due to the magazines, books and other stimulations that are ignored when a child in a middle-class environment turns to the tube habitually.

"Students who viewed more than six hours of television each day had sharply lower achievement scores in all three content areas (reading, writing, mathematics)," the study found.

Gelişim İçin İletişim

Gelişmekte olan ülkeler ya da topluluklar, dışarıdan tek yönlü akan veri selinin kültür baskısı altında koyun sürüsü gibi sadece "alıcı" durumda kalıyorlar. Ve toplulukları istedikleri doğrultuda yönlendiriyorlar. Ulusal bir yitim bu elbet.

AYSELİ USLUATA *Boğaziçi Üni. Öğretim Üyesi*

İletişim (komünikasyon) araçlarının ekonomik ve toplumsal gelişmeyi desteklemek üzere kullanılmalarını amaçlayan "gelişme iletişimi" bugün iletişim bilimlerinin ayrı bir bilim dalı olarak ilgi görüyor ve üzerinde araştırmalar yapılıyor. Belirli bir toplumu, hazırlanan geliştirme programı doğrultusunda, eğitmek, güdülemek, hareketlendirmek için elektronik olan ya da olmayan, yayın yapan ya da yapmayan tüm iletişim araçlarının kullanılmalarına gelişim için iletişim deniliyor. Genel anlamda gelişme iletişimi "gelişmemiş" toplumların ya da toplumsal düzenlerin "gelişmesi"ne yol açan etkileme diye de tanımlanıyor. Burada kullanılan kavramların ayrı ayrı irdelenmeleri konuya açıklık getirme yönünden yararlı olabilir.

GELİŞME SÜRECİNİ HIZLANDIRMA

İletişimi "bildirilerle etkileşim olayı" diye tanımlayan Prof. George Gerbner bildirileri kurumların paketlediğini, araçların düzenlediğini, teknolojilerin de bilinçlere yaydığını belirtiyor(1). Tanım iletişimin tek yönlü bir akıştan çok karşılıklı bir değerler, ilişkiler alışverişi olduğunu gösteriyor. Gelişme kavramından da biyolojik bir evrim, bir olgunlaşma, içten gelen bir değişim, kısacası çok yönlü bir büyüme, ilerleme olayı anlaşılıyor.

Ekonomik gelişmenin özü, toplumun ekonomik üretkenliğinde aranırken, toplumsal değişme temelde eğitime dayanıyor. Eğitim ise niteliği gereği yavaş bir süreçtir, çünkü kişilerin, kişiliklerin yeniden biçimlendirilmeleri uzun zaman gerektiriyor. Çağdaş iletişim teknolojileri ise ekonomik ve toplumsal gelişme programlarının üretkenliğini ve etkinliğini arttırarak, kişilerin temel hakları olan bilgi edinme olanaklarını yükselterek, gelişme sürecini hızlandırıyorlar.

Gelişim için iletişim araçları radyo, televizyon, uydular, görsel ve işitsel kaset kayıtları, bilgisayarlar, basın, grafik, bilgi yayan ve alan tüm araçlardır. Geleneksel iletişim türleri olan yüz yüze iletişim, tiyatro, kukla gösterileri de gelişim için kullanılan iletişim araçlarıdırlar. Gelişim iletişiminin yazılımı da eğitimi amaçlayan içerik, bildiri biçimi oluşturuyor. Kitle iletişim araçlarının değişiklik yaratmadaki somut işlevlerini W. Schramm şöyle açıklıyor: "Değişmenin gereği, ne tür değişikliklerin gerçekleştirilebileceği üzerine bilgi iletişimle verilir.

Var olan tutumlara, yeni düşüncelere uyarlanmanın, yeni türde bir şeyler yapmanın yararları, yolları, yöntemleri üzerine bilgi yine iletişimle sağlanır. İletişim araçları yeniliği kullanmaya yönelik kararlar aldırarak değişikliği kabul ettirirler; ayrıca, kişiler arasında ya da önderlerle kişiler arasında kanal açma işlevini de görürler. Kabul edilen değişikliklerin başarıya ulaşması için gerekli beceriler yine iletişim araçlarınca öğretilebilir" (2).

KOYUN SÜRÜSÜ GİBİ...

İnsanoğlunun bilincini, toplumsal davranışlarını doğrudan, en güçlü biçimde etkileyebilen iletişim teknolojisi bugün sanayinin kültür kolları olarak geniş çağdaş kitleleri, bir başka deyimle, kitle kamusunu yaratıyor. Gücü elinde tutanlar bildiri üretiyor ve bunları kendi çıkarlarına, kendi amaçlarına kullanıyorlar. Kentteki yoksullar, kırsal yörelerdeki yalıtlanmış (tecrit edilmiş) kesim, gönenç (refah) içindeki kişilerin ürettikleri gönenç kültürünü, seyirci olarak, paylaşıyorlar. "Gelişmişlerin" kültürü sessiz çoğunluğa tek yönlü veriliyor, ucuz eğlence sağlanıyor. Gelişmekteki ülkeler ya da topluluklar dışarıdan tek yönlü akan veri selinin kültür baskısı altında koyun sürüsü gibi salt alıcı durumunda kalıyorlar. İletişim ussal yaşamın besleyicisi olurken uyandırabiliyor ya da uyutabiliyor. İletişim teknolojisinin İran devrimine neden olduğu söyleniyor. Gelişmiş ülkeler, uluslararası kuruluşlar gelişmemiş ülkelere ya da topluluklara (alt kültür dediğimiz topluluklara) sürekli geliştirme yüklemesi yapıyorlar. Bunu yapmak için de ellerindeki en güçlü araçları kullanıyorlar.

Bir ülkedeki alt düzen için, alt kültürler, azınlık kültürleri için dışarıdan hazırlanan projelerin ardındaki beklentilerin sorgulanması gerekir. Kimin için, kime uygun bir gelişme iletişimi amaçlanıyor? Gelişme adına çalışmalar, geliştirme çabaları neden böylesine yoğunluk kazanıyor? Gelişme sonucu ne tür insanların ortaya çıkması isteniyor? Bu soruların yanıtlanması özellikle dışarıda kültür olan gelişmekte toplumlar için zorunludur. Kitle iletişim araçları ulusal kalkınmada toplumsal gelişmeyi gerçekleştiriyorlar; ancak, "gelişmişlerin" kültürleriyle kurulan köprüler tek yanlı işliyor ve bir kültür saldırısıyla karşı karşıya kalınıyor. Başka kültürlerin gelenekleri, inançları kişilerin ufuklarını genişletebiliyor, aşılanan ulaşılması olanaksız ve gereksiz beklentilerle de bir gelişme atmosferi yaratılabiliyor. Oysa, gerçek gelişme iki yönlü bir iletişim içinde belirlenir, toplumun karar verdiği yönde saptanan siyasayla gerçekleştirilir.

DIŞARDAN ALMA PROGRAMLAR YERİNE...

Gelişme süreci her toplumun geçmişini, en iyi geleneklerini yeniden yaratacak eylemleri, temel kişi gereksinimlerini karşılayacak eylemleri içermelidir. Toplumsal düzenlerin yeniliklere uyarlanmasını, yeniliklerle özdeşlik kazanmasını üretilecek bildirişimler sağlar. Bildiriler tek başlarına kişileri değiştiremezler; bildirilerin kültür temeline, yaşam biçimine, beğenilere uygun türde üretilmeleri, geri bildirimlerle de yeniden üretilmeleri gerekir. Kırsal yörelerin yalıtılmışlıkları giderilecek, kentlere yakınlaşmaları sağlanacaksa, iletişime bir bilgi paylaşma eylemi olarak bakmak gerekir. Bugün gelişmekteki ülkelerin gazetecilik okulları gelişim için eğitim programına ağırlık vererek bildiriler ile geliştirme programlarının, dışarıdan gelmesi yerine, içerde hazırlanmasına çalışıyorlar. Bu okullarda öğrencilere kırsal yörelerde tüketilecek haber verme yöntemleri öğretiliyor. Toplumun gelişmesine yönelik düşünce ve değerlerin o topluma yabancı olmayan, o toplumun kültürünü paylaşan kişilerce iletilmesi amaçlanıyor. Topluma yararlılık ilkesi bir kez saptanınca, gelişme için iletişimde iki hedef belirlenebilir: Gelişmeyi amaçlayan iletişim sorunlarının öğrenilmesi ile kırsal kesimlerde uygulamalı çalışmaların yapılması.

SONUÇ

Geliştirme programları, gelişmekteki toplumlar için, isteseler de istemeseler de, dışarıda hazırlanıyor ve oluşturulan bildiriler çağdaş iletişim araçlarıyla, şu ya da bu yoldan, en yalıtılmış topluluklara, en uzak yörelere iletiliyorlar. Bunun bilincine vararak, toplumların gelişme iletişimini benimseyip, gelişme programlarını kendi saptadıkları amaçlar doğrultusunda bildirişimlerle hazırlamaları zorunludur. İletişim teknolojisi kırsal yörelerde hem yaşam niteliğini hem de kırsal ekonominin etkinliğini yükseltebilecek güçtedir. Gecikmeden, geleceğe dönük çalışmalarla, kendi toplumumuz içinde gelişim için iletişimi kurmalıyız.

(1) George Gerbner, "Cultural Indicators" in **Communications Technology and Social Policy**, New York, 1973, s. 558.

(2) W. Schramm, **The Process and Effects of Mass Communication**, Univ. of Illinoise Press, 1971, s. 757.

Ayseli Usluata
BOĞAZİÇİ ÜNİVERSİTESİ
P. K. 2 BEBEK - İSTANBUL – Turkey
ÖN - LİSANS YÜKSEK OKULU MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ

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1984?

Why TV Won't Let Up on Violence

By SALLY BEDELL SMITH

"Violence is alive and well on television," Steven Bochco, executive producer of "Hill Street Blues," said in a recent interview. Mr. Bochco, whose award-winning dramatic series has been praised for its sensitive, albeit gritty depiction of the world of urban police, was speaking partly in jest. But his words are as true as they have ever been.

Yet, there appears to be a difference in the quality, variety and pervasiveness of today's televised violence. Some observers believe that as a result of more than three decades of television, viewers have developed a kind of immunity to the horror of violence. By the age of 16, for example, the average young person will have seen some 18,000 murders on television. One extension of this phenomenon may be an appetite for more varied kinds of violence on television. "On the basis of the amount of exposure, certain things that initially would have been beyond the pale become more readily accepted," says David Pearl, director of the National Institute of Mental Health's project on television violence.

In this television season, violence has been more prevalent than in recent years, in large measure because there are fewer situation comedies and more action series — with the addition of such shows as "Hunter" and "Miami Vice" on NBC, "Cover Up" on CBS and "Street Hawk" on ABC. But also because some 25 million of the nation's 84.9 homes with television now receive at least one of the four principal pay cable services — Home Box Office, Cinemax, Showtime and The Movie Channel — which routinely show uncut feature films containing graphic violence as early as 8 in the evening.

However, observers have also noted changes in the way violence is depicted on network television programs. On the one hand, more violent acts in television programs today occur with machine guns and other sophisticated weaponry than they once did, and even on critically acclaimed shows such as "Hill Street Blues" violence now occurs with a greater intensity and realism than in shows of a decade ago. In addition, more action series these days are laced with jokes or gags that occasionally crop up in juxtaposition with violent acts. There is also less distinction between heroes and villains, and more violent acts are committed by people with psychological problems. And on cable television, an increasing number of feature films intertwining sex and violence are finding their way into the home.

Moreover, a new form of television, the music video — rock music illustrated by video images — is also being examined by social scientists who say they detect a new form of violence without even the tenuous dramatic context of many standard television series. According to researchers, many such videos — largely seen on MTV Music Television, the 24-hour cable channel, but available on broadcast programs as well — are saturated with images of menace, cruelty and implied brutality as well as detached and often cold portrayals of violence against people and property.

Documentation of some shifts in the character of violence on the three broadcast networks is emerging from a new study of 500 television programs over the past 30 years by the Center for Media and Public Affairs, a non-profit research center in Washington, D. C., that is underwritten by a number of educational institutions, including Columbia University and Smith College. "The data are preliminary, but we are finding that in the past three decades the nature of violence on television has changed," says Linda Lichter, co-director of the center.

These trends are coming to the fore two years after the National Institute of Mental Health issued its report stating that a connection exists between the viewing of media violence and aggressive and violent behavior in children. Only last Sep-

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Continued from Page 1

tember, the Attorney General's Task Force on Family Violence concluded that "the evidence is becoming overwhelming that just as witnessing violence in the home may contribute to normal adults and children learning and acting out violent behavior, violence on TV and movies may lead to the same result."

In October, Senator Arlen Specter, Republican of Pennsylvania and chairman of the Subcommittee on Juvenile Justice, held hearings on the effect of television violence on children. Once again, new studies were presented that pointed to a link between televised violence and real-life violence.

Even Hollywood producers acknowledge that a problem exists. In a 1983 survey of 100 top television writers and producers conducted by the Center for Media and Public Affairs, 60 percent of the respondents said they thought there was too much violence on television.

Yet, ABC, CBS and NBC continue to counter that while some aggressive behavior has been linked to television viewing, violent behavior has not and that television cannot be singled out in an environment that includes films, books and other influences. The networks' position is backed by some in the research community who contend that only young boys with certain predispositions could be made aggressive by televised violence; other social scientists support the networks by saying that watching violence can be cathartic in its providing a vicarious outlet for hostile impulses.

•

According to George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania, the average level of violence in prime-time television has remained relatively consistent — at five or six violent acts per hour — in the 17 years he has been studying its incidence. Nevertheless, the networks acknowledge that viewers are likely to find more shows with violent content this year. "Because there are more action shows, there is a greater awareness and concern with respect to the volume of violence," said Alfred R. Schneider, vice president of policy and standards for ABC Inc.

More than actual volume, it is the kind of violence coming through the television screen that is gaining the attention of researchers and critics alike. One of the principal developments as revealed in the Media Institute's study is the increasing sophistication of the weaponry. The simple gunfight of the past has been augmented, according to Mrs. Lichter, by "high-tech crimes like terrorist bombings." To Mrs. Lichter, today's televised violence, "may be a lot meaner. A gunfighter shooting down a sheriff is one thing. When you have terrorist bombs, the potential is there for hundreds to die."

Programs in the past used the occasional machine gun, but such weapons as the M-60 machine gun and Uzi semi-automatic have become commonplace today on such shows as NBC's "The A-Team" and "Miami Vice." On the same network's science-fiction series "V" earth-dwellers use military-style arms against the laser guns of alien invaders. And on CBS's "Airwolf" a supercharged helicopter packs enormous firepower.

Moreover, in "The A-Team," a show about a group of vigilantes who are Vietnam War veterans, military hardware is used extensively without killing anyone. In one episode set in Africa that will be shown later this season, 15 varieties of guns are used, according to Michael May, one the coordinating prop masters for Stephen J. Cannell Productions, producer of the series. "The A-Team has more guns than any show I have done in 19 years," says Mr. May. "We like to use state-of-the-art stuff like the Steyr Aug, which is a carbine that is so far out it's hard to describe."

In Mr. Gerbner's view, the approach taken by "The A-Team" poses the problem of "an uninterrupted sequence of violence as a solution to almost any problem — an emotionless, sanitized violence." Network officials contend, however, that viewers are too sophisticated to take shows such as "The A-Team" seriously. "It is recognized for what it is — a real 'Perils of Pauline' show," says Ralph Daniels, vice president of broadcast standards for NBC. "Sure it is militaristic, but who believes it? It is fantasy."

Another preliminary finding of the Media Institute study is that since the early 1970's more violence has been attributed to psychological problems.

caused by drunken drivers.

The Supreme Court, simply by refusing to review a Court of Appeals decision, brought the principle firmly into N.C. law. The appeals court had concluded that dram shop liability is part of the state's unwritten legal history, dating to English common

See N.C. SUPREME Page 7A

The N.C. Supreme Court: Standing, left to right: Justice Louis Meyer, Chief Justice Joseph Branch, Justices James Exum Jr. and Wil
left to right: Jus
Henry Frye and H

How Tuned In Are We?

Charlotte-Area TVs Reflect Patterns Of Watchers' Lives

By LOLO PENDERGRAST
Staff Writer

Charlotte-area television viewers prefer Dan Rather to Johnny Carson and sports activities to watching TV. Or so television surveys would suggest.

And while the area lags behind the nation's record-setting time at the tube, it's not by much.

Each day in the Charlotte area, the typical viewing household is tuned to TV for 6½ hours — roughly a half-hour less than the national average of seven hours, two minutes.

During that time, viewers in the market's 644,100 households watch less prime-time and late-night television than the average American. They do, however, watch more news programming, Arbitron television surveys show.

The difference is charted in leisure habits, age, income, education and even weather. One factor in the 22-county Piedmont area, for instance, is the high percentage of working women, who aren't at home to watch game shows, soap operas and other daytime TV staples, a local researcher says.

Another is the large number of business and professional people, pushing the market's news-watching averages above national norms.

But in the Carolinas as elsewhere, research invariably shows that television — once solely an entertainer — now does multiple duty as educator, preacher, baby-sitter and companion.

Television, researchers say, is becoming the great American equalizer.

"It (TV) is the most interesting thing going in people's lives," says George Gerbner, who researches television and its effects at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. "It keeps them company, reduces isolation .... They feel like they're part of the great mainstream. They have a feeling of what's going on.

"They can have pretty much the same cultural affairs as rich and famous people."

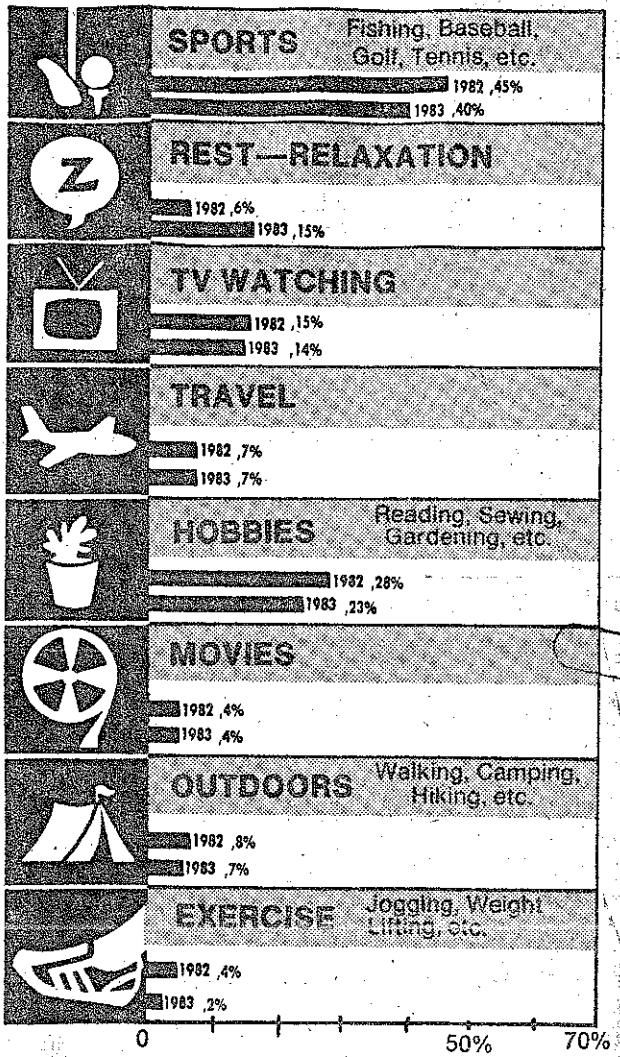
Released in November, Arbitron's figures are the most recent for the Charlotte viewing area, which includes 18 N.C. counties and 4 S.C. counties in a 150-mile radius of Charlotte.

The A.C. Nielsen Co. last week revealed TV watching per home

See CHARLOTTE Page 8A

What Do We Do In Our Spare Time?

Survey of 150 Mile Radius From Charlotte, includes 18 North Carolina Counties and 4 South Carolina Counties.



SOURCE: GMA Research Corp., Pittsburgh, For WSOC-TV In Charlotte. Percentages Do Not Add To 100% Because Some Categories Overlap.

Staff Graphic By GEORGE BREISACHER

Sunday, Jan. 29, 1984

Charlotte-Area TV Screens Reflect Patterns Of The Watchers' Lives

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nationally hit an average of seven hours and two minutes, an all-time high and an increase of 14 minutes over 1982.

"Basically, TV is a ritual," Gerbner explained. "Most people turn it on in the morning, turn it off at night.

"They watch by the clock, not by the program. It's like a church, but no one church has been attended as religiously as this one."

In 1982, the Charlotte-area viewer watched about six hours, 25 minutes of television each day. In 1971, the viewer watched five hours, 45 minutes, compared with a national average of six hours, two minutes.

TV watching patterns vary in the North and South because of weather, Gerbner says. Cold seasons are best viewing times for the North, warm seasons best for the South. People with lower incomes and less education, and the very young and the very old consistently watch more television, he says.

"The real explanation for seven hours is now we have a wider variety of things to view," says John Murray, a Boys Town, Neb., child psychologist with the Surgeon General's Study on Television and Children in the 1970s. "Television now captures those things we don't want to miss."

Of the Charlotte TV market area's 650,800 households, an estimated 644,100 now have television sets, with 369,100 having more than one set. Mecklenburg County alone has 160,500 TV households.

At the same time, cable TV is increasingly becoming a part of Carolinas television life, with 32% of households in the viewing area subscribing to cable service.

Some 206,800 households — or 43% — of TV owners in the city of Charlotte have cable service. In the nation, about 40% of the households are hooked on cable.

Leisure time is a factor that draws the attention of television station and network officials.

For two years now, Carolinas respondents to a WSOC-TV survey of leisure habits indicate that television accounts for 14% to 15% of their spare time. Respondents put TV watching above travel and movies but well below participating in sports and hobbies.

An area's viewing habits also follow demographic trends. A person's age group, the area where he or she lives plus the availability of social and cultural alternatives to television influence TV watching.

For rural residents and the elderly, television is a companion. Likewise for "latchkey" children, who are left home alone much of the time.

In the Carolinas, Arbitron figures show Charlotte-area viewers watch more television than viewers in Columbia and Raleigh-Durham, both state capitals and university towns.

On the other hand, Charlotte-area viewers watch less than people in smaller cities like Charleston, High Point, Winston-Salem, New Bern and Washington, N.C.

The Charlotte-area business community, with a large number of professionals, also includes loyal news watchers, Arbitron's researchers conclude.

In the 5-7 p.m. news slots in the Charlotte market area, news broadcasts capture about 63% of the TV population, compared with 60% nationally. Among people making $35,000 or more, 91% of the TVs are tuned in to news, ratings show.

"News generally does very well here," says Ted French, director of research for WSOC television and radio.

But while the area has a good early-evening audience, viewing drops off dramatically at night. Two times as many people generally watch the news as those that stay up for TV's late-night offerings — NBC's talk show hosts Johnny Carson and David Letterman and ABC's Ted Koppel, who appears on "Nightline."

"We're an early-to-bed, early-to-rise community," French explains.

The Daily Pennsylvanian

The Newspaper of the University of Pennsylvania

Monday, January 30, 1984

Administrators, experts split over televising anti-porn film

By RON MILLER

A panel of experts was split over whether the anti-pornography documentary *Not a Love Story* should be shown on public television during a heated debate on the issue Friday evening.

More than 200 people were turned away from the forum at the University Hilton ballroom when the 280 seats and 100 standing room positions were filled almost an hour before the presentation commenced.

The crowd first viewed *Not a Love Story*, then heard two hours of discussion on the moral and ethical questions involved with showing the film on public television.

The panel, which included University administrators, professors and renown communications experts, was divided almost equally on the question.

Some argued that the film was too explicit for television but, if shown, should at least be accompanied by proper supplementary programming.

"I would be frightened to let it out on the public airwaves," said President Sheldon Hackney. "It is a powerful documentary and could be quite disturbing to many people. I would not show it."

But Chuck Kleinhans, a film scholar from Northwestern University, said he believes the film would be much more effective if it were shown with other movies that address the same issues.

"This film has raised the issues of pornography and sex," Kleinhans said. "But, I would like to show it with lots of other films."

Bonnie Sherr Klein, who directed *Not a Love Story*, emphasized the differences between graphic sexual depiction and pornography, saying that the former is suitable for television while the latter is not.

"[Pornography] is violence and humiliation — not sexual explicitness," Klein said. "I wouldn't show [the movie], but other materials should be shown."

The panel also debated the consequences of exposing children to the film.

CAROL TRACY
'It should be shown'

"I struggled with the decision, but I decided to let my children see the movie," Klein said. "I was sorry I showed it to my 12 and 14 year

(Continued on page 9)

Experts debate showing of anti-porn film

(Continued from page 1)

olds. They asked me 'Is this sex?' "

"Pornography isn't sex," Klein said. "The problem is many people mistake pornography for sex."

Communications Professor Larry Gross said the he believes the film is a biased presentation of the issue.

"It is dangerous to say it speaks for women," Gross said. "This very much plays into the feelings that sex is for men."

"If this is presented it doesn't go nearly as far into showing the entire issue," Gross said. "The film by itself could become part of the problem it is trying to help."

Many who advocated showing the film argued that its showing is necessary to counter the massive quantity of pornography which is presented to the American public.

Linda Lee Tracey, a participant in *Not a Love Story*, said, "I feel that with so much pornography on the airways [the film] offers a counter view."

Penn Women's Center Director Carol Tracy said she also supports public viewing of the film.

"The film is a good look at a sleezy corrupt industry," Tracy said. It should be shown."

"I don't believe in a protectionist attitude," she added.

Tracy added that she believes the film's graphic portrayals are offset by the value of its message.

"There is an emotional impact," he said. "But there is enough in [the film] that is useful."

"I'm not happy about [children seeing the film], but the importance of the film outweighs it," she added.

DP/Scott Langston

Provost Thomas Ehrlich moderating Friday night's pornography debate

Law School Professor Paul Bender also said he believes that the importance of showing the film outweighs its possible harm. "Being offended is not an excuse for not showing it," Bender said.

After listening to the panel's analysis, WHYY [Channel 12] President Rick Breitenfeld announced that it is against his station's policy to show the film.

"The signal that I broadcast goes to all people," Breitenfeld said. "Most of you are two standard deviations up. The station has a responsibility to the public. The sophistication of the issue is so complex. . .we would not show it."

Despite Breitenfeld's conclusion, audience members overwhelmingly voted in favor of showing the film at the conclusion of debate.

"It should be on T.V. – it will start a dialogue," said Second-year Law School student Janice Gorman. "The film only must propose the issues, not answer them."

"It is up to the network to be responsible," Gorman said. "Just because a certain percent of the population finds it offensive doesn't mean that we shouldn't pose the question and start a discourse."

Marc Krones, a first year student in the Annenberg School, said he agrees that the film should be shown.

"It could be used as an educational tool to expose people," Krones said. "It is good to have a forum for give and take on the issue."

Not a Love Story will be screened again by the Penn Union Council Film Aliance Thursday, February 9, at 10:00 p.m. at Irvine Auditorium.

Focus on reality is blurred by television, speaker says

THE RICHMOND NEWS LEADER, Wednesday, February 1, 1984

By Gail Gilmore
News Leader staff writer

Danger lurks behind the television lens, and Dr. George Gerbner has seen it.

Television has blurred the distinction between fact and fiction, according to Dr. Gerbner, who is dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. Drama looks real, and reality — in the form of news — becomes like a TV drama.

"For most people born into the television age, it (TV) shapes reality," Dr. Gerbner said last night shortly after arriving here to speak to the Tuckahoe Woman's Club today.

Dr. Gerbner, who describes himself as a television diagnostician, said the real danger lies with younger generations, for whom TV has become a ritual.

"They are born into it. They forget it is drama," said Dr. Gerbner, who shows the respect he bears the medium he studies by always referring to it as television — never TV.

Over the past two decades, Dr. Gerbner has become one of the most respected researchers studying violence in the mass media, specifically television, and its impact on American society. He prepared his first major TV report for the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence in the late 1960s. He has continued his scrutiny under annual grants from the National Institute of Mental Health and appears frequently on panels exploring the effects of television.

His most publicized finding is that there is too much violence on television.

"We've gotten used to violence," he asserted, resting both arms on the table in front of him. "The fact that we've gotten used to it shows it's overdone."

However, Dr. Gerbner said that violent acts committed after watching TV violence can't be blamed on television. Among the court cases in which he has testifed is the Ronny Zamora murder case, in which a Miami defense attorney charged that his client was influenced to kill after seeing repeated TV violence. Dr. Gerbner testified for the prosecution, which won the case.

Dr. George Gerbner says the medium blurs fact, fiction.

"It's basically nonsense," Dr. Gerbner said of the defense contention. "You can't hold the storyteller responsible for the act."

The primary impact of TV violence is to create victims, not criminals, Dr. Gerbner said.

"Violence mainly cultivates fear of being victimized," he said. "When you make people afraid, you really pacify them. You can control them."

Television also creates victims by distorting people's view of their roles and the roles of other segments of society, he said. Women are particularly victimized in this way.

"Relationships are still not equal on television," said Dr. Gerbner. He cited statistics showing that male characters appear three times as often as females in general entertainment shows, six times as often on news shows, and eight times as often on children's shows.

In addition, he said the "risk ratio" is higher for TV women. Women are more likely to be victims of TV violence, but in real life men are more likely to be victimized, he said.

Even shows that claim to depict reality may be distorted, Dr. Gerbner said. Especially susceptible are documentaries, which purport to be factual investigations or reviews of history.

"Because of the way a documentary is selected, it has a point of view," explained Dr. Gerbner, who has testifed in several libel suits in which plaintiffs have claimed that their comments were distorted in editing.

He said a comparison of the televised story with raw footage sometimes shows that an answer to one question is paired with an entirely different question, giving the answer a far different meaning than the speaker intended.

Although Dr. Gerbner sees many evils in television, he said the medium can have a positive effect.

"Television itself is a great common denominator among people who are otherwise isolated," he said. "Nobody's out in the sticks anymore."

"Most people know what a surgical operating room looks like even though they have never been in one," he said. By contrast, he finds most police dramas on television "absurd."

What is real and what is unreal has never been perfectly clear, noted Dr. Gerbner. A native of Hungary, he immigrated to this country in 1939. He said that his perception of the United States was probably colored by Westerns he had seen and the writings of author James Fenimore Cooper.

Dr. Gerbner, who was educated as a writer in his homeland, said he always has been interested in folklore and storytelling. After he earned his Ph.D. from the University of Southern California and became a college professor, he began to study television, which he sees as today's storyteller.

"There are no short stories in magazines anymore," he said. "Other storytellers can't compete — including parents."

In spite of TV's shortcomings, Dr. Gerbner said its universality can have a positive effect.

"It can heal us and bring us closer together," he said.

Although television may entertain, Dr. Gerbner suggested that it rarely educates.

"It expands our prejudices, our weaknesses," he noted. "In its striving for ratings, it cannot extend us."

Remedies for TV ills proposed

By Douglas Durden
Times-Dispatch staff writer

After analyzing 1,500 characters found in various television series, the Annenberg School of Communications found:

- Male characters outnumber women 3-to-1 — 6-to-1 in the news, 8-to-1 in children's programming.
- Although persons 18 and younger represent 20 percent of the population, they only represent 8 percent of the characters found on television; although persons 65 and older make up 12 percent of the population, they represent a scant 2 percent.
- An average of six acts of violence occur in each hour of prime time; but there are 25 acts of violence per hour in children's programming.

These facts and figures may not be surprising to people who watch television. But Dr. George Gerbner, dean of the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications, offered some perhaps surprising interpretations of these facts to members of the Tuckahoe Woman's Club yesterday.

For instance, in questioning TV viewers, his studies have found although viewers don't think men outnumber women in real life, "they believe women have a much more restricted lifestyle."

Dr. Gerbner described the lack of fair representation of youth and senior citizens on televison as "symbolic annihilation." The results are people who watch a lot of television believe "older people are a vanishing breed, all of which is contrary to fact."

Television also tells us it is perfectly all right for a man to remain a romantic figure well up into his 80s. But the romantic age is much more limited for women, said Dr. Gerbner. After 45, a woman can only be cast as a grandmother. (Dr. Gerbner must not be watching Joan Collins romancing her way through numerous situations on ABC's "Dynasty.")

Finally, Dr. Gerbner looks upon TV violence as a demonstration of power, "who can get away with what against whom." Women who assert themselves seldom get away with it, older women especially.

In general, the more television a person watches, the more insecure and fearful that person is likely to be. And the more fearful a person is, the easier it is to control him, pointed out the profesor.

But don't assume that Dr. Gerbner is anti-television. His interest in the medium is a logical outgrowth of his interest in folklore as a boy growing up in Hungary. And he views the medium as a logical, if not inevitable, cultural evolution.

First, there was the face-to-face communication of tribal ritual, dependent upon a central authority. Then came the industrial revolution's first machine: the printing press, which breaks up the tribal ritual. "Once you can take it with you, you can interpret it yourself" and there was no need for centralized authority.

Then came the "final transformation" provided by the telecommunications revolution.

"Television is very peculiar. Unlike print and film, television is basically a ritual. Most people watch television not by the program, but by the time." On an average, an American household spends seven hours a day with that ritual. "There's never been anything like it in humankind."

"It has reduced isolation ... You can be out in the sticks, you can be very young, you can be very old, you can be in prison or a hospital — but cultually, you are still part of the great American mainstream. Poor people have, for the first time since

Continued on page 5, col. 2

Staff photo by Bruce Parke

Dr. George Gerbner had some surprising interpretations

Richmond Times-Dispatch
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA
D. 135,175 SUN. 219,330

FEB 2 1984

Remedies proposed for TV problems

Continued from first page

tribul ritual, the same culture as the rich."

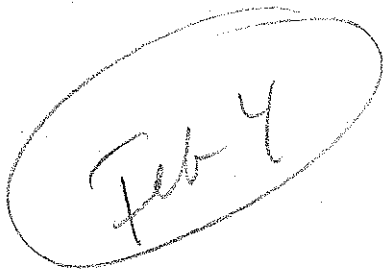
At the same time however, television has pre-empted the role of the parents and the schools.

But Dr. Gerbner didn't leave his audience without offering some remedies for television's worst ills.

First, parents should set an example for their children. "Children, left to their own, watch less TV than their parents."

Secondly, "demand that our schools attend to the cultural revolution" and include teaching "analytical viewing skills" among other liberal arts.

Third, "consider television as we would consider education or political issues" — in other words, take a hand in determining programming and not leave the decision-making solely to network executives.



TV called bad example. Television has established contemporary standards for social behavior, according to George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania. Speaking at "A Conference on the Media: Shaper and Reflector of Values," sponsored by the Interfaith Coalition on Values and the Family, Gerbner reported the results of an Annenberg-developed "sexism index." Used to determine TV's effect on the perception of women, the study showed "a strong link between the portrayal of women on television and their status in the minds of viewers." Said Gerbner: "Television has become more sexy but not less sexist. Most nudity and other forms of explicit vulnerability involve women, while men are shown as powerful aggressors." Additionally, said Gerbner: "We found in most groups that the degree of sexism increased with the amount of time spent watching television. Even viewers who described themselves as liberals were prone to sexist beliefs as their [TV] viewing increased." Concluded Gerbner: "We need an effective mobilization of religious leaders, along with parents, educators and public officials—not to censor the media—but to recognize television's symbolic violence and exploitive sex as instruments of inequity and injustice in our lives."

Nineteen eighty-fear!

Name dropping

Nominations are still in order for the office of Big Brother (AA, Jan. 9), the Viewpoint: Forum exercise in which prominent Americans name their favorite candidates, those they feel could best serve as the omnipresent ruler of Oceania. Here is another response. Others will be published in future Viewpoint: Forum pages.

George Gerbner

I hereby nominate the ghost of George Orwell. I do so in order to summon him as witness to the irony of all the hullabaloo about 1984. If Orwell's work had any lasting message, it was to warn and avoid, not to predict. Taking his cautionary projections of Stalinist practice as predictions is misleading. It tends to obscure the crucial (and, compared to the 1930s and '40s), largely successful struggles around the world (including the Soviet Union), that—despite all technological capabilities—make those predictions less likely than ever. Furthermore, it blinds us to those possibilities of cultural conditioning and catastrophic policies that come in democratic trappings far different from what George Orwell had envisioned.

If only Orwell's ghost could be here now pretending that it is HIS 1984 and HE is Big Brother, he could best point out the irony and confusion inherent in this exercise.

Mr. Gerbner is professor of communications and dean of the Annenberg School of Communications, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

Compunishments

The year 1984 happens to be a proper time to exercise the reflex of keeping a wary eye out for signs of slippage in mankind's options. George Orwell's seminal novel, "1984," reminds us what is at stake when the right to think for ourselves is diminished or removed. Here are a few items that raise the eyebrows of those who are checking out our Option Slippage Quotient:

When a Manhattan restaurant's computer faltered, bar patrons were advised that their drinks could not be served until the computer came back on-line. Said the bartender, "No printout, no drinks." Said a customer, "I really miss the days when drinks were served, not processed.

To a caller seeking information at a time when a New York Telephone Co. computer was down, the operator explained: "We can't help you. All we have here is people."

Those who find computers inferior to humans because computers cannot "think" soon may have to find another reason. Joseph J. Kroger, computer systems president at Sperry Corp., points out that in the works are "expert systems—programs that perform at the level of human experts—utilizing a process known as knowledge engineering to combine textbook learning with the insights that come only from experience, then set about working tirelessly to sort through thousands of 'if, then' rules of thumb and form a reasoned judgment. The implications for problem solving in such diverse fields as mathematics, science and engineering are staggering. Combine these systems with mechanical creatures that operate independently—robots—and you've added a whole new dimension to the workplace, the home, the school and practically every other institution."

The word "intercept" in the law is defined as the "aural acquisition" of information. A Federal appeals court and a

(Continued on Page 22)

USA TODAY
WASHINGTON, DC
D. 1.109.587

FEB 6 1984
BURRELLE'S

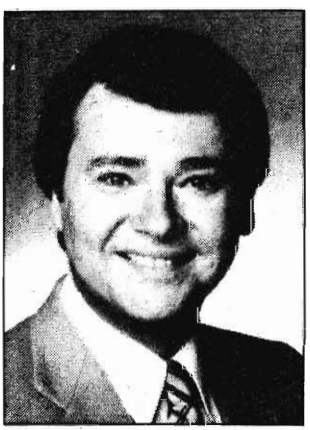
TV INSIDER/BY MONICA COLLINS

'ET' zeros in on 2 shows in its series on cocaine

Entertainment Tonight will reveal Tuesday the names of two network television shows targeted for investigation by the Los Angeles Police Department because of cocaine use on the sets. *ET* will report that backstage on these two programs, illegal cocaine use is rampant and flagrant. *ET*'s special series, "Cocaine: The Hollywood High," begins tonight and continues until Friday. Frank Anthony, the *ET* producer who conducted the investigation, says one of the shows being investigated usually ranks in the top five rated programs nationally; the other consistently shows up in the top 20.

"In two weeks after this report," says a pessimistic Anthony, "everything will be back to business as usual. There won't be any drugs on the sets of these two shows for a while but then they'll go back to them." Anthony stresses that the aim is not to point out that cocaine is socially acceptable in Hollywood but, rather, to show how the drug is used as currency in the industry. "Some producers give the stars drugs to make them work faster," says Anthony, noting that the L.A.P.D. finds NBC's *The A Team* the most drug-free production on TV.

Anthony expects that *ET* and its producer — Paramount Domestic Distribution — will get some heat. "*Entertainment Tonight* wants to get away from that cream-puff image," Anthony says. "We think of ourselves (in the *ET* "Newscan" unit) as the guts that go with the glitz."



RON HENDREN: His show is likely to draw some heat.

Landon's 'Little House' won't end tonight

Michael Landon produced three *Little House on the Prairie* specials to air this season. After tonight, only two will have seen the light of the tube. And tonight's *Little House* edition is being billed as absolutely the last in the series. Now there's word that the unaired part of the protracted *Little House* goodbye trilogy will air on NBC next Christmas after Landon reshoots certain scenes. This will be a neat trick, since the little house explodes on the prairie tonight. Perhaps the Christmas show will be "The Little Reconstruction on the Prairie."

Talking about miracles: In Landon's next NBC series — which premieres in the fall — he'll play an angel who comes to Earth to perform good deeds. It won't be a comedy: Landon will play the angel straight.

Small-screen violence induces paranoia

Are violent and pornographic depictions in the media reinforcing "structural inequities" in society? According to studies done by George Gerbner of the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communication, viewing such acts causes a mild but pervasive paranoia — what he calls "the mean world syndrome." Gerbner says "the more people watch violence on TV, the more acquiescent they become. . . . They don't identify with the muggers; they identify with the people who are mugged."

His findings may have surprised a few of his colleagues at Sunday's Symposium on Media Violence and Pornography in Toronto. While many anti-TV-violence groups — including some of the sponsors of the Toronto conference — worry that viewers will imitate what they see on TV, Gerbner says his research suggests nearly the opposite: The paranoia created by such acts on TV makes citizens more willing to accept otherwise extraordinary measures of repression.

Debut of a new ABC investigative team

Crackerjack news producer Marion Goldin, formerly of CBS' *60 Minutes* who then defected to ABC's news magazine *20/20*, now heads a special ABC News investigative unit in the Washington, D.C., bureau. Goldin is working with two reporters, Peter Lance and Mark Feldstein. Tonight, the unit presents its first report — on congressional travel — on ABC's *World News Tonight*.

Ben Brown contributed to this column.

Panelists decry media's portrayal of sex with violence

By Judith Michaelson
Los Angeles Times Service

TORONTO — A cover of a back issue of Newsweek flashed on the screen, heralding "TV's Hottest New Show": "General Hospital," with its leading characters, Luke and Laura.

That's the soap "where Luke rapes Laura, they become lovers and get married," said Neil Malamuth, psychologist and sexual-violence researcher at the University of California, Los Angeles. Something is wrong, he said, "when rape has a happy ending."

A clip from the R-rated movie *Toolbox Murders* flashed on the screen, beginning with an erotic scene of a beautiful young woman bathing herself. Romantic music played in the background.

Nothing wrong with that, noted Edward Donnerstein, psychologist and sexual-violence researcher at the University of Wisconsin, except for the scene that immediately followed: A stocking-faced intruder enters her house and mows her down in her bedroom with tracer bullets. "That juxtaposition of sex and violence," Donnerstein said, "and the music is still playing."

Then, the Kansas rock video "Fight Fire With Fire" flashed on the screen. In one scene, flames surround a nude woman. The Kansas video is one of the tamer videos on the market, panelists noted.

These and other materials (a Playboy cartoon about incest, a Vogue fashion ad said to be suggestive of it and much out of Hustler magazine) were featured at a marathon 10½-hour Symposium on Media Violence and Pornography at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, sponsored by three U.S. and Canadian groups.

More than 750 people paid $35 apiece to hear nearly 50 panelists, a potpourri that included educators and feminists.

A key message from the conference was that violence and pornography were linked. Violence is inherent in much of pornography, Scott and others maintained, with its ropes, chains — and rape. Moreover, anti-porn groups draw from the work of media-violence researchers much of their ammunition about pornography's impact on viewers.

"We've no problem at all with explicit sexuality, which differentiates us from the Moral Majority," said Scott, a psychologist, "and we are anti-censorship. What we oppose is explicit sexuality with an overlay of violence."

None of the panelists identified what they considered to be violent television programs, but Thomas Radecki, chairman of the National Coalition on Television Violence, one of the sponsoring groups, named some offenders.

Radecki, a psychiatrist at the University of Illinois School of Medicine in Urbana, cited "Magnum, P.I.," "The A-Team," "The Fall Guy," "T.J. Hooker," "Hardcastle and McCormick" and "Knight Rider." He said he was opposed to the "violent words" in "Dallas" and "Dynasty." But he would not censor or urge massive sponsor boycotts. Instead, Radecki favors counter-advertising. For every three ads on television promoting "violent" programs, he advocates that one free commercial be given over to such groups as his own discussing the "damage" done by these programs.

Media violence with sexual overtones is on the increase, most dramatically in rock video, panelists agreed. The coalition, reporting on its monitoring, said that lyrics were 115 percent more violent than they were 20 years ago. The coalition found an average of 18 instances of violence or hostility per hour on the Warner Communications' 24-hour cable rock music channel MTV. It found that 35 percent of all violence on MTV rock videos was of a sexual nature.

"The message," Radecki said, "is that violence is normal and OK, that hostile sexual relations are common and acceptable."

He cited as examples Michael Jackson's "Thriller" video, the Rolling Stones' "Under Cover of the Night" and Billy Idol's "Dancing With Myself." (The Idol video was made by the producer of *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, a movie the panelists condemned.)

"Thriller," Radecki said, features "a very appealing young hero having fun terrorizing his girlfriend." "Under Cover of the Night" is riddled with "intense automatic-weapon violence," and "Dancing With Myself" offers "a naked woman struggling in chains behind a translucent sheet."

Although there was much dispute about what constituted excessive violence, panelists agreed that there was as much evidence, if not more, linking excessive viewing of violence, particularly sexual violence, to psychological damage as linkage between cigarette smoking and cancer.

How much damage is caused by viewing violence has been at issue since the 1972 surgeon general's report on television violence, which found short-term consequences but was unclear about the long-term effects. In 1982, the National Institute of Mental Health, updating the research, found "television violence is as strongly correlated with aggressive behavior as any behavioral variable that has been measured."

The broadcasting industry sharply disputed that finding. ABC said at a congressional hearing that it found that only 1 percent of researchers thought television was "the cause" of aggressive behavior.

"Despite ABC," Rowell Heusmann, a psychologist at the University of Illinois in Chicago, said at the symposium, "none of us ever said it is the cause of aggressive behavior, but we believe it is *a* cause."

In the field of violent-pornographic movies, a battery of researchers found that after prolonged exposure to X-rated, as well as to R-rated movies, such as *Toolbox Murders, The Texas Chainsaw Massacre, Vice Squad* and *I Spit on Your Grave*, male college students became "desensitized" to rape and violence and accepting of the rape myth that women say no when they really mean yes.

Malamuth found that some of these "otherwise normal men" exhibited attitudes similar to those of convicted rapists and about a third said there was "some likelihood" that they would rape a woman if they thought could get away with it.

Donnerstein asked his subjects to view a videotape of a Wisconsin rape trial and found that, against a control group, those who had been given a heavy dosage of violent movies were far less likely to believe the woman, who had a black eye and was charging rape.

Annenberg issues 1984 journal

Publication looks at role, effects of media

By SANJIV NATHWANI

The role of communications in today's society is examined in the latest volume of the Annenberg School of Communications' *Journal of Communications.*

The 368-page publication, entitled *Ferment in the Field*, features original essays on communications as a modern field of study by 41 scholars from 10 countries.

Annenberg School Dean George Gerbner said this week that he feels the publication is significant because it is the first comprehensive view of communications by scholars and researchers within the field.

"It represents the first time that so many internationally prominent scholars have examined and commented on communications as a field of study in one publication," said Gerbner, who edited the anthology. "It is a truly diverse collection of views. A significant effort has been made to represent work and research traditions in many countries."

"Most of these contributions deal with social and policy aspects of communications research, which may be an accurate reflection of the areas in ferment," he said, adding the articles are not research pieces, but statements which "help define the core and critical backbone of our discipline."

"We hope this may be a milestone along the course of growth and rapid developement of communications as a discipline, its 'coming of age' as an active participant in and observer of the growth of communications technologies and institutions," Gerbner writes in the anthology's introduction.

The *Journal of Communications* is a quarterly that has been published for 25 years – the last 10 years by the Annenberg School.

Gerbner said that although the importance of communication and oratory has been acknowledged since the days of the ancient Greeks, the study has only emerged as an academic discipline since the two World Wars. He added that the rise of fascism and the subsequent need to analyze the powers of propaganda played a significant role in the formation of the study.

"Mass media now saturate the life space of all Americans with a ritual serving the industrial establishment and presenting images of society and the world to which there is no equivalent challenge," Gerbner writes in his essay in the journal.

Annerberg Director of Publications Marsha Siefert said this week that the journal was written for a wide audience.

"We have made a tremendous effort to make it acceptable to the scholarly and to people from all walks of life," said Siefert, the associate editor of the publication. "It allows people within the field and outsiders to listen in on a conversation by experts in the field."

She said that much of the focus is on the role of the media.

Columbia University Sociologist Herbert Gans expresses concern in his article that so many citizens receive the news from one source – the three television networks. He also states that communication researchers should take a closer look at the effect of news media on American politics, especially the power of network television.

But Siefert said she does not feel the media is terribly manipulative.

"People are not victims of media," Siefert said. "It takes two to be manipulated."

She added that the media is a responsible profession that could be depended upon to produce its own codes to prevent abuse of its powers, and to safeguard privacy and freedom of thought.

Gerbner said he feels that a major function of the media is to "expose and critique those tendecies that suppress privacy and to unmask the mechanisms of control."

He added that the journal's authors generally view the media favorably.

FRIDAY
FEBRUARY 17, 1984

THE MORNING CALL

a.m. MAGAZINE

ENTERTAINMENT

MTV: Much Too Violent?

By PAUL WILLISTEIN Entertainment Editor

Does MTV stand for Much Too Violent?

In a manner of speaking, that's what a study by the National Coalition on Television Violence (NCTV) would have you believe.

"Rock video's combination of lyrics and images adds a new dimension to television violence," says Phil Galli, NCTV's project director.

A spokesman for MTV, an acronym for Music Television, the Warner Amex (Warner Brothers American Express) Satellite Entertainment Co., strongly denies the 24-hour cable channel has a violence bias.

"We are certainly not pro-violence. We don't advocate violence on MTV," says the spokesman, who requested anonymity.

But a communications researcher at the Annenberg School of Communication at the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, says there's no denying the violence on MTV.

"MTV is a very imaginative new art form. Some of it's very violent, and the violence in it is very bizarre and extreme," says Dr. George Gerbner, communications professor and dean at Annenberg.

Please See MTV Page D10 ▶

A Billy Idol video allegedly is degrading to women.

Australia banned Michael Jackson's 'Thriller' video.

There's violence on TV because, like sex, it sells, expert says

Why is there a considerable amount of violence on MTV and network television?

Because, like sex, it sells.

That's what the dean of the Annenberg School of Communication at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia says.

And, adds Dr. George Gerbner, who has done research concerning sexual violence in the media, in the high-roller world of Hollywood, violence is cost-effective.

"There's a lot of violence on TV because it works," said Gerbner. "It demonstrates the power of the majority — the male, white, prime-of-life characters.

"It performs a function that sociologists call a social-control function. It puts people in their place.

"It's also relatively cheap to produce," Gerbner said. "And because most people don't turn it off, it's profitable."

Gerbner said that putting violence into the

Please See SELLS Page D10 ▶

MTV

▶Continued From Page D1

"Much of it is directed against women. Those particular numbers have a certain sadistic quality."

The NCTV study categorizes 75 rock videos as violent. There were "18 instances of violent or hostile action each hour," according to the study, and "35 percent of all MTV violence featured violence of a sexual nature. More than half of the MTV videos featured violence or strongly suggested violence."

Dr. Thomas Radecki, a psychiatrist at the University of Illinois School of Medicine and founder of NCTV, singles out specific videos shown on MTV and other network and cable music video shows:

"Michael Jackson's 'Thriller' video, banned in Australia, features a very appealing young hero having fun terrorizing his girlfriend with horror violence.

"The Rolling Stones' video, 'Under Cover of the Night,' banned in England, features intense automatic weapon violence, with Keith Richard and Mick Jagger heavily involved, including a violent lawless execution.

"Billy Idol's 'Dancing With Myself,' filmed by the producer of 'Texas Chainsaw Massacre,' has a naked woman struggling in chains behind a translucent sheet."

Having a video aired on MTV has become a key element to success in the music business. Men At Work, Duran Duran, Adam Ant, Billy Idol, Thomas Dolby and Michael Jackson had hit albums and singles in America through exposure on MTV rather than taking the usual route of touring from small clubs up to arenas.

In the nearly three years that MTV has been on the air since its debut on Aug. 1, 1981, its audience has grown to 17 milion households, reports the Nielsen HomeVideo Index (October 1983 and February 1983). Viewers in MTV's 18-34-year-old target audience watch 62 minutes of MTV weekdays and 87 minutes on weekends, Nielsen found.

The MTV spokesman disputed the methodology of the NCTV report.

"We sent the study [the NCTV study] to our research department. They requested backup documentation and they've yet to receive any backup that the study was done in any traditional method. Technically, it's more opinion than anything else," says the spokesman.

According to Dave Hostetter, director of NCTV's Washington, D.C., office, 22 hours of MTV were monitored for the study. The videos were rated in four categories: Violent, Intermediate, Nonviolent and Pro-social.

"What determined the difference between violent and intermediate was direct violence from one person to another. Whereas, others had implied violence," says Hostetter.

NCTV claims its monitoring of MTV found 18 instances of violent or hostile action each hour. Additionally, the study states that 35 percent of all MTV violence was "of a sexual nature." More than half of the MTV videos featured violence or strongly suggested violence, stated the NCTV study.

Hostetter mentions Bryan Adams' "Cuts Life A Knife" video, where Adams toys with a knife while a woman undresses, puts on a swimsuit and dives into an empty swimming pool (seconds later, she emerges wet from the same pool, now water-filled) as an example of implied violence.

"A pro-social video would have a theme such as 'Uptown Girl' by Billy Joel, which shows people crossing class boundaries," says Hostetter. In the video, Joel and his fellow gas station attendants sing and dance with model Christie Brinkley.

A spokesman for MTV confirms the cable channel has refused to air some videos, either because of excessive violence or nudity. "Duran Duran's 'Girls on Film' had nudity. We told them we couldn't run it that way. We did run it after it was re-edited," says the spokesman.

"The acquisitions committee looks at all videos that come in. Each clip is reviewed individually and [that] decides whether the clip is of merit and should run," according to the spokesman. "The clip is viewed in totality. If there are elements which are not considered appropriate, then you have to view it in its entirety."

"I think the violence on MTV is an extreme form of what pervades television anyway," says Dr. Gerbner. "I feel it is the tip of the iceberg of excessive violence and exploitative sex that pervades much of prime-time television programming."

In 1972, the surgeon general's report on television violence concluded that a causal relationship exists between violence on television and increased agression in viewers.

In a 1982 update of the report, the National Institute of Mental Health found that "television violence is as strongly correlated with aggressive behavior as any behavioral variable that has been measured." Major networks, particularly ABC, disputed the institute's findings.

"The Mental Health Institute report in 1982 said TV is as powerful as the church, school and family," Hostetter points out. "TV is a major socializing agent. By the time a student graduates from high school he will have spent 11,000 hours in school and 14,000 in front of the TV.

"The AMA in '76 called violence on TV an 'enviromental hazard,' " adds Hostetter. "Viewing of violence has a desensitization effect. Kids will have witnessed 18,000 murders on TV by the time they are 16. It makes people less likely to react sensitively to pain and suffering in real life."

Radecki holds that "the heavy use of violence in a very appealing format by the leading rock movie stars clearly has a strong harmful effect on young American viewers.

"The message is that violence is normal and O.K., that hostile sexual relations between men and women are common and acceptable, that heroes actively engaged in torture and murder of others for fun," says Hostetter.

"We're not advocating censorship. We're advocating response time. We'd like to require both cable and network television to provide one minute of air time to air the research and knowledge we do have on the dangers of violence for every three minutes the networks and cable use to promote violent movies or shows."

Hostetter says that the requested response time would not be based on the length of shows themselves but rather on the commericals used to promote them.

Although legislation has been proposed by NCTV, there has been no sponsor to date. But Hostetter says that NCTV has the support of the American Federation of Teachers, National Organization of Elementary School Principals, National Coalition Against Domestic Violence and the International Brotherhood Of Teamsters, Commercial Trade Division.

NCTV is a non-profit public interest group, according to Hostetter. Founded in 1980, it was an offshoot of the National Citizens Committee on Broadcasting funded by the American Medical Association, says Hostetter.

The group is funded by private donations, according to Hostetter.

Has the NCTV study caused any changes at MTV? No, according to the MTV spokesman.

"The study hasn't stimulated any rethinking," the spokesman said.

SELLS

▶Continued From Page D1

script reduces other production costs. "Compared to plays, which need longer time for writers to develop, longer appearances by stars who are paid by the minute, and more complicated production designs," a TV show featuring lots of violence is relatively inexpensive to produce.

However, Gerbner said that the majority of successful shows on television are not violent.

"The most popular programs are typically not very violent," he said.

Gerbner contends that the content of shows doesn't matter to many viewers.

"What people watch has not to do with the program, but rather the time when the program is run.

"The time of evening and what preceded it are important. And the cheaper they can make the show, the more profitable it can become."

Gerbner said that similar reasoning goes into the inclusion of violent scenes in rock videos as seen on MTV. "Going after the outrageous and attention-grabbers is the easiest way. It's outrageous but conventional."

What is the motivation for those who produce the violent videos shown on MTV?

"They simply want to promote their music and make money."

SCIENTISTS ON THE TRAIL OF THE MINDKILLER CALLED ALZHEIMER'S

REMEMBERING MARC BLITZSTEIN • MUSEUM-QUALITY PICTURES

The Pennsylvania Gazette

March 1984

GEORGE GERBNER

The Dean with an Eye on TV

The Dean Of Communications

IN HELPING GIVE DIRECTION TO THE ANNENBERG SCHOOL DURING ITS EARLY YEARS, GEORGE GERBNER ALSO HELPED DEFINE A WHOLE FIELD OF STUDY.

By Marshall Ledger *Photographs by Annette Lein*

DR. GEORGE GERBNER, dean of the Annenberg School of Communications and a longtime critic of the vested interests of television programming, has his own vested interest in bad television—it continues to confirm his research.

During his nearly 30 years of scholarship, he has come to many discomfiting conclusions about the medium. Sometimes, he goes on television to discuss them. Network executives may feel that *his* TV appearances are bad programming. They certainly are not fond of his research.

Gerbner originated the Cultural Indicators Project, which, for 15 years, has tabulated and analyzed how television depicts violence, aging, women and minorities, sex-role stereotypes, occupations, political involvement, educational achievement and aspirations, health (including safety and nutrition, as well as medicine), science and scientists, family life, and religion.

Since 1972, members of the project have published annual reports on television violence, and it is this subject which shot Gerbner into the national spotlight and makes him a figure as familiar in Congressional hearings as in the popular media. A bit of drollery might suggest his stature: Reporting on a response to his research seven years ago, *Broadcasting* magazine, a trade publication, stated that a CBS network executive "has challenged the divinity of the word on television violence issued annually by Dr. George Gerbner."

The networks help keep him important. Late in 1982, the National Institute of Mental Health issued a two-volume report on research on television and behavior. In a rebutting pamphlet, ABC focused on four major conclusions, two of them derived from Gerbner's work.

Others in research also treat him as something special. When Thomas G. Krattenmaker, professor of law at the Georgetown University Law Center, and L. A. Powe, professor of law at the University of Texas, analyzed "Televised Violence: First Amendment Principles and Social Science Theory" in the *Virginia Law Review* a few years back, they discussed laboratory and "real world" experiments of many social scientists in one group and Gerbner by himself in another. They attributed his staying power to the violence profile, to "his ability to write comprehensible English in popular journals," and to his tie with the National Institutes of Health (which, over

Dean Gerbner is overseeing the $9.6-million expansion of his school.

the years, has granted some $1,500,000 to his research).

Some observers suggest that he is an adept self-promoter. "I always return phone calls from the media," says Gerbner.

Gerbner's scholarly career and his forays into the public arena keep him busy enough, but he has another career as well. This year, he begins his third decade as dean of the Annenberg School. The school had been open for only five years before he was brought to Penn to head it, and it undoubtedly bears his stamp. The school was malleable, and he is forceful. Partly because of his scholarly contributions, partly because of the way he turned his dreams for the school into a curriculum and a laboratory for research, and partly because of his personality, he has been a dominating presence not only in the school but also in the field of communications.

Gerbner is a vigorous 64-year-old figure who puts in 18-hour days during the week and catches up on his sleep during weekends (he reportedly can also catnap standing up and awaken, in moments, fully refreshed). His face is characterized by a sloping forehead, accentuated by his receding hairline; the lines of his brow suggest intensity. He comes across as no-nonsense, a trait which he has no doubt found useful in discouraging triflers as well as in getting a point across in scholarly and policy-making situations. "He is a hard taskmaster because he demands very much from himself," says Ilona Gerbner, his wife. "He takes his work very seriously, and there is no fooling around there."

Those who know him only through his research sometimes picture him as authoritarian. The impression may come from his fierce and biting defense of his work. "George is stubborn and resistant to argument or opposition on his intellectual or theoretical work. He's very convinced that he's right," says a colleague, who adds, "His success as a figure in the social-science world has a lot to do with being stubborn—it's one way to have an impact." But his attitude is not an act; his research matters to him. "Many scholars do interesting problems which are not central to their most deeply held beliefs," this colleague continues. "What George does is central to him. He may be stubborn, but he is also passionately involved."

Gerbner is described as "egalitarian" to work with and as someone who "carries an authority." The latter is explained this way: "He might open a discussion with what he thinks without asking you what you think—but that doesn't mean he doesn't want you to speak." His sense of humor is full of irony, akin, perhaps, to that of Honoré Daumier, whose caricatures hang on his office wall.

His administrative style as dean is "more feudal than modern managerial," says one member of his faculty. Gerbner is said to be everything from "eminently fair and generous" to a ruler "with an iron hand." Unlike faculty in the larger schools, who have department heads between them and their deans, the 13 regular members of the Annenberg School faculty deal directly with their dean—with varying degrees of satisfaction. Gerbner is praised for "absorbing or deflecting" the technicalities of the sort of University business which some professors feel would detract from their academic work.

To some, he conveys the impression that he is going to follow the letter of the law, but then they see him come out on the side of compassion. Not long ago, a member of his faculty was forced to retire

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early because of poor health; Gerbner reportedly fought stiffly and successfully to get the professor the pension he would have been entitled to if he had retired at the usual age.

One observer says: "He seems to have a need to be in charge. In a university where everyone is in charge and well-learned, that may be hard to take. It may be that George needs to be on top of every detail. That's his personality." Another describes Gerbner as the sort of person who follows you through a revolving door and walks out first.

Gerbner has been called "cool" and "difficult to get to know." His wife agrees with this assessment, and explains: Outside the confines of the family, "he feels that all there is to know about him is his work." Conversely, he brings the problems of running the school home "much less than I would wish," she says. "I sometimes wish he'd let his hair down more often about things which *must* bother him occasionally. But it's very difficult for him to talk about things that bother *him*." (She adds, "He wouldn't agree. He would say that he discusses everything with me.")

Some of his artwork decorates the walls of his home in suburban Philadelphia. There are pencil drawings of lush vegetation and watercolors of village streets, one with a bread line seen from a distance. Gerbner fills up the area inside the frame; nature or society seems crowded. The pieces were done much earlier; he has not painted since he came to Penn. Now, his major recreation is tending the plants which, inside until the spring, jam the window areas. The only hint of chaos in his life is his basement study, where cardboard files bulge with papers and every surface is piled with books and more papers, and the modest space is so filled that his chair seems hopelessly trapped behind his desk.

GERBNER WEARS MANY HATS: HARD TASKMASTER, NURTURER OF SCHOLARS, LOVER OF THE ARTS.

Gerbner's story begins in Budapest, Hungary, where he was born in 1919. His father was a teacher, his mother a photographer; during the Depression, she turned to dressmaking (in the European sense, Gerbner points out, meaning that she developed her own lines for regular clients). By the time he was 19 years old, he had won first prize in a national contest on Hungarian literature and had had a book of poetry published. He also collected songs and stories in villages, with the intention of studying folklore and literature at the University of Budapest. He completed a year of work there before the war interrupted his plans.

In 1939, Hungary was preparing to ally itself with the Nazis. Gerbner could expect to be drafted. "That was not the side I wanted to be on," he says, so he decided to emigrate. "My parents, while they were sorry to see me leave, were glad that I had an opportunity to get out while I could." His father disappeared and presumably died during the war; his mother died three years ago but had been able to visit him in the United States; he has a brother who practices medicine in Budapest.

Gerbner emigrated to Italy, then to France. From there, he applied to U.C.L.A. and was admitted, but he had no visa to enter the United States. Instead, he went to Mexico, where he worked for six months as a guide, mostly for American tourists. His accent evidently made him sound as though he belonged there. "My legitimacy as a guide in Mexico was only based on the fact that I couldn't speak English," he says. "They just believed me. I thought I was a pretty good guide."

When his Mexican visa was close to expiring, Gerbner went to Cuba. The American consul there gave him both a visa for New Orleans and advice—that he would need money before he would be allowed to stay in the United States. He went to New Orleans anyway and was ordered deported. "When the hearing was over, someone back of the table had the decency to say, 'Well, you can appeal,'" he says. "I was never informed of any rights during the hearing." He did appeal and waited in New Orleans for two weeks until the verdict arrived from Washington, D.C. He stayed with friends of his half-brother, Laslo Benedek, who is now a retired movie director; another houseguest for part of the time was Sinclair Lewis. In two weeks, Gerbner received his visa for a bond of $250, put up by Benedek, who had to borrow it.

Gerbner hitchhiked to Los Angeles, then enrolled at U.C.L.A. and proceeded to flunk the test for basic English. With a doggedness that some find characteristic of him, he decided to write a series of articles on his 7,000-mile adventure. He submitted each installment to his remedial teacher, who corrected it, and then he submitted it to the student newspaper. Cut off from his native language, he was finished with poetry; certain kinds of writing, he feels, are almost impossible to do except in one's mother tongue. The next year, he transferred to the writing program at the University of California at Berkeley and eventually graduated with a degree in journalism.

He joined *The San Francisco Chronicle* as a reporter and editor. The Government classified him as an enemy alien; "a little-known fact of history is that Hungary declared war on the United States," he says. In 1943, he became an American citizen. He enlisted in an airborne division of the infantry and was recruited into the Office of Strategic Services, the wartime intelligence operation that was the predecessor to the Central Intelligence Agency.

Gerbner was scheduled to have been dropped behind enemy lines in Austria and help prepare surrendering troops for the eventual armistice, but, by mistake, he was dropped into Slovenia, one of the federated republics of Yugoslavia. He was reassigned to a partisan brigade and, when he and the others were not in flight, reported on German troops from the hills. (In those days, a cartoonist and friend of his depicted Gerbner in a caricature which hangs by Gerbner's bedside: parachuting under fire into enemy territory, Gerbner, his fountain pen strapped to his rifle, is shown nonchalantly reading Shaw.) By the end of the war, he had won a field commission as a first lieutenant.

During the armistice, he was assigned to help arrest Hungarian troops, among them the Prime Minister who was in office when he had emigrated. Gerbner joined the American military mission in Budapest with others representing the Allies in war trials there. "I was pleased to see that the trials were genuine," he says, offering as proof the fact that the sentences were "not indiscriminate."

When Gerbner returned to California, he did not go back alone. At a party, he happened to meet Ilona Kutas, an Austro-Hungarian actress who also taught theater. When they were introduced, Gerbner said, "I've seen you before"—a tired line that would have sunk him, she says, except that it was true: he had seen the production of the topical Hungarian play she was performing in. Later that evening, when she declined his invitation to go to the American officers' club after the party, he invited all of the guests. ("So you get an idea of how George Gerbner works," she says.) Not long thereafter, Gerbner received orders to go to Austria and knew that he would not be returning to Hungary. Ilona Gerbner remembers the statement that amounted to his marriage proposal, which was also their first discussion of marriage: "I found out," he declared to her, "that as a war bride,

George Gerbner communicates with his wife, Ilona, at home.

there's no problem getting you into the United States."

They were married and lived in Vienna for six months while Gerbner, who had gained his discharge from the Army, was employed by the United States Information Service as an editor in charge of a daily newspaper and news broadcasts. In 1947, they went to Los Angeles, where he waited for a newspaper job like the one he had held with the *Chronicle* and she began working on a master's degree in theater from U.C.L.A.

To jump ahead a bit: Ilona Gerbner gave up an established acting career to marry her husband and, hating the uncertainty of employment in the American acting system, refused to act in the United States. "But my marriage was most important, and there is no way for me to have done it all [the Gerbners have two children, too], and I have never regretted my decision," she says. "I have a strong sense of my own identity, of being a person in my own right regardless of what George did." She has, in fact, built her own career at Penn, where she is a senior lecturer in theater arts in the College and director of its theater laboratory. Last year, she forced a revision in the policy which had limited lecturers to six-year appointments. Student ratings of her teaching border on the ecstatic and mention how demanding the course is and how seriously she takes it.

According to her, her husband is "very, very American" because "he feels comfortable with a lack of leisure."

George Gerbner's period of unsolicited leisure ended abruptly in 1947 when he received a telephone call from his employment agency. A professor of journalism at John Muir Junior College had suddenly resigned to become chairman elsewhere; would Gerbner like a stopgap job as an instructor? "I started teaching that Monday, and I've been teaching ever since," he says.

Up to this point, Gerbner had not given academic life any thought. "An interest in Hungarian folklore didn't seem useful at the time," he says, "but I discovered that I have more freedom [as a scholar], and it's a more creative job for me." He gravitated toward the University of Southern California, where, based in a school of education, he earned a master's degree in communications with a thesis on television and education. A professor asked him to write a paper on what a graduate school of communications should be. The paper led him to his dissertation, in which he analyzed general theories and models of communication; it won the university award for the best dissertation in 1955. "What I was essentially doing," he says, "was inventing or pioneering the concept of communications as a basic concern with the production, nature, and role of symbols and messages of human and social life as a seminal approach to most, if not all, human problems—and, therefore, a basic academic discipline."

All during his graduate studies, he had been teaching and doing research. He began moving away from classroom journalism and, under the influence of Franklin Fearing, a social psychologist, toward the social aspects of mass communication. He also collaborated with Theodor Adorno in studies on the psychodynamics of television drama. This work taught him to look at what he calls "hidden messages," cultural assumptions that are an inherent part of stories and help in understanding them. Take, for instance, relationships among television characters: women rarely interact with women because, Gerbner says, men most often write the stories, and they are not interested in what women say among themselves unless they talk about men. Men express the greatest friendship as well as the greatest hostility when they talk to other men. And men and women typically go through tense negotiation about who dominates (the male usually wins). The regularity of such patterns in a sexist society makes them pass unnoticed, Gerbner suggests. They begin to stand out, however, when you sort events into categories and count the number of times they occur or when you encounter an individual story that violates the conventional relationships (a more interesting story, he says, "and usually a less salable one").

In 1956, Gerbner became an assistant professor in research at the Institute of Communications Research at the University of Illinois at Urbana. His new work was empirical, rather than theoretical, and was conducted over a period of time; both characteristics became a permanent part of his methodology. He joined a study in progress on the portrayal of mental illness in the mass media. Then he originated a study of the portrayal of schools and education in the mass media of 10 countries (the United States, several European nations, both Western and Eastern) over a period of 10 years. He looked at power roles that influence policies affecting the mass media ("institutional policy analysis"). Acknowledging the problems in developing a framework that is free of any "ethnocentric bias," he looked for a way to compare programs in various countries to see if different policies produce different messages or systems of messages ("message-system analysis" or "content analysis"). In such studies, single programs are less important than programs seen in the aggregate; mass communication begins to look like an assembly line, and Gerbner, employing the metaphor, asked what is rolling off the line. And then he asked whether the different systems of messages cultivated different habits of thought in the various audiences ("cultivation analysis").

Gerbner had risen to associate professor at Illinois when he was invited, in 1964, to apply for the deanship of the Annenberg School. "He was movable," recalls Dr. Robert E. Spiller, *'17 C, '24 Gr, '67 Hon*, the Felix E. Schelling Emeritus Professor of English Literature, who was serving as acting dean of the school at the time. "He is a top man, and he wanted a top job—he really wanted the job."

According to Spiller, the Annenberg School had not settled on whether it ought to prepare students for jobs in the mass media or for research and teaching in communications, and a previous com-

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mittee assigned to find a dean had to be disbanded because of the indecision. The appointment of Spiller as acting dean no doubt helped to determine the direction the school would take, because his own work was scholarly and interdisciplinary. Spiller liked the way Gerbner's research branched into sociology and psychology "in a general, theoretical way." He also liked its moral direction. Along with the atomic bomb and biological research, Spiller feels, the mass media constitute one of the major influences on contemporary life, and he wanted someone who would help foster the possibilities for good. Gerbner was his choice. "For an ax-cut into a basic situation, the appointment of George Gerbner is about as good as any could be," says Spiller, who regards it as "one of the best things I ever did in my life."

What did Gerbner see when he came for his interviews? "Nothing but opportunity," he says. Gilbert Seldes had been the first dean of the school. Gerbner calls him one of those brilliant people who do not have advanced degrees but produce influential books, and Seldes, who was known as, among other things, the author of a seminal work, *The Seven Lively Arts*, made a virtue out of the school's unsettled course. Gerbner recalls his saying, "We have some good people here, but we have not determined any direction—that's my present to you."

According to Gerbner, many graduate schools of communications in the United States have grown out of departments of journalism or speech or public relations or advertising or television, and the entrenched interests of the existing faculties determine what the graduate programs become. The Annenberg School, on the other hand, was the clean slate which Seldes had promised—as was the field of communications, in Gerbner's eyes—and he went at both zealously.

To describe what he had in mind at the time is to describe what the Annenberg School does, because, when he became dean, Gerbner carried out the idea he had had before. He describes it historically.

Human culture, he says, was once a handicraft. In the preindustrial era, tribal leaders, depending heavily on memory and ritual, told stories and interpreted them to their listeners, face-to-face; the listeners learned merely what pertained to their society and how to act in it.

The industrial era introduced books, "movable packages of consciousness," in Gerbner's words, which represent "a pretty big transformation in the way in which human beings find out who they are." Books free peoples from dependence on tribal leaders. They create notions of individuality and of class consciousness. (They also created a new order of people—the literate—and a new set of storytellers, who shaped reality in their stories to their own point of view.) Relatively stable groups, set off by geography, broke up and formed "mass publics," in which people share a particular consciousness without ever meeting face-to-face. During the last century, when the industrial revolution began to pour forth goods in earnest and such cultural symbols as books became mass-produced, human consciousness gradually became, as Gerbner puts it, "the product of a system of symbol mass-production."

> 'WHEN I FIRST CAME FOR MY INTERVIEW, I SAW NOTHING BUT OPPORTUNITY AT THE SCHOOL.'

The latest stage of this development is telecommunications. As immense an impact as books have on literate people, people still must learn to read; before they do, they absorb various messages from their culture. Television, a "tribal leader" because it seems to be personal and face-to-face (but actually is distant and centralized), creates an enormous, in some ways undifferentiated, "mass public" (the singular is crucial); it dominates the way people think and perceive as books never did, because it imposes a point of view before people even begin to develop one of their own. "You grow up from day one on," says Gerbner, "in a symbolic environment which is essentially produced by distant sources. It's like a religion, which represents an ideological structure of society—how people view the world, the nature of the universe and what governs it, and themselves.

"We, as a society, and perhaps most other societies, have not yet found a satisfactory solution to the management of an industrial culture." The problems which societies face because of the "industrialization of cultures," the application of sophisticated technology to forms of communication, are, he concludes, within the purview of the Annenberg School.

Gerbner recalls saying as much to the Hon. Walter H. Annenberg, *'31 W, '66 Hon*, the school's founder and benefactor, during an interview for the deanship. "He, in effect, said, 'Well, it sounds okay; try what you can do, and we'll see,'" adds Gerbner.

Annenberg, Gerbner says, wanted "to plow back benefits to the communications field that has been so good to him." To do that, he founded a nonprofit educational corporation. In December of 1958, Annenberg and Dr. Gaylord P. Harnwell, president of the University at the time, announced the establishment of Penn's Annenberg School of Communications, which opened in 1959. It was eventually housed in a new building dedicated to Moses L. Annenberg, Walter's father.

According to Gerbner, stock in Triangle Publications, a firm owned by the Annenberg family, has been turned over to the nonprofit educational corporation, which is presided over by Annenberg. It currently provides the school with about 60 per cent of its annual academic operating budget of $3.2 million. Like other deans at the University, Gerbner reports to the provost; he also reports to a committee composed of trustees from Penn and the corporation.

"Mr. Annenberg is a man of strong ideas and convictions, and one who doesn't hesitate to express them," says Gerbner, who estimates that the former Ambassador to the Court of St. James's disagrees with 20 to 30 per cent of what the school undertakes. "As the school developed and as he could see that the ideas that he occasionally expressed were taken into consideration—not as orders, but as ideas coming in from any knowledgeable and reputable source—and that we dealt with them in a professional way," says Gerbner, "and as the results began to come in, I think he began to respect, more and more, the independent, dynamic development of the school. He has always said that all he wants is excellence."

In a letter to the director of an offshoot of the school located in Washington, D.C., Annenberg wrote that the school "always has had and always will have complete and unconditional academic freedom. I have said many times that it is the academic prerogative and responsibility of educators to examine problems in a totally objective and unhampered manner." He also said he doubted whether Gerbner, among others, would be associated with the school "if that were not the case."

Gerbner's first task as dean was establishing a faculty. He preferred scholars from psychology or social psychology or anthropology or sociology or education or history who felt themselves on the fringes of their own disciplines and were willing to use communications to test theories in their home subjects or to apply those subjects to communications. "George likes eccentrics," says one observer, "and will give them a lot of rope to see what they can do against a larger ambition."

Gerbner also oversaw the creation of the Annenberg Center for Communication Arts and Sciences, the fancy name for

what has become one of Philadelphia's busiest performing arts centers. The building was completed in 1970. He withdrew from responsibility for the center in 1975. At one time, there were plans to offer a professional theater program as part of a master of arts in communications and to study the nature of the theatrical experience by, for instance, measuring audience response during live performances; the plans did not materialize.

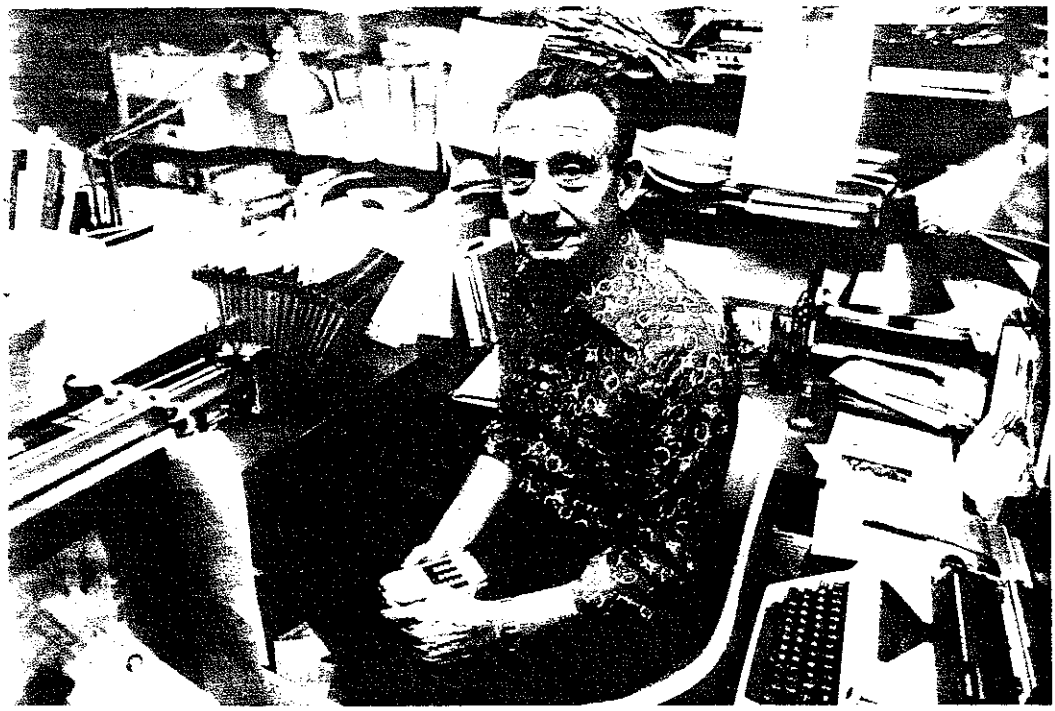
Gerbner phased out the workshops in art which had been housed in the school when he arrived. Despite his own artistic inclinations—and one painter calls him "perhaps the best patron of art on the campus"—he seems not to have let those interests interrupt his idea of what the school should be. Some who conducted the workshops reportedly felt that they had been canned, but one artist says, "George seemed tender enough not to shatter my feelings" (as he was let go). This artist recalls that one of his students went into art professionally. Gerbner approached the teacher and said, in effect, "That is not the intention of the school. We are not competing with the design schools." The artist agreed, yet replied, "But if somebody turns out awfully good, I'm not going to discourage him." Without being testy about it, Gerbner reportedly responded, "I don't perfectly agree, because we do have to keep the school on course, but I do understand it."

At another time, Gerbner had asked the artist to remove a poster done by a student which was hanging in the hallway; it contained a dirty word, and important people would be traversing the hallway. The artist refused because the point of the project was to see whether print in poster form could inflame viewers. The artist was thinking of posters of the sort which appear in Europe and China, not ones using the cheap tactic of dirty words. Gerbner said something like, "It will cause me great embarrassment. I want to remind you that you have the right to do what you want. I've told you how I feel." The artist let it hang and heard nothing more from Gerbner. He says, "In a critical situation, when George could have been in a dilemma and given a suppressive order, he did not. I almost expected him to, because he is an authoritative person. But he has an intrinsic fairness."

Gerbner also had to tend to nurturing a generation of scholars trained in communications. It was a struggle, he says, to convince applicants that they should not come to Penn to become movie directors or reporters or television anchors. "They didn't read the bulletin, and if they did read it, they didn't believe it," says Gerbner. "They were shocked to discover that we meant every word that we said in the bulletin."

The current bulletin warns readers away from applying for "what can be learned in any program, in other fields, or on a job." It goes on to describe three "core" areas, in one of which the student is expected to make an original scholarly contribution: "codes and modes" (covering such topics as theories and models of information and communication, content analysis, and the social contexts of communication); behavior (including "encoding and decoding characteristics of sources and receivers," "the consequence of exposure to messages," and mass communication and socialization); and systems and institutions (history; theories of social and mass communications; public policy; and structure, management, and social functions of the media).

George Gerbner squeezes into his study, the only hint of chaos in his life.



Although the bulletin speaks of communications as a "new discipline," much of its core material was laid out by Gerbner decades ago. In 1956, he wrote an article called "Toward a General Model of Communication," which sketches much of the structure behind the core material. It is very schematized and is illustrated with circles and squares and connecting lines and arrows, and smacks of simplicity. But Gerbner did not have much to draw upon at the time. The bibliography for the article did not extend back more than nine years. And the *Zeitgeist* was not encouraging; in 1959, Bernard Berelson, a sociologist who applied behavioral science to communications, would declare that communications research was "withering away."

Gerbner defended the study of communications as "a potentially seminal, organizing discipline" and "a busy crossroads of many disciplines in science, art, education, engineering, and of a great deal of social and philosophical concept-building." He also insisted that his model was "value-oriented." The findings in the field would contribute to public policy in a society based on self-government, so that the heart of the issue was "freedom in industrial society," he said. He proceeded to argue that the Constitutional guarantee of a free press is designed "to safeguard the thinking process of the community" by assuring that all views and evidence on public issues have "equitable" distribution. He also argued for "necessary rules and controls" and stated that "there is no freedom of selection unless there is control over facilities to assure equitable distribution and availability."

When asked whether communications is a legitimate academic field, Gerbner replies by explaining what legitimates any field: "It has a budget and it can hire people, it's got journals, and it's got professional organizations," he says, his point being that, by meeting these criteria, fields become established and stay on as academic fixtures. Communications meets the criteria, so it is a field. But is it a discipline? Communications, he goes on to say, "is addressed to the nature and role of human interaction through messages, in life and society, whose understanding can make a contribution to the understanding of every human and social situation," implying that its potential contribution to knowledge turns it from a field into a discipline. It has a revered ancestor—rhetoric, effective eloquence.

Gerbner feels that communications has gained attention of late because of the "industrialization" of the process of communicating, the "cultural manipulation"

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by which relatively few people control and manage to mobilize masses of others—the "engineering of consent," he has called it. This capacity, chiefly because of its implications in a self-governing society, invites questions of policy, which, in turn, demand a scientific base, which scholars can provide. Mass communications is not the only part of the inquiry, he observes, but it is the part that directs attention to the fact that a field exists. Does it really stand alongside economics and sociology and history and other traditional areas of study? Gerbner

'AFTER ESTABLISHING A FIELD,' GERBNER OBSERVES, 'WE ARE NOW TRYING TO DEFINE IT.'

smiles and says, "I will compromise by saying that it is an emerging discipline."

The Annenberg School has some 130 students (enrollment was expected to have been about 100), and there is a danger that, graduating as specialists, the students will be less interesting than their teachers, who bring so much eclectic and interdisciplinary expertise to the classroom. "You have to have a coherent core; otherwise, you're going in too many directions. The boundaries should be flexible and loose, the core should be coherent," Gerbner insists. But he acknowledges the problem of turning out graduates who know more and more about less and less. He feels that he can stave it off by requiring them to take graduate courses outside the Annenberg School and by continuing to hire faculty with diverse interests and by drawing upon the Penn faculty at large (the school has an associated faculty of 24 scholars from elsewhere in the University). "Every discipline has the problem," he says, and he mentions another headache for the conscientious academician: that students take the field for granted and "don't try to rethink it and rediscover it all the time, questioning the reasons for its existence." Then he adds, "Being aware of the danger is about all we can do."

Gerbner teaches a seminar in which he tries, as he says, "to keep alive the original sense of challenge and excitement." Students have been heard to criticize him for using the classroom as a pulpit for his own ideas. "What professor doesn't?" says one of Gerbner's colleagues in his defense, adding this: Scholars like Gerbner who are experienced advisers to policymakers learn to state their conclusions and rationale confidently; naive or uncritical students may become swept up by the well-rehearsed presentation, only to complain later when they realize that they are not dealing with the subject matter on their own footing. Gerbner reportedly prefers students who challenge what he says; by doing so, they presumably find their own paths through the well-defined curriculum.

Early in the semester, Gerbner is introducing the students to the school's approach. He stands in front of the classroom, looking relaxed and teacherly, unjacketed, his shirt tieless and unbuttoned at the top. He speaks in low tones, peering through steel-rimmed glasses, and occasionally brushes back the edges of his hair, which is not out of place anyway. He covers a lot of ground (material; but he paces constantly, too). He asks the students what "communications" is ("You'll be asked; you should and will have answers"). He speaks of making "maps" of researchable problems. He speaks of types of codes or patterns ("nonrandom configurations" seen in large institutions or systems rather than in individuals). He talks about the dynamics of forming public policy, dynamics shaped by laws on the books as well as by laws implicit in social behavior. He talks about culture in the anthropological or sociological sense, in which it means the system of communication regulating social behavior. He gets concrete. He clears his throat. He asks whether the rasping sound he makes qualifies as communication (maybe it is a signal to a confederate to yell "Fire"—"so that we can do dirty work in the confusion"). He explains why an orator addressing 40,000 people in a Greek city-state is not engaged in mass communication: because the concept of *mass* is tied to a system of industrial production—of delivery—not to numbers. He goes on to differentiate between a community and a public and between a public and a mass public; and he describes the "manufacturing" of publics, which have "manufactured needs and interests." By the time class is dismissed, the blackboard is filled with notations about senders and receivers and participants and events, enclosed in boxes or circles and connected by solid and dotted lines and arrows. Before long, presumably, the students will be working on their original scholarly contributions.

Having begun from scratch, the school has been benefiting from a "multiplier" effect in recent years, according to Gerbner. Penn graduates are rising in the ranks of faculties in communications schools elsewhere. Its academic arm is extended in several directions. It cooperates with the College of Arts and Sciences in offering an undergraduate major in communications, and anywhere from 300 to 600 undergraduates take courses in the school each semester.

The school is extending physically as well. It is in the midst of a $9.6-million construction project, which will provide a new wing for faculty and administrative offices; audio-visually equipped classrooms and a gallery (both located under the Annenberg Plaza); and, in the thoroughly renovated main building, seminar rooms, space for film archives, film-editing, and analysis of film, as well as more space for computers and books.

The school has also sponsored national and international conferences on such topics as child abuse; public views of doctors and lawyers; and communications, technology, and social policy ("before it became the trendy topic it is today," says Gerbner). It is planning one on visual communication (it conducted a preliminary conference on "image ethics" in January). With the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Southern California, Penn's school has established a branch in Washington, D.C., which focuses on policy studies in communications; a major study on the implication of the A.T.&T. divestiture, called "Setting Telecommunications Policy for the '80s: The Transition to Competition," is expected in midyear.

Since 1973, the school has owned and published the *Journal of Communication*, an organ of the International Communication Association, the professional organization in the field. Last summer's issue had the length and substance of a book. It has a book-like title—"Ferment in the Field"—and contains 35 essays by scholars from 10 countries on the condition, goals, tactics, and strategies of research in communications—which no contributor thought was "withering away." The school also publishes the serial *Studies in Visual Communication*. And the school has joined with Longman to publish books on communications; the first, issued last year, is called *World Communications: A Handbook*.

Late last year, the school announced that, in conjunction with Oxford University Press, it will publish an "International Encyclopedia of Communications," a four-volume work which is expected to take five years to produce. It is billed as "the first comprehensive encyclopedia" for scholarship and practice in communications. "After having established a field," Gerbner observes, "we're now trying to define it."

(This concludes the first part of a two-part series.)

TV, according to George Gerbner and his team of analysts, is a maker of stories that shape the way we live—stories that, for our own good, really need to be scrutinized.

ANNETTEE LEIN

STUDYING TELEVISION

BY MARSHALL LEDGER

ALMOST every day, if my guess is right, Dr. George Gerbner can count on having available as much as five hours more than most of us. That is the amount of time that Americans, on the average, watch television daily. Asked whether he ever watches TV for pleasure, he replies in that ironic way of his, "It's a question I refuse to answer on the ground that it may degrade or incriminate me." (I gather that he seldom watches.) He certainly could use the extra time: for the past 20 years, he has served not only as dean of the Annenberg School of Communications, but also as a social scientist curious about the content, usually dolorous, of all of the programs others watch. In these positions, he has helped develop communications as a field.

Shortly after World War II, he stumbled into academic life by taking a teaching job that had opened up before he could find a job in journalism. Several years after that, he earned his advanced degrees and began climbing the academic ladder, and he could reflect on the different path he had chosen. "As a journalist, I would always be a hired hand and always basically describe things that are occurring or things that somebody else knows. As an academic, I could devote most of the time to questions to which there are no answers," he observes.

His unanticipated career also gave him a freedom he had not known previously. "There's no other form of activity from which you can make a living and you can determine your own goals and you can question anybody else's goals as well as your own," he says. "In any other enterprise, once you join the enterprise, you don't question its goals. You just question its means and try to improve them. In an academic enterprise, there are no sacred cows," he continues, "and that, of course, is an exhilarating experience if you have intellectual interests."

Gerbner's important scholarly contribution to communications—a contribution which its critics attack as something like a sacred cow—has been the Cultural Indicators Project, which Gerbner began in 1969. He introduced the term *cultural indicators* then, and others have taken it up. A symposium in Vienna in 1982, for instance, was called "Cultural Indicators for the Comparative Study of Culture."

Gerbner and others who are engaged in such research see culture as "a world of towering symbolic constructions," which includes art, science, law, religion, statecraft, and storytelling. (He put it this way in the keynote address to the American Association for Higher Education last spring.) All of these activities, he said, provide messages and images which regulate social relations. They give us models to conform to and targets for rebellion; they give us our "characteristics," so that we know who stands outside our society (and, therefore, can be repressed). Culture, he says, socializes us by mediating between our consciousness and what exists in the world outside our consciousness and "thereby helps shape both." If a new experience fits into the picture which culture has helped us form, we call it real. "Of course, that does not *make* it real; it only makes us behave as if it were."

As this description suggests, culture is difficult to study because it amounts to the sum of many things, few, if any, of which are inherently quantitative, and you cannot hope to observe and describe directly anything cultural more than its individual elements. Dr. Larry Gross, professor of communications at Penn and coprincipal investigator with Gerbner on the project, compares culture to an invisible man, whose contour you begin to see when he dons a glove.

For the Cultural Indicators Project, the glove is television. It is the most pervasive conveyor of stories that express and reflect and shape our reality, according to Gerbner. He points out that, in addition to having their sets on for more than a quarter of the day, most viewers watch by

continued

the clock, not by the program, and they do not even decide what to watch until they turn on the set. He calls television a ritual. Rituals serve a social order by rationalizing it; like plots in stories, rituals "make the necessary and inevitable appear natural and right," he says.

And so, when members of the project study television, they watch who is who (the number of different social types in the cast and how they are characterized). They observe who takes risks and who gets what (for this determines who has the power to allocate resources, including such intangible qualities as personal integrity and freedom of action). And they attend to who comes to what end (what is their fate, or what outcomes are inherent in the structures that relate social types to a calculus of power, risks, and relative success or failure). For them, the most telling quality of a drama is violence, because it is a demonstration of power—who can get away with what against whom.

The project is made up of Gerbner, Gross, and two other associates, Michael Morgan, a research associate in the Annenberg School, and Dr. Nancy Signorelli, a research coordinator. They are interested in the attitudes created by television drama, but not in immediate behavior—and this distinction sets their research apart from most television research. As Gerbner describes the difference, most studies on the effect of communication have been oriented toward change: if you direct a particular message to a particular group, what behavior can you cause? He calls that "a kind of marketing, persuasion, political approach." It assumes that routine events are a background for something special that should be examined. But what about the routine events themselves, the stable patterns of everyday life that shape our daily movements and thoughts even though we aren't aware of it? What happens all the time, rather than when somebody injects a new message into the environment? The challenge for the project was to develop a way of measuring stability.

Here is how it works (even though this brief description makes the research sound too mechanical): The associates begin with a definition. *Violence*, for instance, is "actually hurting or killing" or "the overt expression of physical force against another (or oneself)," which compels action against the victim's will "on pain of being hurt or killed." The definition is not exceptional. The way the associates use it, however, is unusual because they apply it to *every* act of physical force, including cartoon mishaps and acts of nature; their point is that they measure the "content," not the "effects," of television drama. (They do not examine violence on the news; Gerbner says that we see it there only about once a month.)

Next, they train "coders," who analyze one week of network programming each year. Since 1969, they have examined 1,500 programs and 20,000 characters and compiled a "content analysis."

Now comes the part that raises the most hackles—the "violence index," which, critics claim, amounts to adding apples and oranges. The associates add together the following figures: the percentage of programs with violence; double the rate of violent episodes in each program; double the rate of violent episodes for each hour of programming; the percentage of major characters involved in violent acts, either as perpetrators or as victims; and the percentage of major characters involved in killing, either as perpetrators or as victims. (Doubling the rates of violent episodes raises them "to the level of importance [those concepts] deserve" when combined with the percentages, the associates say.)

Then they construct a "cultivation analysis" in order to determine how viewers might be affected by what they have seen. They categorize viewers according to various demographic characteristics and further separate them as either "heavy" or "light" viewers of television. They proceed to ask questions about real life (never about television) which are designed to determine whether the viewers' perceptions about life accord with what is presented on television. One question, for example, might be about the number of people in life who are policemen. According to the content analysis, the world of television is more densely populated by policemen than the real world—partly because plots often involve breaking the law. Interviewees are given a choice of two figures, one above the real-world figure and one below it. If they choose the former, they are said to have given the "television" answer and to demonstrate (along with similar answers on other tests) that television has influenced their view of the real world.

Sometimes, the social scientists find that the television answer from respondents grouped in a particular demographic way is stronger than expected. They call this result "resonance," which means that the viewers had their biases about the real world strengthened by television; for instance, low-income urban residents show the strongest association of any group between television viewing and fear of crime—possibly because they are more likely to live in areas of higher crime.

And sometimes they find that the television answer from heavy viewers in specific demographic groups departs from the expected answer from those groups and coincides with an incompatible answer from heavy viewers of other groups. They call this smoothing over of differences "mainstreaming." For example, television, which they find sexist, may reduce sexist attitudes among heavy viewers in groups expected to be the most highly sexist.

And, finally, the associates have constructed "risk ratios" to see if viewers feel "real-world fear" from watching their demographic counterparts symbolically victimized on television. They derive the ratio by comparing the percentage of violent characters in a given group and the percentage of victims in it and dividing by the less numerous (they do the same with the percentage of killers and the percentage killed); the result tells whether a group is more likely to inflict or to suffer violence. "Those who see their fictional counterparts more often as victims are the ones who show the strongest links between how much they watch television and the tendency to overestimate their chances of involvement in violence," the associates determined recently in a paper delivered by Morgan at the Vienna conference. Television drama has what he called an unstated "power structure" that informs viewers where they stand in the hierarchy. That hierarchy transmits "messages, images, and norms which may be particularly effective mechanisms of social control," Morgan added, concluding, "The appropriate lessons are apparently learned by the appropriate viewers."

Such a conclusion is characteristic of papers issuing from the Cultural Indicators Project, which state, in one way or another, that stereotypic inequities and prejudices are cultivated by television and repeatedly confirmed by it rather than challenged. Viewers tend to have a heightened anxiety about the world and, as Gerbner nightmarishly puts it, may be susceptible to "demands for protection, dependence on authority, and acceptance of repression if it comes in the name of security."

(Gerbner seemed headed for similar conclusions in his earliest publications. In the 1950s, he examined "The Social Role of the Confession Magazine." He found a formula: A heroine who only wants to pay the rent and keep the family together is beset by human frailties which bring a mean and punitive world down upon her. When she rebels, she is quelled—either compromised or sacrificed to "bewildering" social codes. She is blamable for protesting; the codes are not impugned. Readers presumably perceived the "truth" of that hierarchy, but, in those days, Gerbner did not poll them. He relied on sales reports, statistical compilations of dramatic elements, stated editorial aims, and, details of a story which he says he chose at random.)

The project's early work, on TV violence, was used by the National Institute of Mental Health, which issued the 1972 study *Television and Growing Up: The Impact of Televised Violence*, under Dr. Jesse L. Steinfeld, the Surgeon General of

the United States at the time. The networks subsequently retaliated with mortar fire of their own. They exchanged rounds more recently. The N.I.M.H. issued a follow-up report, *Television and Behavior: Ten Years of Scientific Progress and Implications for the Eighties*, in 1982; and ABC responded last year with "A Research Perspective on Television and Violence," a 32-page booklet which singles out the project.

In its rebuttal, ABC criticized the project's sweeping application of its definition of violence as an approach that ignores context—for instance, self-defense. It called the one-week sample "clearly inadequate." It mentioned three studies that purportedly conclude that the index "is an arbitrary and idiosyncratic measure which does not accurately reflect program content."

ABC also denied that television "significantly" cultivates viewer attitudes. A "correlation" does not imply causation, it pointed out, and when there is any correlation involving television, only three per cent of a person's social attitudes can be attributed to it. The network also disputed the way the project arrives at "television answers" and criticized its failure to define the difference between "heavy" and "light" viewers strictly. And it observed that nonviewers express more fear and distrust than light viewers and that extremely heavy viewers express less fear and distrust than heavy viewers. Cultivation theory is "far less compelling than the N.I.M.H. report indicates," the network concluded.

The pamphlet prompted a response by the scientific advisers to the N.I.M.H. report; Gerbner was one of them. By way of counter-argument, they suggested that violence is high even when restraints are put on what is included—only one of five violent acts appears in "light" and "humorous" contexts, and nature accounts for less than one violent act in each sample. They pointed out that ABC did not explain why one week of sampling was "clearly inadequate," and that an experimental sampling extended over several weeks did not change the conclusions. They stated that nonviewers and extremely heavy viewers constitute about five per cent of the population each and are "nonsignificant statistically" and, in any case, if they are excluded, the resulting patterns for the remaining 90 per cent of the population are strengthened.

The conclusions of the scientific advisers were supported by Dr. C. Everett Koop, the Penn professor of pediatric surgery who currently serves as Surgeon General. He called the ABC pamphlet "an embarrassment to the social science research community as well as to the media." He also said that the failure of the networks to "rise to the challenge" of the 1972 report on television violence and their resistance to the "implications" of the 1982 report "depressed" him.

The arguments, nonetheless, fly back and forth, sometimes hanging on technicalities. At one point, ABC, intending to suggest that the work of the Cultural Indicators Project remains in question, stated that the "research community" argues about it and cited four critics to support the claim—neglecting to add, according to the scientific advisers, that three of the four were network employees. Their source of employment, of course, does not invalidate their point—a position taken, in effect, by Alan Wurtzel, vice president of broadcast standards and practices (East Coast) for ABC, who says that he stands by the pamphlet.

According to Gerbner, the networks cannot mount a sound scholarly criticism of the Cultural Indicators Project. Why? One reason, he says, is that they "engage in a public debate instead of analyzing what we actually do." The project is often characterized in newspapers as opposing television violence because showing it causes aggression—"which is very different from what we actually say," he points out. "I never claim that violence is bad," he declares. Dramatic violence is "functional and necessary" as motivation for the characters, but "when you have violence at the rate of six [occurrences] an hour, it's what I call a cheap industrial commodity," he explains. "It doesn't matter much what the motivation is; most of it is mechanical," and 30 murders a week, week after week, "has a certain corrosive effect." To some, the effect may be a developing sense that, in Gerbner's words, "violence is painless, it's quick, it's glorious, it's an effective way to deal with problems, and it's going to hurt somebody else and not us." And others may grow fearful and anxious and welcome the protective arm of their government.

The networks have a further problem, he continues, in finding "respectable scholars" to undertake work for them. "Networks don't want to risk financing something that is not going to prove their point," he says. He says that the investigators on the Cultural Indicators Project have invited the networks to work with them. "We could guarantee, as I try to do anyway, to defend them from any kind of unjustified attack. And there's a lot of scapegoating going on that *is* unjustified," Gerbner adds. "But they cannot afford to do that because, if they legitimize that, they will also legitimize the justified attacks against their policies." So, he concludes, they limit themselves to the terms established by the public debate about TV violence.

I invite the networks to respond. Dr. J. Ronald Milavsky, vice president for news and social research at NBC, speaks for his network; he headed a project, recently published as *Television and Aggression: A Panel Study*, which found no statistically significant effect of TV violence on children. He says, "We don't deal with [the Cultural Indicators Project] because it has no handles for us to grasp it with. Fear is the only thing he points to. That's so abstract, who knows if it's true?" ABC and CBS decline to comment.

The project has received thoughtful criticism, although probably not as much as might be expected after a decade of prominence. Some of the best from a network appeared in the *Journal of Broadcasting* in 1977. In it, Dr. David Blank, vice president and chief economist at CBS, made a charge, the associates on the project made a countercharge, and each made a rebuttal. After answering Blank virtually point for point, the associates wrote, "What we have profited from this and other exchanges will thus be put to use in our continuing studies."

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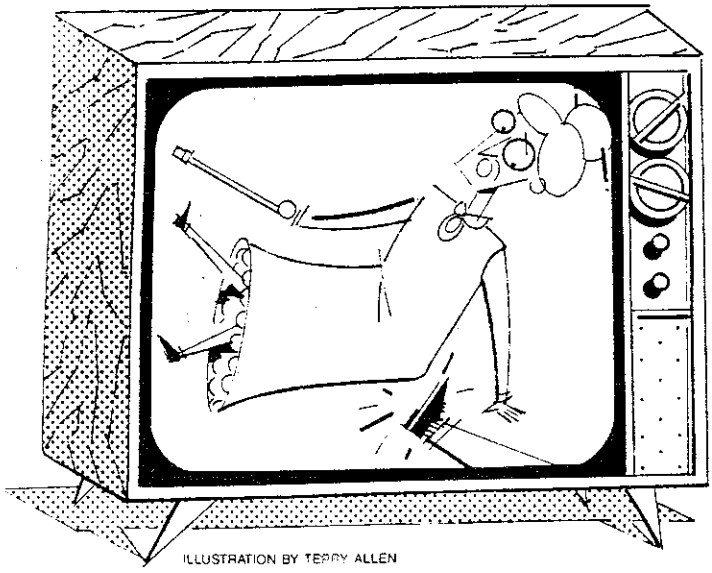

ILLUSTRATION BY TERRY ALLEN

TV and 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 treated with disrespect and to be portrayed as stubborn, eccentric, and foolish."

Gerbner says "it's not so easy" to attack the results because, in part, methodological flaws have been corrected over the years; other studies, in the United States and abroad, are confirming the conclusions; and the consistency of their results, year after year, helps confirm them. Not everyone, however, is convinced.

Thomas G. Krattenmaker, professor of law at the Georgetown University Law Center, and L. A. Powe, professor of law at the University of Texas, reviewed research in the social sciences for its possible effect on the First Amendment. They found it easier to point out the flaws and limitations of aggression research than to do the same with the Cultural Indicators Project. Most of the research on aggression resorts to experiments which have an undemonstrated relationship to reality; and that which uses the real world does not have sufficient controls, they suggested. They had a harder time with Gerbner (they focus on Gerbner rather than the project). By applying his definition of violence without qualification, Gerbner has taken "the easiest, and least rewarding route." Even so, he excludes "the infliction of pain as it occurs in real life" (as seen in sports- or newscasts), they said. They expressed their wonder at how a network can reduce the number of violent incidents but still register an increase on the violence index. (More leading characters might be involved in violence, and violence might be more broadly distributed over the programs sampled.) They said that the methodology is "ridiculous" for allowing anyone to conclude that a program beginning with a violent murder and ending with a violent capture of the murderer is less violent than a story about two patients who die of cancer. And they said that calling *I*

Gerbner and Company on Television

"You cannot escape television by not watching it," Dr. George Gerbner, professor of communications and dean of the Annenberg School of Communications, once told an interviewer. He and his research associates in the Cultural Indicators Project watch numbers—numbers compiled from what happens on TV drama and from the responses of viewers. From their statistics, they determine the messages that they believe TV brings. Here is a sampling of their conclusions, both from their studies and from Gerbner's statements to the press:

On TV's real victims: "Unfortunately, television's victims—those who, we are told on TV, have no power in our society—are women, blacks, foreigners, lower-class citizens, and other minority-group members. This is especially disturbing in light of the TV documentaries and public pronouncements by spokesmen for the television industry, which proclaim that the rights of minority groups must be protected both in society and on television."

On television ministries: "There is no support for the charge that they cause or at least contribute to the erosion of main-line church membership, financial contributions, and general participation. The programs appeal to an older, traditional audience; and watching these programs appears to confirm their religious beliefs, not substitute for them, and to complement other forms of religious practice, like church worship. . . . Evangelists [on syndicated TV] are more likely than ministers on locally produced programs to ask for money, to make more numerous requests, and to ask for greater amounts."

On the increased portrayal of sexual activity: "Sex is not a simple act. It is a social relationship structured in particular ways and for particular purposes. We have no evidence to suggest that the dramatic change in verbal or pictorial depiction of sex has been accompanied by a similar change in the social structure of sex. Most nudity—and other forms of dependency—depicted on television is still female; most demonstration of power is still male."

On television and political campaigns: "The purpose of parties is mainly to buy time on television and to dispense patronage. They're no longer the channel of communication between leaders and the voters. . . . Television wants new faces, so an established [political] figure, as a tired old media face, starts from a disadvantage. A new face at the right time can build up momentum that leads to the nomination. . . . Because of its attempt to be fair and evenhanded, television tends to equalize the votes. Winning the Presidency by narrow margins will become the rule rather than the exception. The margins will be slight, the mandates relatively small, and minority Presidents may become more frequent."

On the perception of heavy viewers that they are politically "moderate": "That does not necessarily mean that television is a force for genuine moderation. . . . We know from previously reported data that the mainstream bends to the right on issues dealing with minorities and personal rights, reflects the anxieties and mistrust of television's violent 'mean world,' and tilts to expansive populism on economic welfare."

On economic self-perceptions: "Ongoing analyses . . . reveal that people whose objective social class is low and who watch more television are more likely to call themselves 'middle class'; among high S.E.S. [socio-economic-status] respondents, however, heavy viewers are more likely than are light viewers to call themselves 'working class.'"

On science: "Television is the 'wholesaler' of most images, including that of science. Television, on the whole, seems to make few friends for science but may confuse and alienate its potentially most likely students and supporters. We may have a serious national problem standing in the way of better understanding and support of science. . . ."

On health: "Prime-time characters are not only healthy (though often vulnerable to inflicted injury) but, despite all the mayhem, eating, and drinking, are also relatively sober, safe from accidents, and slim at all ages. . . . The cultivation of complacency, coupled with an unrealistic belief in the 'magic of medicine,' is likely to perpetuate unhealthy life styles and to leave both patients and health professionals vulnerable to disappointment, frustration, and litigation."

On the poor light in which business people are portrayed: "Characters who are totally benign, in television and in real life, are ineffective, usually women and teachers. The price you pay for being goody-goody is that you are ineffective. The price you pay for power is that you are not portrayed as totally benign. You must have a touch of evil."

On television in the courtroom: "There is a Perry Mason mythology of the judicial system, and that's what the networks feel they should give the public. . . . In fact, a trial must proceed as independently as possible from conventional moral pressures and the popular clamor of the moment. . . . Neither history nor existing research supports the contention that television coverage of courts would enhance fairness, protect freedom, increase public understanding, or promote needed court reform."

Dream of Jeannie the most violent show of the year "affronts common sense." (The project does not rank individual shows, but Krattenmaker and Powe claim that such ranking can be extrapolated.) In the end, they said, Gerbner's theories have "a patina of scientific behaviorism" but "are best understood as abstract, aesthetic criticism."

Gerbner says he and his associates did not find out about the article, published in 1979, until a couple of years later; because of the passage of time and because Gerbner considers the basic thrust of the lawyers to be "so ignorant" about behavioral science, and because a response would have required a major investment of time and effort, "I just ignored it," he says.

Dr. Paul M. Hirsch, professor of sociology at the University of Chicago, engaged in a running battle with the associates on the project, some of which appeared in the journal *Communications Research*. Hirsch criticized the analyses for ignoring "standard statistical procedures." The concepts of "mainstreaming" and "resonance" are mutually contradictory, he said, and he accused the project of using them to cover over divergences which otherwise would open the cultivation analysis to doubt; the analysis, he charged, ends up "ambiguous, untestable, and irrefutable." As if to ridicule the project, he constructed a comparable table purporting to demonstrate that the Zodiac signs of viewers are related to their television viewing and their fear of walking alone at night in their own neighborhood. Hirsch concluded that there is no relationship between television viewing and viewers' feelings of fear, suspicion, and alienation and recommended new approaches, including some from the perspective of the humanities.

In the main, Gerbner and his associates replied that the most compelling evidence for their method was "cumulative consistency" and that Hirsch should have attended to the subgroups in the study rather than expected viewing always to have a "universal" effect.

My summary of the positions does not hint at the nastiness which passed on both sides; each disputant spoke about toning it down, while, at the same time, goading the other.

Gerbner is not always an amiable opponent, and sometimes he gets downright abrasive when responding to criticism. But the virulence between Gerbner and his associates and Hirsch may have been based on an unusually deep rift between their positions. Robert A. White, research director at the Centre for the Study of Communication and Culture in London, looked at both sides; and in "Ferment in the Field," that issue of the *Journal of Communication* which examines the state of communications research, he concluded that the debate between them raised a fundamental question of "what is adequate theory and methodology" for studying the relationship between communication and culture. And that question arises because the Cultural Indicators Project implies the validity of a new paradigm, a model based on consequences rather than persuasion. That is, in brief, instead of assuming that a message is received as a sender intends it to be, you have to consider culture as an "intervening variable." One aspect of culture is the mass media, but how do you deal with them? Are they better conceived as molding influences or as mirrors and amplifiers of cultural themes? Should analysis begin with the media or other aspects of the cultural context? However perennial such questions are, White says, the new paradigm must consider them anew. Until they are reconsidered, he suggests, "fiery debates" will result.

Although White appreciates the comprehensiveness of the Cultural Indicators Project, he also criticizes it thoroughly. He suggests that it is too rarified because it excludes the historical, political, and economic conditions that influence both message-content and individual perceptions. He feels that it does not allow for different interpretations of television content; instead of absorbing TV messages, might not some subgroups reject them and use them as "seeds of cultural dissidence and cultural change"? He suggests that identifying the national culture with the symbolic content of one medium is limited. He questions the adequacy of using quantitative methods to describe a subjective cultural experience—specifically, the way an audience integrates themes it finds in the media into its system of meaning, its view of the world, and its values. If television is a factor in social control, then it does influence cultural change over time rather than uphold the status quo, he says, adding that a more general theory than the project provides is required.

Asked what White wants from the project, Gerbner says, "He thinks we're not radical enough." Calling the project "essentially like a weather report," Gerbner feels that it would be "self-defeating" to be more polemical or more ideologically explicit. The investigators on the project are often depicted as media critics or social critics ("as, in some ways, scholars should be"), he says, but adds that he prefers to see conclusions in the data—"building the authority into the methodology rather than into your rhetoric."

Newsweek said that Gerbner is neither a Marshall McLuhan nor a Ralph Nader. Gerbner takes that to mean that he resembles both. He admired McLuhan, who was his friend. Whatever the limitations about "the medium is the message," Gerbner suggests, it was, in stimulating thought, "a hell of a lot better than being nonchallenging." He also admires the consumer advocacy of Nader, but not what he suggests are confinements of the work. Watching out for the consumer's best interests is like picking out the safest, most nutritious food in a cafeteria—"often trivial choices that are given to us as big deals," observes Gerbner. He adds, "In a sense, I'm much more radical"—criticizing all of the choices or even the cafeteria itself. That is what it means, he explains, to do research in order to establish a basis for judgment, and to teach students who enter the field to carry out even more research, and to stir political action, "to create a sense of alternatives, a sense of discussion, and to open up issues that had not really been seriously discussed—namely, what kind of a system do we want to have?"

Some scholars object to the scholarly activism, but Gerbner calls that a matter of temperament. "The experiences of my life have made the need for action and the

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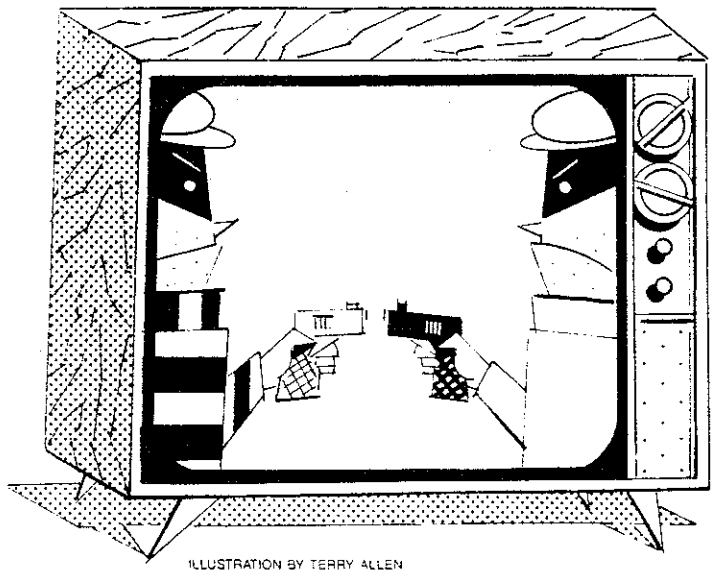


ILLUSTRATION BY TERRY ALLEN

TV and Children

"BY junior high, children who are heavy viewers have already developed the 'mean world' syndrome. They are more likely to be anxious and insecure and to think of people as mean and selfish and the world as a cruel place in which they must protect themselves."

need for participation and the need for involvement very clear to me. I cannot sit back, because I feel that where my responsibility as a scholar may conceivably leave off, my responsibility as a citizen begins," he says. "I recognize that those are two different roles, but I think everyone has those two roles. When you're dealing with areas that do have an impact on people's behavior and on public policy, your role as a citizen becomes more apparent."

He says that, as a citizen, he has "no clearly defined aim," except "to stimulate or excite or cultivate a sense of alternatives and say that whatever people in a democratic country do ultimately has to take the form of legislation," adding, "there's no other way to institutionalize it, to regulate behavior; there's no other way to structure institutions." Many people fear that legislation means Government control, he says. Yet, he points out, broadcasting lives on the law that makes advertising expenditures tax-deductible—they amount to $15 billion a year. "The alternative to Government control is monopoly control," he states. The existing system is not democratic and not a free market, so the question is not whether there should be control. "It's a question of on whose behalf, how broadly, how many organizations, citizens, groups can share in influencing decisions. Right now, they're pretty insulated. So what I'm advocating is that they should be less insulated. And our institutions should be more responsive." The media parade as a form of communication to the world, he says, but in fact, "they're a screen that very effectively screens out or admits very selectively and in very self-serving ways." Alternatives exist abroad. Gerbner would like people to know about them "to broaden the base of the institutions, particularly broadcasting, particularly television."

"I do not have a blueprint," Gerbner continues, but he does anticipate a rather Orwellian future if something is not done. He foresees a kind of tyranny—not a formal system, but "social control, control of people's behavior by the way in which you socialize them." Print decentralized cultural life; electronically-based communications are recentralizing it. "Recentralization is inimical to the theory of self-government, which is predicated on individual publics having some understanding of their own interest," he says. "Now if you can bring up a whole generation or several generations of poor people with a mentality of millionaires—which is what we seem to have done—you very well abolish or reduce or limit their ability to be aware of their own interests, insofar as they are competing or conflicting with the interests of other groups. And if you've done that, you've reduced people's ability to be self-governing.

"So a new modern dictatorship will not have to come in any kind of formal political guise," Gerbner goes on to say. "It would offend and revolt people. Why do that when you can do it so much more charmingly and entertainingly? It's a new problem because the same mechanism can be used to allocate resources rather than to concentrate them. It can be used to provide a much better understanding within society, to allow groups and publics to speak for themselves to the whole, instead of always being interpreted by somebody else."

Gerbner says that he watches TV "to see whether a scene or a program fits the structure I know is out there, out of our studies, or whether it's an exception. And every once in a while, I am encouraged by seeing something that is an exception to the rule."

One such exception was *The Day After*, the ABC-TV movie about nuclear war, which Gerbner calls "brilliantly produced"—both because it overcame many front-office objections and fears (for instance, he says, network executives worried about signing up sponsors for the program) and because it challenged the typical dramatic assumption that violence solves problems. He does not consider *The Day After* a violent film. "You didn't see people pursuing private gains and hitting and killing each other, which is what most television violence is," he says.

Gerbner has been such a staunch and visible exponent of his ideas that *New York* magazine called him "typecast." Gerbner accepts the role. "But in order to be used by television, you can extract a price from television," he says. "It enhances your ability to be a 'certified authority.' It's like 'as advertised on television,' as if that would mean anything (it seems to mean something to a lot of people)." Nonetheless, making appearances has its frustrations—like getting cut off before saying what he came before the camera to say, which some of Ted Koppel's guests on ABC's *Nightline* learn, he says. But sometimes he is not cut off and can say his piece: after every such appearance, or article in a popular magazine, he gets hundreds of requests for more information, he says, adding, "That is my part of the bargain."

I state one of my little biases, that within each celebrity rests some hollowness, and ask about the criticism of him as a self-promoter. "There is a danger, especially in academic life, because academic people disdain popular appearances and feel that it makes them superficial, [sensing] that they are used in shallow ways on behalf of other aims—which it does. That's part of the trade-off; that's part of the bargain," he says. "Still, I continue." I have heard it said, in reference to Gerbner, that being "a celebrity" is not a proper scholarly role. Gerbner seems to have heard it, too. "Considering the source, I thought it was more a feeling of jealousy than of impropriety," he says.

"But," he continues, "if you're dealing not with esoteric things that only a few specialists are really interested in, if you're dealing with public issues that somehow have some meaning to almost everyone, and if you're pioneering, trying to show a new set of propositions, a new discipline, what it can contribute, I think you have to be a bit of an entrepreneur. You have to be a bit of a celebrity.

"I try to look for the most productive opportunities to appear in public. I think that, by promoting myself, I promote the school, I promote the discipline, I promote our work. And I don't know how else that can be done. If I'm sorry about anything, it's about my limitations on my ability to do that, but not the fact that I'm doing it. If anything, I think I ought to be able to do it more." END

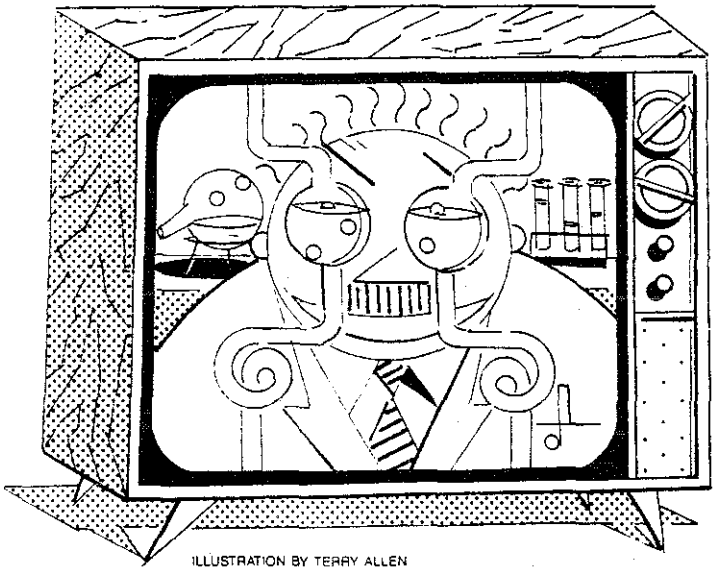


ILLUSTRATION BY TERRY ALLEN

TV and Science

"THE image of science, although mostly benign, is linked with future, fantasy, and danger. The image of the scientist, though largely positive, is a relatively rare, limited, and—compared to that of other characters—strange and forbidding image."

HARTFORD, CT
CATHOLIC TRANSCRIPT
WEEKLY (C)

MAR 2 3 1984

BURRELLE'S

Church Leaders Look To Gallup

By JOHN DART
Religious News Service

6270

The most listened-to figure in organized religion today, judging by the demand for his time and wealth of information, could be George Gallup Jr.

Church leaders today hardly speak of the state of U.S. religion without citing a Gallup poll.

Thirty Catholic and Protestant groups sponsored a major Gallup survey of the "unchurched" American in 1979, but a broader coalition of Catholics, main-line Protestants and fundamentalists last year funded a Gallup study on the impact of religious television, the so-called "electronic church." The report is due in April.

The 53-year-old Dr. Gallup, who pioneered in polling religious attitudes the way his famous father did decades earlier on political opinions, is frequently booked as a speaker at religious conventions and meetings. He is scheduled to address the annual meeting of U.S. denominational presidents in Chicago today, March 23, and will speak to a seminar of the Southern Baptists' Christian Life Commission next week.

The rise of the junior Gallup as sociological guru for the churches is explained only partly by his own religious interests — interests which once prompted him to consider the ministry.

His popularity may be tied to broader trends, says sociologist

Mr. Gallup

Jeffrey K. Hadden, president of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion. Organized religion is just as caught as the rest of contemporary America in the "information age," whether it is computerized data or other factual resources, he says.

"We want information, not opinions," says Professor Hadden, of the University of Virginia. "And if we do want opinions, we want a choice of opinions."

Dr. Gallup, in some ways, speaks to an even broader constituency than many famous religious leaders because he is perceived as more sympathetic to traditional religion and yet bears the aura of scientific neutrality.

A National Council of Churches official, Peggy L. Shriver, comments, "Conservative church leaders now can say, 'We've got Gallup . . . here he is, telling us what we say counts.' It's reassuring for many people to know there are a lot of people out there 'who believe what I believe."

'Believers'

Dr. Gallup found, for instance, that even the majority of nonchurchgoers in the country are "believers." Eighty-six percent of Americans say they pray to God and 55 percent say they pray once a day or more. Thus, the potential for religious revival seems to be borne out by the numbers who respond positively to religious questions.

When the National Council of Churches, Catholic groups, the National Religious Broadcasters and other religious bodies moved toward sponsoring a detailed analysis of the impact of religious television on church life, the conservative religious groups were "very skeptical of almost any group other than Gallup doing the study, so we wound up doing a combination of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania and Gallup working together," said Ms. Shriver.

MIAMI, FL
THE MIAMI NEWS
WEEKEND EDITION 59,650

APR

BURRELLE'S

Sunday pew holds its own against TV worship

Cox News Service 6270

A two-year study sparked by disagreements between traditional and television preachers has found that the "electronic church" does not lure people away from the Sunday pew.

The University of Pennsylvania research, released this week in New York, also concluded that about 13 million people, most of them already converted, watch religious TV programs.

The figure represents only 6 percent of the viewing public and one-tenth of those claimed by some televangelists.

Though originally commissioned to settle a dispute, the study warns the factions to stop worrying about each other and to pay more attention to the nation's "new religion" — prime time television.

Researchers found that the more television a person watched, the more likely he was to use it as a substitute for religion.

"Certainly it has its ritualistic aspects. It does certain things that religion has done," said Stewart Hoover, a project investigator with the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communication.

"There's a great deal (in television) that explains reality, teaches basic values and ethics," he said.

The project grew out of a 1980 challenge by the National Council of Churches to Pat Robertson of the 700 Club. Mainline denominations have long blamed TV preachers for diverting money and attention from local churches, but until the Annenberg report, no conclusive research was available.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing . . . the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School. "Our study found no support for that charge."

Study indicates TV evangelism doesn't hurt church attendance

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The growth of TV evangelism has not caused many people to stop attending or donating money to their local churches, according to researchers who conducted a two-year study of religion and TV.

Television ministries have attracted millions of viewers, but those audiences are usually made up of people with long-standing allegiance to organized religion, according to researchers from the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania and the Gallup Organization of Princeton, N.J.

The study was commissioned by a group of more than 30 religious organizations, including the United Presbyterian Church, the U.S. Catholic Conference and television ministries such as PTL Network and Jerry Falwell's Old Time Gospel Hour.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School. "Our study found no support for that charge."

Gerbner, a member of the research team, said communication research over the years indicates that prime time television drama, and religious programing, has become the "new religion" in the United States.

"Watching television has become a ritual that meets certain needs that used to be satisfied by religion," he said in a statement issued Sunday.

The surveyers found that about 13.3-million people regularly watch religious programs, or about 6.2 percent of all people with television sets in their homes.

The programs "appeal to an older, traditional audience and watching these programs appears to be a confirmation of their religious beliefs, not a substitute for them," the researchers said.

"Their interest in the electronic church is complementary to other forms of religious practice, like church worship."

Followers of TV evangelism typically are older, have less education and income, are more conservative politically and are more fundamentalist in their religious beliefs than the average person, the study found.

They also are more likely to live in rural areas and in the South and Midwest than people who don't watch religious programs, the researchers said.

People who watch religious programs frequently express greater confidence in their local church leaders than "light viewers" and "nonviewers," they said.

About one of every four religious programs mentions local churches and one in 10 urges viewers to attend church, the study found.

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER
PHILADELPHIA, PA
M—454,471 S—819,304

Poll: Church not hurt by TV ministry

United Press International

Television evangelism attracts a loyal and stable audience, composed of older viewers who are conservative politically and fundamentalist in their beliefs, a study indicates.

The survey, conducted by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications, was paid for by a group of religious organizations, including TV ministries such as the PTL Network and Old Time Gospel Hour.

Researchers for the Gallup organization of Princeton, N.J., also worked on the study, which was to be released today.

George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School, said the study discredits the theory that watching religious programs keeps people from attending church.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing ... the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," he said.

The survey indicated that 13.3 million people regularly watch religious programs, about 6.2 percent of the estimated number of people in households with televisions.

"The programs appeal to an older, traditional audience, and watching these programs appears to be a confirmation of their religious beliefs, not a substitute for them," Gerbner said.

The survey was commissioned by a coalition called the Ad Hoc Commit-

THE BUSINESSMAN AS VILLAIN

By Eric Pace

On TV and in Novels, the Bad Guy Sells

ON CBS's "Dallas," the scoundrelly businessman J. R. Ewing flashes his villainous smile. On ABC's "Dynasty," the oil-industry wheeler-dealer Alexis Carrington is vengeful and destructive.

In Sidney Sheldon's long-time best-seller, the novel "Master of the Game," the main character, Kate Blackwell, is a ruthless conglomerate tycoon.

Fictional "bad guy" business executives are smirking, scheming, cheating and conniving their way across the nation's television screens and the pages of its novels.

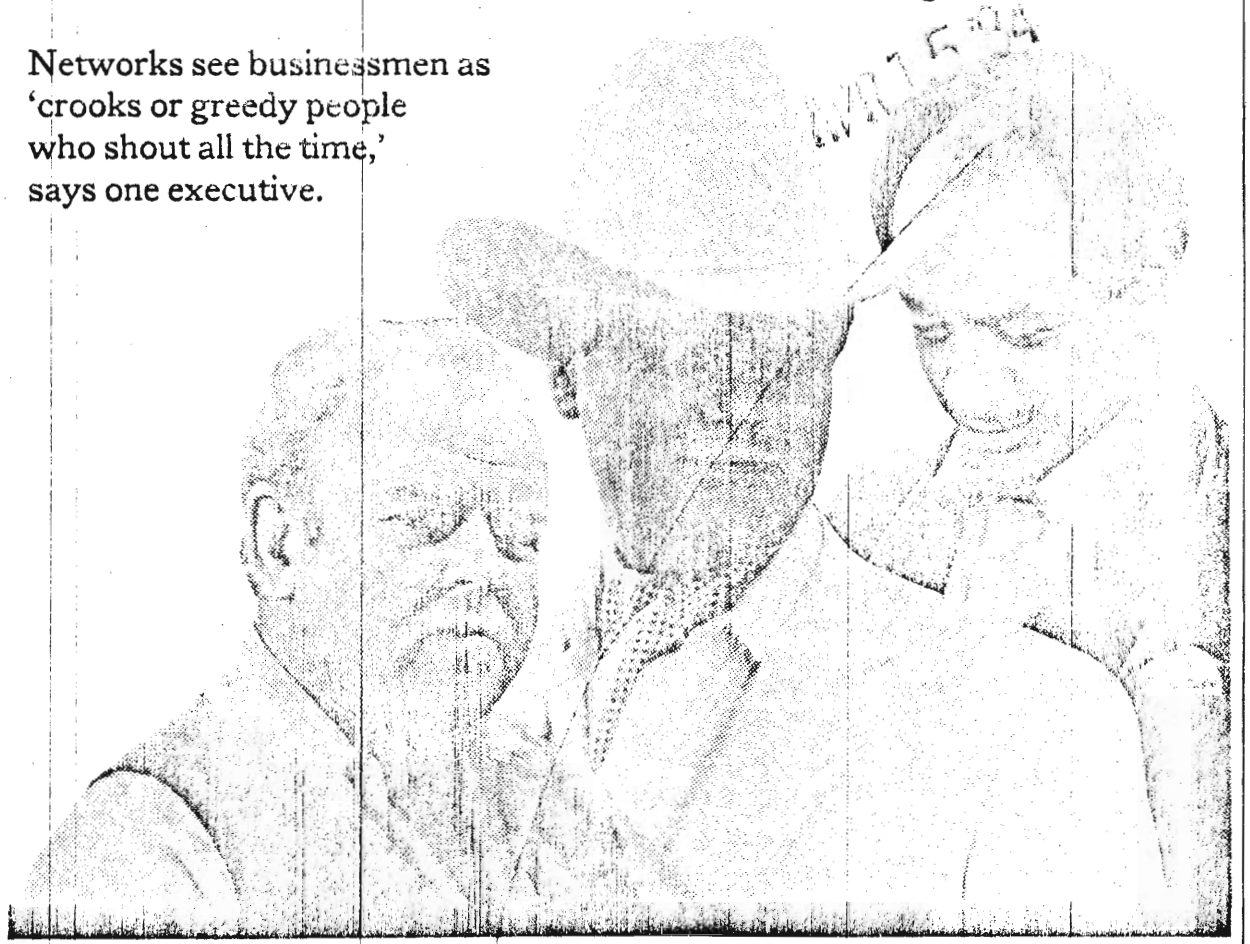
It's become a familiar theme in the long fictional and dramatic history of America — a country that, ironically, was built largely by the efforts of hard-driving capitalists but at the same time lionizes the working-class hero, the fellow who often finds himself in conflict with just such a capitalist.

But these bad-guys capitalists seem to go over fine with the public: "Dallas's" ratings have been stratospheric, and so have the sales of "Master of the Game." Its paperback publisher, Warner Books, has printed more than 4.3 million copies.

Yet the bad guys have been drawing boos and grumbles from real-life business people — mostly concerned about prime-time network television shows, and much less about novels. Bernard J. O'Keefe, chairman of the National Association of Manufacturers' executive committee, complains that when the networks create fictional business folk, "they are either crooks or greedy or people who shout all the time."

Mr. O'Keefe — he's also chairman of E.G.& G. Inc., a Wellesley, Mass.-based high-technology company with sales of $1 billion a year — argues that "having a hard-working, unexciting businessman" or police officer

Networks see businessmen as 'crooks or greedy people who shout all the time,' says one executive.



Archie (Carroll O'Connor), J.R. (Larry Hagman) and George (Sherman Hemsley).

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BE that as it may, some scholars have systematically studied fictional depictions of American business people ... and have

American business world.

Such rumbles and grumbles don't come only from Big Business and Big Finance. John E. Sloan Jr., president of the National Federation of Independent Business — an organization of more than 500,000 small- and independent-business owners — said in a speech in February that in some tele-

Another early business novel much pored over by literary historians is Frank Norris's 1903 work, "The Pit," about anarchic speculation in wheat. That book, too, gives a negative view of a hard-driving businessman — and it was a best seller in its day.

But all is not sourness and gloom. Professor Watts reported in her book

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Mr. O'Keefe — he's also chairman of E.G.& G. Inc., a Wellesley, Mass.-based high-technology company with sales of $1 billion a year — argues that "having a hard-working, unexciting businessman" or police officer or whatever as a fictional television character "doesn't sell advertising, and so most of us are caricatured for that reason."

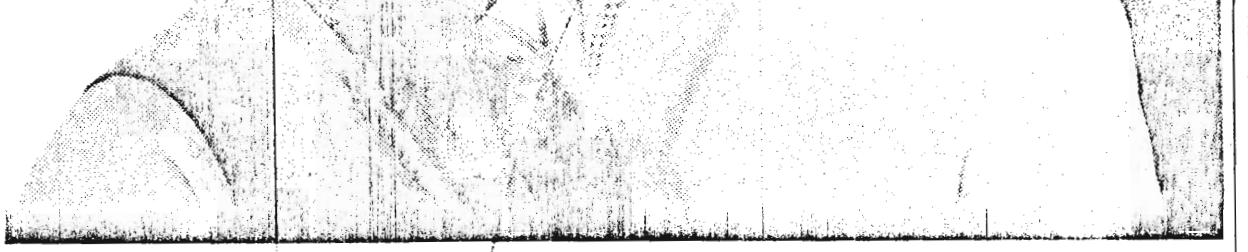
The beef at the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, as Thomas J. Donohue, group vice president, puts it, is that "there is a tendency in entertainment television to depict many business people as wealthy, unscrupulous and succeeding through less-than-honorable dealings. This is totally incorrect."

But network executives contend that such peeves ignore some basic considerations of their art. "The viewing public," says Alice M. Henderson, a CBS Broadcast Group vice president, "is a lot more intelligent than some of those people give it credit for being."

Mrs. Henderson, vice president for program practices, says "the primary function of prime-time fictional television is to entertain." Much of the programming being complained about, she contends, "has done just that — it has entertained people. It's not meant to be a view of business people in real life."

At ABC, Alan Wurtzel says: "Television tends to deal with larger-than-life situations. With television, as with any dramatic form, there is very rarely a depiction of the day-to-day life of any profession, be it doctor, lawyer or businessman."

The day-to-day truth, says Mr. Wurtzel, vice president of broadcast standards and practices for ABC television on the East Coast, is that "the vast majority of businessmen — network executives included, I might



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BE that as it may, some scholars have systematically studied fictional depictions of American business people — and have found that those portraits bear more than their share of warts. At the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, for instance, Prof. Emily Stipes Watts of the English department has concluded that since 1945, "most businessmen depicted in television and serious literature are characterized as greedy, unethical and immoral (or amoral)."

At the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications, researchers have catalogued more than 2,000 fictional business people shown on prime-time network television in the past eight years. The school's dean, George Gerbner, reports that one in three of the characters is a "bad guy" — which, he says, is a much more negative ratio than the bad-guy ratio for doctors (1 in 13) or police officers (1 in 29).

Other analysts, crunching different sets of numbers, have decided that prime-time television's presentation of fictional business people is even wartier. In a 1982 article in the journal "Public Opinion," Linda S. Lichter, S. Robert Lichter and Stanley Rothman reported that "the struggle between good and evil dominates television, and businessmen come down squarely on the side of the bad guys."

The three analysts reported that, of the fictional TV business folk they studied, "60 percent were portrayed negatively, compared to only 28 percent who were depicted positively." They concluded that "if American business has redeeming social values, they rarely turn up on prime-time television. Rather, businessmen

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He singled out three fictional small-business owners spotlighted on CBS television in recent years: Archie Bunker, now no longer first-run network fare, but still widely seen on local stations; George Jefferson, the owner of dry cleaning plants on "The Jeffersons," and Mel, the diner owner on "Alice."

"Bunker is a bigot," Mr. Sloan said, "Jefferson is a conniver, and Mel, a selfish loudmouth who is hard on his employees. Not exactly models of the small-business people I represent."

That sort of depiction, he said, has helped make business widely suspected, and "as a result, scores of agencies and thousands of regulations have sprung up, imposing checks on the performance of business."

CBS views its fictional children more fondly. Mrs. Henderson argues that Archie Bunker should not "truly be labeled a bigot." "He's a person you love to hate," she says, but "I don't think that's a negative portrayal of a small tavern owner."

As for George Jefferson, she says he "may be a little rough around the edges as to how he deals with people, but he's certainly not at all corrupt. He's genuinely a very good person." And Mel, she says, "cares about his employees as much as he irritates them — that's not portraying him as a negative small-business man."

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But all is not sourness and gloom, Professor Watts reported in her book. Among the cultural cross-currents she charted was what she called "a growing tendency among our recent writers to treat the businessman with compassion, understanding, and even admiration." She suggested in an interview that recent fiction-writers' portrayals of small-business men have become more favorable.

And Roger W. Straus Jr., president of the publishing house Farrar, Straus & Giroux, argues that ideological currents have favored fictional business folk in recent decades. He says, "speaking of the top-of-the-line literary novel," in the Depression years, "certain authors of the Steinbeck-Dos Passos school depicted the business executive as a capitalist heavy, but I don't think that's been so true in contemporary times."

The reason, he believes, is that today's writers find "the present capitalistic society more compatible" than writers viewed it in the Depression and early postwar years.

Winthrop Knowlton, chairman of another publishing house, Harper & Row, singles out John P. Marquand, who died in 1960, as having written perceptive fiction about business people. And he says the writer-lawyer Louis Auchincloss is one fictioneer of today who has an "understanding of how marvelously rich and tensioned" office lives can be.

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The day-to-day truth, says Mr. Wurtzel, vice president of broadcast standards and practices for ABC television on the East Coast, is that "the vast majority of businessmen — network executives included, I might add — pay their bills and operate in a highly ethical and appropriate fashion." And anyway, he says, "I don't think that businessmen are all depicted unfavorably" in fictional television.

At NBC, M. S. Rukeyser Jr., executive vice president for public information, says catcalls about fictional television characters don't come only from the business world. "It's probably true that no group likes the way it's portrayed on television or, in fact, in any other part of the media," he says. "The goals of a special interest group, which by definition are special and positive, are often at odds with how that group sees itself portrayed on television, and particularly in entertainment programming."

Conversely, Leonard S. Matthews, president of the American Association of Advertising Agencies, says businessmen aren't alone in suffering at fiction-writers' hands. "The writer who sits down to entertain and communicate fast finds his job made much easier if he stereotypes people."

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Drawing on such findings, Herbert Schmertz, the Mobil Corporation's vice president for public affairs, asked a rhetorical question in a speech last January: "Who are the worst crooks of all on TV after professional gangsters?"

"You're looking at one: the businessman," he declared. "Not every crook on TV has an occupation that can be identified, but of those who do, the largest single group," he said, is business people. And he suggested that exporting American television's "crazy-crooked-businessmen shows" helps fan foreign suspicions "of American institutions, particularly the multinational corporations."

A similar though milder view comes from George L. Ball, president of Prudential-Bache: "There have certainly been relatively few pieces of modern fiction or drama" on television or film "that I've seen in the recent past that have had as a sympathetic protagonist" someone from the researchers have catalogued more than 2,000 fictional business people shown on prime-time network television in the past eight years. The school's dean, George Gerbner, reports that one in three of the characters is a "bad guy" — which, he says, is a much more negative ratio than the bad-guy ratio for doctors (1 in 13) or police officers (1 in 29).

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At ABC, Mr. Wurtzel argues that the character flaws of "Dynasty's" vengeful Alexis Carrington are balanced by the sterling qualities of another character, her ex-husband, Blake Carrington, "a very tough but fair businessman who is not involved in anything unscrupulous."

THIS whole artistic issue, if that's what it is, flows out of America's cultural and commercial past, with many cross-currents. Professor Watts of the University of Illinois wrote in her 1982 book-length treatise, "The Businessman in American Literature," that "The capitalist has been attacked for any number of reasons throughout our literary history."

She analyzed the 1885 work that has been dubbed the first American business novel, William Dean Howells's "The Rise of Silas Lapham." And her verdict was that the image of Silas, the businessman and main character, "is one of greed and grasping miserliness, of unethical business dealings somewhere on the way to financial success, of insensitivity to the needs of employees, of emotional atrophy, and of exploitation."

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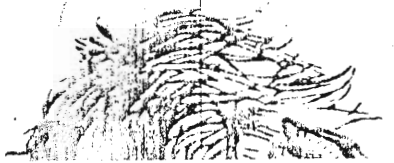
Mr. Knowlton, who has written some fiction himself, also offers one practical explanation of why fictional portrayals of the business world give its real-life denizens a pain: "There's a great thinness of knowledge about businessmen on the part of people" writing fiction, he says, "because most people who are writing fiction are spending their time writing fiction, they're not going to an office. So what we tend to get is caricatures."

And Prudential-Bache's Mr. Ball says the blame for the unlovely portraits may lie partly "with those of us in the business community who have probably done too little to talk about some of the things of conscience, some of the things of morality, some of the things of honor that we do."

Mr. Ball also argues that the proper reflex for a business person, when riled by a fictional character, is not a gripe, but a stiff upper lip.

"People in any business," he says, "bridle at seeing fictional portrayals of people in their line of work that are reputationally adverse. But to carp about it really implies a defensive mentality as opposed to a pride that can override pinpricks. Thus, for us to criticize specific illustrations would be, I think, a form of sniveling." ■



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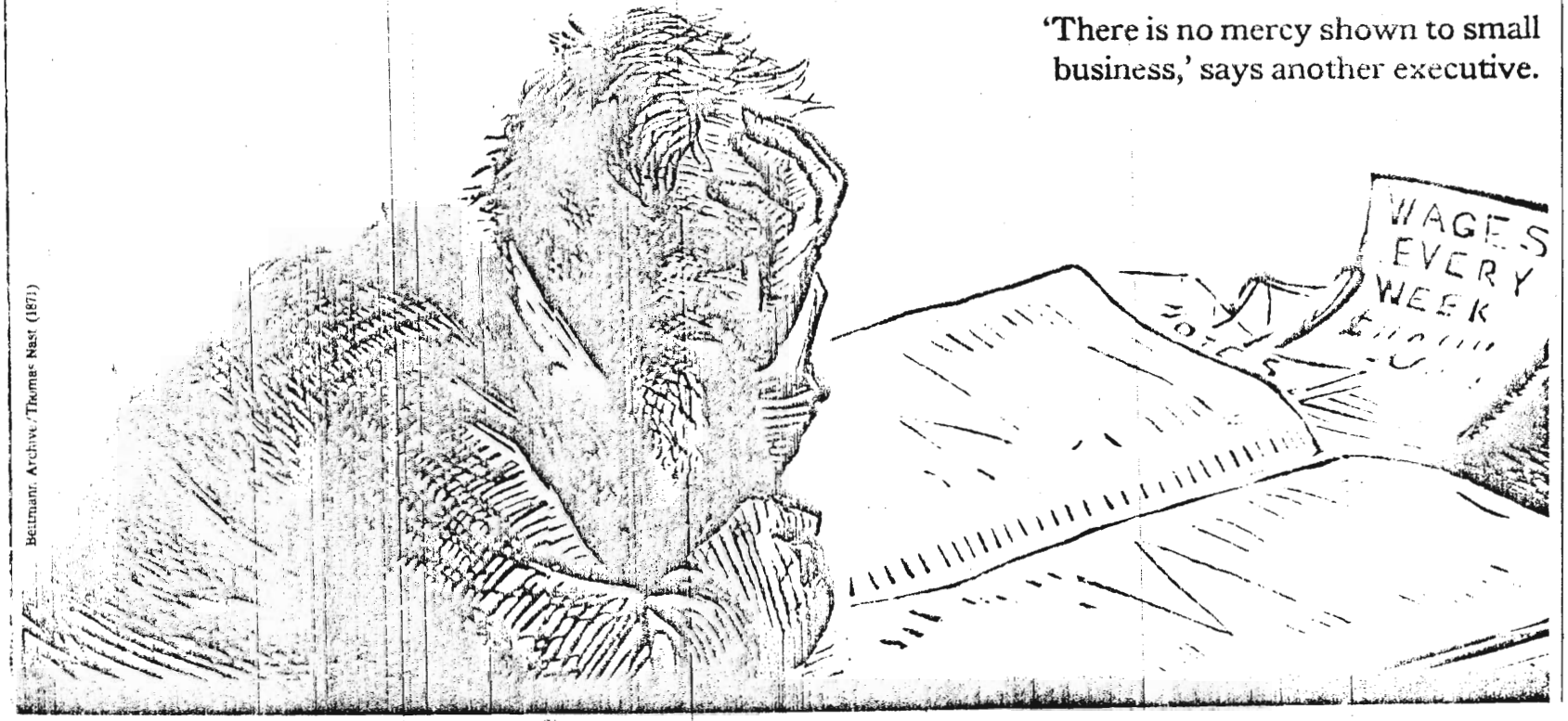
some of the things of morality, some of the things of honor that we do."

Mr. Ball also argues that the proper reflex for a business person, when riled by a fictional character, is not a gripe, but a stiff upper lip.

"People in any business," he says, "bridle at seeing fictional portrayals of people in their line of work that are reputationally adverse. But to carp about it really implies a defensive mentality as opposed to a pride that can override pinpricks. Thus, for us to criticize specific illustrations would be, I think, a form of sniveling." ■

'There is no mercy shown to small business,' says another executive.



Bettmann Archive / Thomas Nast (1871)

TV religion not luring congregations from church

FRONT PAGE

By Jim Galloway
Staff Writer

A two-year study sparked by disagreements between traditional and television preachers has found that the "electronic church" does not lure people away from the Sunday pew.

The University of Pennsylvania research, to be released Monday morning in New York, also concluded that about 13 million people, most of them already converted, watch religious TV programs.

The figure represents only 6 percent of the viewing public and one-tenth of those claimed by some "televangelists."

Though originally commissioned to settle a dispute, the study warns the factions to stop worrying about each other and to pay more attention to the nation's "new religion" — prime-time television. Researchers found that the more television a person watched, the more likely he was to use it as a substitute for religion.

"Certainly it has its ritualistic aspects. It does certain things that religion has done," said Stewart Hoover, a project investigator with the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communication.

"There's a great deal (in television) that explains reality, teaches basic values and ethics," he said.

The study grew out of a 1980 challenge from the National Council of Churches to Pat Robertson of the 700 Club. Mainline denominations have long blamed TV preachers for diverting money and attention from local churches, but until the Annenberg report, no conclusive research was available.

THE ATLANTA CONSTITUTION
ATLANTA, GA.
D. 210,793

APR 16 1984

BURRELLE'S

TV EVANGELIST
Jerry Falwell

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The Atlanta Journal
ATLANTA, GA.
D. 183,760

APR 16 1984
BURRELLE'S

Study: TV isn't hurting church rolls, donations

6270

By Jim Galloway
Staff Writer

A two-year study sparked by disagreements between traditional and television preachers has found that the "electronic church" does not lure people away from the Sunday pew.

The University of Pennsylvania research, released this morning in New York, also concluded that about 13 million people, most of them already converted, watch religious TV programs.

The figure represents only 6 percent of the viewing public and one-tenth of those claimed by some television evangelists.

Though originally commissioned to settle a dispute, the study warns the factions to stop worrying about each other and to pay more attention to the nation's "new religion" — prime time television.

Researchers found that the more television a person watched, the more likely he was to use it as a substitute for religion.

"Certainly it has its ritualistic aspects. It does certain things that religion has done," said Stewart Hoover, a project investigator with the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communication.

The project grew out of a 1980 challenge by the National Council of Churches to Pat Robertson of the 700 Club. Mainline denominations have long blamed TV preachers for diverting money and attention from local churches, but until the Annenberg report, no conclusive research was available.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing . . . the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School. "Our study found no support for that charge."

An unusual alliance of 30 denominations, churches and television preachers ultimately put up $170,000 to form the Ad Hoc Committee on Electronic Church Research to finance the research. Donors included Robertson, the NCC, Jerry Falwell, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Southern Baptist Convention and the U.S. Catholic Conference.

The group chose the Annenberg School, which has a history of television research, and the Gallup Organization, which was in charge of a nationwide survey of viewers, as neutral investigators.

AUBURN, N.Y.
CITIZEN
(Syracuse Market Area)
D. & S. 17,162

APR 16 1984
BURRELLE'S

Team cites study results

NEW YORK (UPI) — A major study of the audience of religious television programming says the audience is smaller than some TV evangelists claim but does not have the negative impact on church-going some critics maintain.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania and a member of the research team that studied religious television. "Our study found no support for that charge."

BOSTON, MA
HERALD
D. 228,452 SUN. 204,685

APR 16 1984

BURRELLE'S

TV preachers no substitute for church: study

PHILADELPHIA — Television evangelism attracts a loyal and stable audience of older viewers who are politically conservative and theologically fundamentalist, a study indicates.

The survey, conducted by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications, was paid for by a group of religious organizations, including such TV ministries as the PTL Network and Old Time Gospel Hour.

Researchers for the Gallup Organization of Princeton, N.J., also worked on the study, which was to be released today.

George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School, said the study discredits the theory that watching religious programs keeps people from attending church.

The survey indicated the number of people who regularly watch religious programs is 13.3 million, about 6.2 percent of the estimated number of persons in households with televisions.

"The programs appeal to an older, traditional audience and watching these programs appears to be a confirmation of their religious beliefs, not a substitute for them," Gerbner said.

"Their interest in the electronic church is complementary to other forms of religious practice, like church worship," he said.

BRIDGEPORT, CT
BRIDGEPORT POST
71,204 S. 90,789

APR 16 1984
BURRELLE'S

Study: evangelism on TV no harm to church-going

10270

NEW YORK (UPI) — A major study of the audience of religious television programming says the audience is smaller than some TV evangelists claim but does not have the negative impact on church-going some critics maintain.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania and a member of the research team that studied religious television. "Our study found no support for that charge," he said.

At the same time, Gerbner said the study, which was released today, found the "audience for religious television is smaller than has been claimed" — about 13.3 million regular viewers for all programming. That amounts to about 6.2 percent of the estimated number of persons in households with television sets.

The Annenberg study, conducted jointly with the Gallup Organization, was commissioned by a broad range of religious groups including Jerry Falwell's Old Time Gospel Hour, the National Council of Churches, the Christian Broadcasting Network, the U.S. Catholic Conference, the Southern Baptist Convention and some 30 other groups.

It is the first major, in-depth look at the audience for religious broadcasting.

According to a summary of today's study, most of the religious broadcasting audience are not converted to religion by the charismatic television preachers but are instead church members with "a long-standing allegiance to organized religion."

They drew a profile of the religious TV audience, drawn by television content not found on other television shows, as older, having less education and income, are more conservative politically and more "fundamentalist" in their religious beliefs. They are also more likely to live in rural areas and in the South and Midwest.

Other findings included:

- Half the religious programming viewers say they are dissatisfied with the "prevailing moral climate," compared to only one-third of non-viewers.
- Half said evangelism and missionary work are the main goal of the church, compared to one-third of the non-viewers.
- Only one-fith said the church should be "working for social justice" while a third of the non-viewers said this should be a priority of the church.
- Heavy viewers of religious programs express greater confidence in local church leaders than both light viewers or non-viewers.

THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL
MEMPHIS, TENN.
D. 200,189 SUN. 282,054

APR 16 1984

BURRELLE'S

Study pinpoints TV religion audience as older, conservative

6270

PHILADELPHIA (UPI) — Television evangelism attracts a loyal and stable audience of older viewers who are politically conservative and theologically fundamentalist, a study indicates.

The survey, conducted by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications, was paid for by a group of religious organizations, including such TV ministries as the PTL Network and Old Time Gospel Hour.

Researchers for the Gallup Organization of Princeton, N.J., also worked on the study.

The survey indicated the number of people who regularly watch religious programs is 13.3 million, about 6.2 percent of the estimated number of persons in households with televisions.

THE DERRICK
OIL CITY, PA.
AM—15,168

TV Evangelism Focus Of Study

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Televised evangelism may have attracted millions of loyal viewers, but it has not cut down on support for more traditional forms of worship, according to a study by researchers from the University of Pennsylvania and the Gallup Organization.

Researchers working out of Penn's Annenberg School of Communications found that contrary to popular opinion, people who support the electronic ministries also attend and contribute to their local churches.

The two-year study, which was to be released Monday, was commissioned by a group of more than 30 religious organizations, including the United Presbyterian Church, the U.S. Catholic Conference and television ministries such as PTL Network and the Old Time Gospel Hour.

The findings contradict the notion that TV evangelism has contributed to a drop in support for local churches.

COLUMBUS, OH
DISPATCH
D. 200,141 S. 339,942

APR 16 1984

TV doesn't empty pews, study says

6270

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The growth of TV evangelism has not caused many people to stop attending or donating money to their local churches, according to researchers who conducted a two-year study of religion and TV.

Television ministries have attracted millions of viewers, but those audiences are usually made up of people with longstanding allegiance to organized religion, said researchers from the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania and the Gallup Organization of Princeton, N.J.

Jacksonville Journal
JACKSONVILLE, FLA.
D. 41,035

APR 16 1984

TV evangelism seen no bar to attendance

PHILADELPHIA — The growth of TV evangelism has not caused many people to stop attending or donating money to their local churches, according to researchers who conducted a two-year study of religion and TV.

Television ministries have attracted millions of viewers, but those audiences are usually made up of people with long-standing allegiance to organized religion, according to researchers from the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania and the Gallup Organization of Princeton, N.J.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School. "Our study found no support for that charge."

LOCK HAVEN EXPRESS
LOCK HAVEN, PA.
PM—10,491

TV Does Not Hurt Church Going

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — People worried about the "erosion" of church attendance and financial contributions shouldn't blame television evangelists, according to researchers who conducted a two-year study of religion and TV.

Contrary to what many may feel, the researchers said, the growth of TV evangelism has not caused many people to stop attendi or donating money to the local churches.

Television ministries ha attracted millions of viewer but those audiences a usually comprised of peop with longstanding allegian to organized religion, a cording to researchers fro the University of Pe nsylvania and the Gall Organization nceton, N.J.

Ledger-Star
NORFOLK, VIRGINIA
D. 32,141

APR 16 1984
BURRELLE'S

TV's effect on churches discounted

62P Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — The growth of TV evangelism has not caused many people to stop attending or donating money to their local churches, according to researchers who conducted a two-year study of religion and TV.

Television ministries have attracted millions of viewers, but those audiences are usually made up of people with long-standing allegiance to organized religion, according to researchers from the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania and the Gallup organization of Princeton, N.J.

The study was commissioned by a group of more than 30 religious organizations, including the United Presbyterian Church, the U.S. Catholic Conference and television ministries such as PTL Network and Jerry Falwell's Old Time Gospel Hour.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School. "Our study found no support for that charge."

Gerbner, a member of the research team, said communication research over the years indicates that prime time television drama, and religious programming, have become the "new religion" in the United States.

"Watching television has become a ritual that meets certain needs that used to be satisfied by religion," he said in a statement issued Sunday.

The surveyers found that about 13.3 million people regularly watch religious programs, or about 6.2 percent of all people with television sets in their homes.

The programs "appeal to an older, traditional audience and watching these programs appears to be a confirmation of their religious beliefs, not a substitute for them," the researchers said.

"Their interest in the electronic church is complementary to other forms of religious practice, like church worship."

Followers of TV evangelism typically are older, have less education and income, are more conservative politically and are more fundamentalist in their religious beliefs than the average person, the study found.

They also are more likely to live in rural areas and in the South and Midwest than people who don't watch religious programs, the researchers said.

People who watch religious programs frequently express greater confidence in their local church leaders than "light viewers" and "non-viewers," they said.

About one of every four religious programs mentions local churches, and one in 10 urges viewers to attend

The Miami Herald
MIAMI, FLA.
D. 397,953 SUN. 483,100

Televison preachers draw older conservative viewers

6270

PHILADELPHIA — (UPI) — Television evangelism attracts a loyal and stable audience of older viewers who are politically conservative and theologically fundamentalist, a study indicates.

The survey, conducted by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications, was paid for by a group of religion organizations, including such TV ministries as the PTL Network and Old Time Gospel Hour.

Researchers for the Gallup Organization of Princeton, N.J., also worked on the study, which is to be released today.

The survey indicated the number of people who regularly watch religion programs is 13.3 million, about 6.2 percent of the estimated number of persons in households with televisions.

The Mobile Press
MOBILE, ALA.
D. 52,262

Study shows TV evangelism doesn't hurt church attendance

0270

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The growth of TV evangelism has not caused many people to stop attending or donating money to their local churches, according to researchers who conducted a two-year study of religion and TV.

TELEVISION ministries have attracted millions of viewers, but those audiences are usually made up of people with long-standing allegiance to organized religion, according to researchers from the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania and the Gallup Organization of Princeton, N.J.

THE STUDY was commissioned by a group of more than 30 religious organizations, including the United Presbyterian Church, the U.S. Catholic Conference and television ministries such as PTL Network and Jerry Falwell's Old Time Gospel Hour.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School. "Our study found no support for that charge."

MUTUAL
PRESS CLIPPING SERVICE INC.
APR 16 84

NEWS - ITEM
SHAMOKIN, PA
PM—16,280

Church not hurt by tv evangelist

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — People worried about the "erosion" of church attendance and financial contributions shouldn't blame television evangelists, according to researchers who conducted a two-year study of religion and TV.

Contrary to what many may feel, the researchers said, the growth of TV evangelism has not caused many people to stop attending or donating money to their local churches.

Television ministries have attracted millions of viewers, but those audiences are usually comprised of people with long-standing allegiance to organized religion, according to researchers from the University of Pennsylvania and the Gallup Organization of Princeton, N.J.

The researchers, working out of Penn's Annenberg School of Communications, were to release a report on their two-year study today.

The study was commissioned by a group of more than 30 religious organizations, including the United Presbyterian Church, the U.S. Catholic Conference and television ministries such as PTL Network and the Old Time Gospel Hour.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School. "Our study found no support for that charge."

The News-Sentinel
FORT WAYNE, IND.
D. 65,800

APR 16 1984
BURRELLE'S

Survey views TV ministers

FRONT PAGE 6270

NEW YORK (UPI) — A major study of the audience of religious television programming says the audience is smaller than some TV evangelists claim but does not have the negative impact on church-going some believe.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania. "That is not the case."

At the same time, Gerbner found the "audience for religious television is smaller than has been claimed" — about 13.3 million regular viewers for all programming. That amounts to about 6.2 percent of potential viewers.

The study added that most of the religious broadcasting audience are not converted by the shows but are instead church members with "a long-standing allegiance to organized religion." It described regular viewers as older, less educated, lower income, and likely to live in rural areas of the South and Midwest.

The survey was commissioned by religious groups including Jerry Falwell's Old Time Gospel Hour, the National Council of Churches, the Christian Broadcasting Network, the U.S. Catholic Conference and the Southern Baptist Convention.

San Francisco Chronicle
THE VOICE OF THE WEST
D. 537,621 SUN. 486,422

Who Watches TV Evangelists

Philadelphia

Television evangelism attracts a loyal and stable audience of older viewers who are politically conservative and theologically fundamentalist, a study indicates.

The survey, conducted by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications, was paid for by a group of religious organizations, including such TV ministries as the PTL Network and Old Time Gospel Hour.

Researchers for the Gallup Organization of Princeton, N.J., also worked on the study, which is to be released today.

George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School, said the study discredits the theory that watching religious programs keeps people from attending church.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing ... the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," he said. "Our study found no support for that charge."

The survey indicated the number of people who regularly watch religious programs is 13.3 million, about 6.2 percent of the estimated number of people in households with televisions.

The survey was commissioned by a coalition called the Ad Hoc Committee on Electronic Church Research.

United Press

San Jose Mercury-News
SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA
D. 271,955

APR 16 1984
BURRELLE'S

Survey: TV evangelism hasn't hurt churches

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The growth of TV evangelism has not caused many people to stop attending or donating money to their local churches, according to researchers who conducted a two-year study of religion and TV.

Television ministries have attracted millions of viewers, but those audiences are usually made up of people with long-standing allegiance to organized religion, according to researchers from the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania and the Gallup Organization of Princeton, N.J.

The study was commissioned by a group of more than 30 religious organizations, including the United Presbyterian Church, the U.S. Catholic Conference and television ministries such as PTL Network and Jerry Falwell's Old Time Gospel Hour.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School. "Our study found no support for that charge."

Gerbner, a member of the research team, said communication research over the years indicates that prime time television drama, and religious programming, has become the "new religion" in the United States.

"Watching television has become a ritual that meets certain needs that used to be satisfied by religion," he said in a statement issued Sunday.

The surveyors found that about 13.3 million people regularly watch religious programs, or about 6.2 percent of all people with television sets in their homes.

The programs "appeal to an older, traditional audience and watching these programs appears to be a confirmation of their religious beliefs, not a substitute for them," the researchers said.

"Their interest in the electronic church is complementary to other forms of religious practice, like church worship."

SPRINGFIELD, MO.
LEADER AND PRESS
D. 35,140

APR 16 1984
BURRELLE'S

Study disputes TV evangelists' claims

United Press International

NEW YORK — A major study of the audience of religious television programming says the audience is smaller than some TV evangelists claim but does not have the negative impact on church-going some critics maintain.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania and a member of the research team that studied religious television.

"Our study found no support for that charge," he said.

At the same time, Gerbner said the study found the "audience for religious television is smaller than has been claimed" — about 13.3 million regular viewers for all programming. That amounts to about 6.2 percent of the estimated number of persons in households with television.

The Annenberg study, conducted jointly with the Gallup Organization, was commissioned by a broad range of religious groups including Jerry Falwell's Old Time Gospel Hour, the National Council of Churches, the Christian Broadcasting Network, the U.S. Catholic Conference, the Southern Baptist Convention and some 30 other groups.

It is the first major, in-depth look at the audience for religious broadcasting.

According to a summary of the study, most of the religious broadcasting audience are not converted to religion by the charismatic television preachers but are instead church members with "a long-standing allegiance to organized religion."

"We found that the audience for religious television is smaller than has been claimed, though this group is consistent in its viewing habits," the researchers said.

SCRANTON, PA.
TIMES
D. 55,200 S. 49,815

APR 16 1984
BURRELLE'S

Study Declares TV Evangelism Not Cutting Church Attendance

(2-10

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — People worried about the "erosion" of church attendance and financial contributions shouldn't blame television evangelists, according to researchers who conducted a two-year study of religion and TV.

e Contrary to what many may feel, the researchers said, the growth of TV evangelism has not caused many people to stop attending or donating money to their local churches.

Television ministries have attracted millions of viewers, but those audiences are usually comprised of people with longstanding allegiance to organized religion, according to researchers from the University of Pennsylvania and the Gallup Organization of Princeton, N.J.

The researchers, working out of Penn's Annenberg School of Communications, were to release a report on their two-year study today.

The study was commissioned by a group of more than 30 religious organizations, including the United Presbyterian Church, the U.S. Catholic Conference and television ministries such as PTL Network and the Old Time Gospel Hour.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School. "Our study found no support for that charge."

Gerbner, a member of the research team, said communication research over the years indicates that prime time television drama, and not religious programming, has become the "new religion" in the United States.

"Watching television has become a ritual that meets certain needs that used to be satisfied by religion," he said in a prepared statement.

The surveys conducted for the Annenberg study show that about 13.3 million people regularly watch religious programs, or about 6.2 percent of all people with televisions in their homes.

The programs "appeal to an older, traditional audience and watching these programs appears to be a confirmation of their religious beliefs, not a substitute for them," the researchers said in their statement.

"Their interest in the electronic church is complementary to other forms of religious practice, like church worship."

Followers of TV evangelism typically are older, have less education and income, are more conservative politically and are more "fundamentalist" in their religious beliefs than the average person, the study found.

They are also more likely to live in rural areas and in the South and Midwest than people who don't watch religious programs, the researchers said.

People who watch religious programs frequently express greater confidence in their local church leaders than "light viewers" and "non-viewers," they said.

About one of every four religious programs mentions local churches, and one in 10 urges viewers to attend church, the study found.

STATE TIMES
BATON ROUGE, LA.
38,430

APR 16 1984
BURRELLE'S

Religious television said drawing fewer viewers than claims

61 10

By United Press International

NEW YORK — A major study of the audience of religious television programming says the audience is smaller than some TV evangelists claim but does not have the negative impact on church-going some critics maintain.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania and a member of the research team that studied religious television.

"Our study found no support for that charge," he said.

At the same time, Gerbner said the study found the "audience for religious television is smaller than has been claimed" — about 13.3 million regular viewers for all programming. That amounts to about 6.2 percent of the estimated number of persons in households with television sets.

The Annenberg study, conducted jointly with the Gallup Organization, was commissioned by a broad range of religious groups including Jerry Falwell's Old Time Gospel Hour, the National Council of Churches, the Christian Broadcasting Network, the U.S. Catholic Conference, the Southern Baptist Convention and some 30 other groups.

It is the first major, in-depth look at the audience for religious broadcasting.

According to a summary of the study, most of the religious broadcasting audience are not converted to religion by the charismatic television preachers but are instead church members with "a long-standing allegiance to organized religion."

"We found that the audience for religious television is smaller than has been claimed, though this group is consistent in its viewing habits," the researchers said. "The programs appeal to an older, traditional audience and watching these programs appears to be a confirmation of their religious beliefs, not a substitute for them. Their interest in the electronic church is complementary to other forms of religious practice, like church worship."

They drew a profile of the religious TV audience, drawn by television content not found on other television shows, as older, having less education and income, are more conservative politically and more "fundamentalist" in their religious beliefs. They are also more likely to live in rural areas and in the South and Midwest.

Other findings included:

— Half the religious programming viewers say they are dissatisfied with the "prevailing moral climate," compared to only one-third of non-viewers.

— Half said evangelism and missionary work are the main goal of the church, compared to one-third of the non-viewers.

— Only one-fifth said the church should be "working for social justice" while a third of the non-viewers said this should be a priority of the church.

— Heavy viewers of religious programs express greater confidence in local church leaders than both light viewers or non-viewers.

Fort Worth Star-Telegram
FORT WORTH, TEXAS
D 126 211 (EVENING)

APR 16 1984
BURRELLE'S

Study rebuts tie of TV ministries, church declines

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The growth of TV evangelism has not caused many people to stop attending or donating money to their local churches, according to researchers who conducted a two-year study of religion and TV.

Television ministries have attracted millions of viewers, but those audiences are usually made up of people with long-standing allegiance to organized religion, according to researchers from the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania and the Gallup Organization of Princeton, N.J.

The study was commissioned by a group of more than 30 religious organizations, including the United Presbyterian Church, the U.S. Catholic Conference and television ministries such as PTL Network and Jerry Falwell's *Old Time Gospel Hour*.

"TELEVISION MINISTRIES have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School. "Our study found no support for that charge."

Gerbner, a member of the research team, said communication research over the years indicates that prime-time television drama, and religious programming, has become the "new-religion" in the United States.

"Watching television has become a ritual that meets certain needs that used to be satisfied by religion," he said in a statement issued Sunday.

The surveyers found that about 13.3 million people regularly watch religious programs, or about 6.2 percent of all people with television sets in their homes.

THE PROGRAMS "appeal to an older, traditional audience and watching these programs appears to be a confirmation of their religious beliefs, not a substitute for them," the researchers said.

"Their interest in the electronic church is complementary to other forms of religious practice, like church worship."

Followers of TV evangelism typically are older, have less education and income, are more conservative politically and are more fundamentalist in their religious beliefs than the average person, the study found.

They also are more likely to live in rural areas and in the South and Midwest than people who don't watch religious programs, the researchers said.

People who watch religious programs frequently express greater confidence in their local church leaders than "light viewers" and "non-viewers," they said.

About one of every four religious programs mentions local churches, and one in 10 urges viewers to attend church, the study found.

LAS VEGAS, NV
SUN
D. 58,948 SUN. 64,602
SAT. 55,759

APR 16 1984

BURRELLE'S

TV preachers' viewers eyed

270

PHILADELPHIA (UPI) — Television evangelism attracts a loyal and stable audience of older viewers who are politically conservative and theologically fundamentalist, a study indicates.

The survey, conducted by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications, was paid for by a group of religious organizations, including such TV ministries as the PTL Network and Old Time Gospel Hour.

Researchers for the Gallup Organization of Princeton, N.J., also worked on the study, which was to be released Monday.

George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School, said the study discredits the theory that watching religious programs keeps people from attending church.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing ... the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," he said. "Our study found no support for that charge."

The survey indicated the number of people who regularly watch religious programs is 13.3 million, about 6.2 percent of the estimated number of persons in households with televisions.

"The programs appeal to an older, traditional audience and watching these programs appears to be a confirmation of their religious beliefs, not a substitute for them," Gerbner said. "Their interest in the electronic church is complementary to other forms of religious practice, like church worship."

The News and Observer
RALEIGH, N.C.
D. 129,411 SUN. 171,027

APR 16 1984

Study uncovers little conflict between TV, regular churches

NEW YORK (AP) — America's booming "electronic church," operating via television and often criticized as siphoning off membership, participation and funds from regular churches, has no such effects, a national study concludes.

It found that audiences of the evangelical broadcasters also attend and contribute to their local churches and see "no conflict between syndicated religious television programs and more traditional forms of worship."

Rather, the two are regarded as "complementary and mutually reinforcing activities rather than as substitutes for one another," said the report, released Sunday.

The two-year study, "Religion and Television," was carried out by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications and the Gallup Organization for a cross-section of about 40 Christian organizations.

They range from the U.S. Catholic Conference, the interdenominational National Council of Churches and several mainline Protestant denominations to the Billy Graham Evangelist Association, the Christian Broadcasting Network, the National Religious Broadcasters and Jerry Falwell's Old Time Gospel Hour.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg school and member of the research team. "Our study found no support for that charge."

The study said the real competitor seems to be commercial television itself — what Gerbner calls society's "new religion."

"General commercial television viewing — seven hours a day in the average television household and rising — may support or supplant some religious satisfactions and thus lessen the importance of religion for its heavy viewers."

Heavy viewers were found less likely than light viewers to read the Bible, indicating an influential rivalry between commercial television and biblical faith.

While no basic, institutional conflict was found between religious television and the churches, the report says "a conflict with established forces exists," epitomized in general television.

The rise of the electronic church, until now getting scant scientific analysis, seems to be an echo of "fundamentalist upheavals that have shaken large parts of the world," according to the report.

The broadcast evangelism audience, totaling about 13.3 million, tends to be more conservative, more fundamentalist and rural than non-viewers and more dissatisfied with "the prevailing moral climate," it found.

"In fact, their dissatisfaction with the prevailing moral climate may be one of the most distinctive bonds between religious programs and their viewers," the report says.

NEW YORK, NY
TRIBUNE
DAILY

APR 16 1984
BURRELLE'S

TV ministries draw older, fundamentalists: study

PHILADELPHIA, April 15 — Television evangelism attracts a loyal and stable audience of older viewers who are politically conservative and theologically fundamentalist, a study indicates.

The survey, conducted by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications, was paid for by a group of religious organizations, including such TV ministries as the *PTL Network* and *Old Time Gospel Hour.*

Researchers for the Gallup Organization of Princeton, N.J., also worked on the study, which is to be released Monday.

George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School, said the study discredits the theory that watching religious programs keeps people from attending church.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing ... the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," he said. "Our study found no support for that charge."

The survey indicated the number of people who regularly watch religious programs is 13.3 million, about 6.2 percent of the estimated number of people in households with televisions.

United Press International

MONDAY, APRIL 16, 1984

THE NATION'S NEWSPAPER

USA TODAY

PUBLISHED BY GANNETT

TV preachers not hurting local church

By Patrick O'Driscoll
USA TODAY

Television evangelists are increasing in airtime, but they are not draining members or money from local churches, says a study released today.

They preach to a small, already-converted following, says the study commissioned by more than 30 conservative and liberal religious groups.

The two-year study by Gallup and the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications found:

- About 13.3 million watch religious shows, 6.2 percent of the population in TV-viewing households.
- 3.14 percent watch one hour or more weekly of religious programs.

The figures are far fewer than religious broadcasters estimate, but the Rev. Jerry Falwell, Moral Majority leader, said: "I can only go by the people who support us and write us and say they're listening. Our reality is, we have a larger universe than the ratings would indicate."

The study also found that most viewers are older, less educated, more conservative and have lower incomes.

USA Today

TV preachers not hurting local church

By Patrick O'Driscoll
USA TODAY

FRONT PAGE

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The study also found that most viewers are older, less educated, more conservative and have lower incomes.

WORCESTER, MA
EVENING GAZETTE
D. 85,986

APR 16 1984

Study Finds Religious TV Audience Smaller Than Evangelists Claim

NEW YORK (UPI) — A major study of the audience of religious television programming says the audience is smaller than some TV evangelists claim but does not have the negative impact on churchgoing some critics maintain.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania and a member of the research team that studied religious television.

"Our study found no support for that charge," he said.

At the same time, Gerbner said the study found the "audience for religious television is smaller than has been claimed" — about 13.3 million regular viewers for all programming. That amounts to about 6.2 percent of the estimated number of persons in households with television sets.

The Annenberg study, conducted jointly with the Gallup Organization, was commissioned by a broad range of religious groups including Jerry Falwell's Old Time Gospel Hour, the National Council of Churches, the Christian Broadcasting Network, the U.S. Catholic Conference, the Southern Baptist Convention and some 30 other groups.

It is the first major, in-depth look at the audience for religious broadcasting.

According to a summary of the study, most of the religious broadcasting audience are not converted to religion by the charismatic television preachers but are instead church members with "a long-standing allegiance to organized religion."

"We found that the audience for religious television is smaller than has been claimed, though this group is consistent in its viewing habits," the researchers said. "The programs appeal to an older, traditional audience and watching these programs appears to be a confirmation of their religious beliefs, not a substitute for them. Their interest in the electronic church is complementary to other forms of religious practice, like church worship."

They drew a profile of the religious TV audience, drawn by television content not found on other television shows, as older, having less education and income, are more conservative politically and more "fundamentalist" in their religious beliefs. They are also more likely to live in rural areas and in the South and Midwest.

Other findings included:

—Half the religious programming viewers say they are dissatisfied with the "prevailing moral climate," compared to only one-third of non-viewers.

—Half said evangelism and missionary work are the main goal of the church, compared to one-third of the non-viewers.

—Only one-fifth said the church should be "working for social justice" while a third of the non-viewers said this should be a priority of the church.

—Heavy viewers of religious programs express greater confidence in local church leaders than both light viewers or non-viewers.

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C.
JOURNAL
D. 71,485 S. 95,325

APR 16 1984

BURRELLE'S

TV Evangelism Has Older Viewers

(9210)

PHILADELPHIA (UPI) — Television evangelism attracts a loyal and stable audience of older viewers who are politically conservative and theologically fundamentalist, a study indicates.

The survey, conducted by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications, was paid for by a group of religious organizations, including such TV ministries as the PTL Network and Old Time Gospel Hour.

George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School, said, "Television ministries have been suspected of causing . . . the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," he said. "Our study found no support for that charge."

The survey indicated the number of people who regularly watch religious programs is 13.3 million.

NEWS
D. 13,476

APR 16 1984
BURRELLE'S

Study finds that television preaching doesn't deter attendance at churches

6270

By GEORGE W. CORNELL
AP Religion Writer

America's booming "electronic church," operating via television and often criticized as siphoning off membership, participation and funds from regular churches, has no such effects, a major national study concludes.

It found that audiences of the evangelical broadcasters also attend and contribute to their local churches and see "no conflict between syndicated religious television programs and more traditional forms of worship."

Rather, the two are regarded as "complementary and mutually reinforcing activities rather than as substitutes for one another," said the report, released Sunday.

The two-year study, "Religion and Television," was carried out by the Annenberg School of Communications at the University opf Pennsylvania and the Gallup Organization for a broad cross-section of about 40 Christian organizations.

They range from the U.S. Catholic Conference, the interdenominational National Council of Churches and several mainline Protestant denominations to the Billy Graham Evangelist Association, the Christian Broadcasting Network, the National Religious Broadcasters, and Jerry Falwell's Old Time Gospel Hour.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to erosion of financial contributions and general participation," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg school and member of the research team.

"Our study found no support for that charge."

Instead, the study said the real competitor seems to be commercial television itself — what Gerbner calls society's "new religion." The report says:

"General commercial television viewing (seven hours a day in the average television household and rising) may support or supplant some religious satisfactions and thus lessen the importance of religion for its heavy viewers."

Heavy viewers were found less likely than light viewers to read the Bible, indicating an influential rivalry between commercial television and biblical faith.

While no basic, institutional conflict was found between religious television and the churches, the report says "a conflict with established forces exists," epitomized in general television.

The rise of the electronic church, until now getting scant scientific analysis, seems to be an echo of "fundamentalist upheavals that have shaken large parts of the world," the report also says.

The broadcast evangelism audience, totaling about 13.3 million, tends to be more conservative, more fundamentalist and rural than non-viewers and more moral climate," it found.

"In fact, their dissatisfaction with the prevailing moral climate may be one of the most distinctive bonds between religious programs and their viewers," the report says.

Half of these viewers disapprove of prevalent moral attitudes — a theme characteristic of such programs — compared to only a third of the non-viewers. Non-viewers also are less likely to hold conservative, fundamentalist ideas.

The widespread assumption, often voiced by mainline church critics, that the "electronic church" is deflecting people from regular church participation was found to have no basis.

"Viewers of religious programs are by and large also the believers, the church-goers, the contributors," the report says. "Their viewing of religious programs correlates with all important measures of religiosity.

In gathering the findings, the Gallup Organization conducted a national personal interview survey of viewers and nonviewers of religious television, using a representative national sample.

Annenberg school researchers conducted a content analysis of selected local and nationally syndicated religious TV programs, and also made a telephone survey of viewers and non-viewers in the northeastern and southeastern United States and wrote the final report.

MONTGOMERY, AL
ALABAMA JOURNAL
D. 24, 025 S. 22,100

APR 17 1984

BURRELLE'S

Religious TV Audience Smaller Than Some Evangelists Claim, Study Says

6270

NEW YORK (UPI) — A major study of the audience of religious television programming says the audience is smaller than some TV evangelists claim but does not have the negative impact on church-going some critics maintain.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania and a member of the research team that studied religious television.

"Our study found no support for that charge," he said.

At the same time, Gerbner said the study found the "audience for religious television is smaller than has been claimed" — about 13.3 million regular viewers for all programming. That amounts to about 6.2 percent of the estimated number of persons in households with television sets.

The Annenberg study, conducted jointly with the Gallup Organization, was commissioned by a broad range of religious groups including Jerry Falwell's Old Time Gospel Hour, the National Council of Churches, the Christian Broadcasting Network, the U.S. Catholic Conference, the Southern Baptist Convention and some 30 other groups.

It is the first major, in-depth look at the audience for religious broadcasting.

Birmingham Post-Herald 4/17/1984

TV church hasn't cut congregation sizes

New York Times News Service

NEW YORK — Religious television shows are not cutting into church attendance as some social scientists and religious organizations had suggested in recent years, according to a study of religious television programming released yesterday.

The two-year study, conducted by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications, also found that religious broadcasts appeal to 13.3 million people — 6.2 percent of American television viewers — who, for the most part, already have strong religious beliefs. The programs, the study suggested, fail to reach large numbers of viewers who are not actively religious, nor do they seem likely to make many new converts.

"This is both good news and bad news for evangelical broadcasters," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School. "The good news is that they do not reduce the number of people going to local churches. On the bad side, we found they are reaching a stable audience of those who are already religiously active."

TV preachers found to draw few viewers

By Frank P. L. Somerville FRONT PAGE
Religion Editor of The Sun

NEW YORK — A two-year study financed by 39 Catholic and Protestant organizations has determined that the actual audience for even the most successful of the TV preachers is far smaller than many of them had believed.

"Infinitesimally small for the huge amounts of money spent" was the way the Rev. Everett C. Parker, of the United Church of Christ, characterized the 13.3 million "regular viewers" of such religious programs estimated by the polling.

That total, which the Rev. William F. Fore, of the National Council of Churches, said reflects the number of Americans who watch as little as 15 minutes of religious broadcasting at a time, amounts to about 6.2 percent of the number of people in households with TV sets, according to the research.

But at a recent press conference for release and discussion of the data it became clear that interpretations will vary as widely as the theology of the sponsors of the study.

The more liberal, mainstream denominations, which had felt threatened by claims that TV evangelists were drawing 130 million regular viewers or more and syphoning contributions away from the local churches, breathed a sigh of relief.

Their representatives already are beginning to reassess financial commitments to competing religious broadcast time.

Mr. Fore noted that when the study zeroed in on "regular" viewers of an hour or more of the religious programs, the audience dropped below seven million people, or only 3.14 percent of the total with TV sets.

George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania and a member of the research team, said he disagreed with describing as "infinitesimal" the audiences for such religious broadcasters as Pat Robertson, Jimmy Swaggart and the Rev. Jerry

See **EVANGELISTS**, A5, Col. 1

THE SUN
BALTIMORE, MD.
(MORNING)
D. 183,188 SUN. 377,183

APR 17 1984
BURRELLE'S

TV preachers found to get fewer viewers than many believed

EVANGELISTS, from A 1

Falwell. "Limited, stable, yes," Dr. Gerbner said. "But clearly they are supporting the programs."

David W. Clark, vice president for marketing at Pat Robertson's Christian Broadcasting Network Center in Virginia Beach, added, "No one is forced or coerced to give, as with the Internal Revenue Service. They give freely."

In response to an assertion by one of the researchers that the bulk of the funding for TV evangelists in general comes from a relatively few large contributors, not many small ones, Mr. Clark

> *"Televison ministries have been suspected of causing, or at least contributing to, the erosion of mainline church membership. Our study found no support for that charge. . . ."*
>
> **GEORGE GERBNER**

said that only about 20 percent of Pat Robertson's support comes from major donors. He said the annual budget for Mr. Robertson's CBN network is about $20 million.

Ben Armstrong, executive director of National Religious Broadcasters, said the "big question" facing his membership now is, "How do we reach out to the large number of people not in our audience?"

He said he was "concerned that minorities and women are under-represented" in the content of the religious programs studied. "We will review that," he said.

Mr. Armstrong was especially pleased with the study's conclusions that the national, nondenominational, mostly fundamentalist religious broadcasters in his group are not draining the resources of local churches, but rather that their loyal audiences displayed a longtime allegiance to organized religion.

"Televison ministries have been suspected of causing, or at least contributing to, the erosion of mainline church membership," Dr. Gerbner observed. "Our study found no support for that charge."

The combined survey of TV viewers by the Annenberg School and the Gallup Polling organization "found that the audience for religious TV is smaller than has been claimed, though this group is consistent in its viewing habits. The programs appeal to an older, traditional audience and watching these programs appears to be a confirmation of their religious belief, not a substitute for them."

The Cincinnati Post
CINCINNATI, OHIO
D. 142,746

APR 17 1984

BURRELLE'S

Who views television evangelists?

6270

United Press International

NEW YORK — A major study of th audience of religious television prc gramming says the audience is smalle than some TV evangelists claim bu does not have the negative impact o church-going some critics maintain.

"Television ministries have been sus pected of causing or at least contribut ing to the erosion of mainline churc membership, financial contribution and general participation," said Georg Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg Schoc of Communications at the University o Pennsylvania and a member of the re search team that studied religious tele vision.

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It is the first major, in-depth look a the audience for religious broadcasting.

According to a summary of the study most of the religious broadcasting audi ence are not converted to religion by the charismatic television preachers but are instead church members with "a long standing allegiance to organized reli gion."

"We found that the audience for reli gious television is smaller than has beer claimed, though this group is consisten in its viewing habits," the researchers said. "The programs appeal to an older traditional audience and watching these programs appears to be a confir mation of their religious beliefs, not a substitute for them. Their interest in the electronic church is complementary to other forms of religious practice, like church worship."

They drew a profile of the religious TV audience, drawn by television con tent not found on other television shows, as older, having less education and income, are more conservative po litically and more "fundamentalist" in their religious beliefs. They are also more likely to live in rural areas and in the South and Midwest.

The Charlotte Observer
CHARLOTTE, N. C.
D. 172,056 SUN. 243,823

APR 17 1984

BURRELLE'S

Most Viewers Of TV Ministries Already Believers, Researchers Find

6210

FRONT PAGE

By TERRY MATTINGLY
Staff Writer

Television ministries in the much-publicized "electric church" are mainly preaching to the converted.

However, religious television is not draining money and members from local churches and cannot be blamed for membership losses in mainline churches.

Those are the main themes emerging from two years of research by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications and the Gallup Organization of Princeton, N.J. Study results were released in New York Monday.

The study was commissioned by a diverse, ad hoc group of more than 30 religious organizations — including the PTL Network, based near Fort Mill, S.C. Others included the Rev. Jerry Falwell's Old Time Gospel Hour, the National Council of Churches of Christ, the U.S. Catholic Conference and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Research included one national and two regional surveys of viewers of religious and other programs and a "content analysis" of religious television.

Television ministries are a conservative religious core group's alternative to what researchers called the "mainstream" of "general television." This group is more dissatisfied with the "prevailing moral climate" in television than unhappy with local churches, the survey finds.

Although television ministries have long hailed the medium's reach to nonbelievers, the study summary says religious television "serves more to rally believers than to recruit or convert others."

The study's research shows an estimated 13.3 million people watch religious television, about 6.2% of the nation's TV households. About 3.14% watch one or more hours of religious television a week.

Teresa Gardner of the PTL public relations staff said PTL would have no comment until it sees a complete copy of the results. PTL estimates its daily audience at about 2 million, not including viewers with cable television, she said. Thus, the daily total could be as high as 12 million or more, she said.

The Annenberg/Gallup study claims the audience for religious television is "more stable and compact than has been supposed." It is "somewhat older, lower in education and income, more conservative, more 'fundamentalist,' and more likely to live in rural areas and in the South and Midwest."

These viewers are "no less likely" than nonviewers to attend or give money to a local church, said the summary.

See VIEWERS Page 4A

A

TV Preachers

- An estimated 13.3 million people watch religious television, about 6.2% of the nation's TV households.
- About 3.14% watch one or more hours of religious television a week.

Researchers Study Evangelists' Audiences

Viewers Of TV Ministries Mainly Believers

Continued From Page 1A

"It's a loyal audience, but it's not the young. It doesn't really seem to be growing and it's not very diverse," said Dr. George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School of Communications.

He noted the study "has a little bit of good news and bad news in it for everybody."

Representatives of more conservative television ministries are disappointed with the audience figures, although "so far" none have disputed their accuracy, Gerbner said in a telephone interview.

One of the survey's clearest findings, he said, is that television is "just not a very effective way to do evangelism. What reaches large numbers of people is commercial entertainment .... It's hard for evangelism to be entertainment."

On the other side, he said mainline churches are "going to have to rethink their approach to religious television and ... some of their criticisms of these ministries in light of what we learned."

Several other findings:

- Reading the Bible is seen or discussed in 90% of religious broadcasts but is "virtually absent from commercial programs."
- "Sinful sexual conduct" is attacked in one of four religious broadcasts.
- Only a fifth of religious television viewers believe churches should work for "social justice" — a view held by a third of non-viewers.
- Political issues are discussed on more than half of television ministry broadcasts. Regular viewers are more likely to vote than those who do not watch religious television.
- The more prominent a television ministry, the more likely it is to ask for more funds, more often.
- "The most prominent television ministries tend to dwell most on ... personal problems and ailments and prescribe spiritual solutions or ... financial contributions."
- As in commercial television, there are far more men than women depicted on religious broadcasts. Women are younger and are rarely shown as clergy or as interpreters of the Bible. Women are shown as more likely to have personal problems or physical ailments.

Churches not hurt by TV, study says

By Roy Larson
Religion Editor

• The holiest week; Editorial, Page 3

The "electronic church" does not hurt church attendance or drain off money from mainline congregations, a major new study of television ministries disclosed yesterday.

The two-year study also showed that "the audience for religious television is smaller than has been claimed."

The analysis was made by the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania and the Gallup Organization Inc. for 30 religious organizations.

The sponsors ranged from the National Council of Churches and the United States Catholic Conference, among mainline churches, to the National Religious Broadcasters and the Old Time Gospel Hour, on the fundamentalist-evangelical end of the spectrum.

The scholars found that "viewers of religious programs, including the prominent television ministries, are no less likely than non-viewers to attend, contribute to, and participate in local church activities. Further, those who contribute more to these programs do not correspondingly contribute less to their local churches."

The national study provides the most complete profile yet drawn of the 13.3 million regular viewers of religious programs.

Compared with those who do not watch such TV offerings, the electronic church's audience, according to the survey, is older and has less education and income. It is also more likely to be "fundamentalist" in its religious beliefs and "conservative" in its views on such issues as a nuclear freeze and legislation to control pornography.

Although television ministries usually are identified with evangelists, the study indicated that "charismatic television personalities" have not, for the most part, "created a new and expanding audience of religious converts," but tend to attract viewers with a "long-standing allegiance to organized religion."

Examining the people who appear on the programs, the study concluded that the shows are dominated by men. It also states that "minorities, especially minority women and all Hispanics, are underrepresented" in services on the air.

Con't on PG 2

CHICAGO
SUN-TIMES
CHICAGO, ILL.
D. 651,580 SUN. 677,681

APR 17 1984

BURRELLE'S

D
From 86 32

The holiest week

With Holy Week and Passover virtually coinciding, this truly is the holiest week in the Judeo-Christian world, a time to recall two periods of trial and renewal, centuries apart, but similar in their quests for freedom.

The resurrection climaxed events that began with a daring visit to Jerusalem by a Jew from Nazareth who sought freedom for his people from the Roman yoke.

Christ came to observe Passover, to mark, as Jews do throughout the world this week, the escape of the Hebrews from bondage under the Egyptians.

Technology has carried man far beyond the physical confines of the Roman world, but the thirst for freedom rooted in the principles espoused by Christ and the ancient Hebrews remains as fierce as ever.

In the United States, a land of unparalleled freedom, leaders quarrel over prayers in public schools; in Poland, where freedom is prostrate, students battle to return the crucifix, symbol of resurrection, to their classrooms.

Amidst the violence that underscores man's continuing hatred for man, and the disputes over whether God belongs in the life of man and, if so, where, it is worthwhile to pause and reflect for a moment on the glory and wonder of it all.

And for those who eschew the trappings of organized religion, perhaps the best way would be simply to visit a quiet spot on a clear night away from city lights, and just look up at the sky and contemplate. The experience would be just as solemn.

TV religion no threat to churches, study says

By Kate DeSmet
News Staff Writer

FRONT PAGE

A major new study on religion and television provides comforting news for local church pastors.

Some of these ministers have long regarded TV religion shows as competitors for money and members.

TV ministries may actually "compete more with commercial television than mainline religion" and "may even complement local church attendance and contributions," according to findings by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications and the Gallup Organization.

"THERE MUST be other explanations if church attendance has declined and there is a lack of financial support," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg school.

The two-year study, sponsored by such diverse groups as the National Council of Churches and The PTL Network (a television ministry), found that one in 10 programs urged viewers to attend their local churches.

"Viewers of religious programs are by and large also the believers, the churchgoers, the contributors," the study said. "It appears (that the viewing) is an expression, confirmation and cultivation of a set of religious beliefs — not a substitute for them."

Gerbner said 13.3 million people regularly watch religious programs covering all denominations — a smaller number than some evangelists

Continued on Page 16A

The Detroit News
DETROIT, MICH.
O. 625,730 SUN. 823,500

TV religion no competitor for churches, study decides

Continued from Page 1A

have claimed.

"BUT THIS group is consistent in its viewing habits," he said, noting that the shows appeal to an older, traditional audience, who are conservative politically, have less income and education, and are more likely to live in rural areas and in the Midwest and South.

Researchers said viewers are often drawn to religious TV shows because they are dissatisfied with the "prevailing moral climate, much of which comes to them from (commercial) television." Viewers describe themselves as opposed to a nuclear freeze, in favor of tougher laws against pornography, and report having voted in the last general election.

While social and moral issues are often discussed on these shows, religious and theological issues are not, according to the study. In one out of four programs, the suggested solution to personal problems was a financial contribution to the ministry. And the shows usually feature white males in positions of authority, with few major roles for women and minorities.

"(IT'S) SIMILAR to the characters who populate the fictional world of prime-time drama," the study said.

The Rev. Ed Willingham Jr., executive director of the Christian Communication Council of Metropolitan Detroit Churches, said "it was about time" such a study was done.

Dallas Times Herald
DALLAS, TEXAS
D. 269,410 SUN. 355,753

TV ministers haven't stolen churches' thunder

By LISA ELLIS
Staff Writer 6270

Local pastors mostly have quit worrying about television minsters draining away their members, says the Rev. J. Stanley Hagadone, president of the Dallas Pastors Association.

In case he and other ministers needed more evidence to calm their fears, they found it in a study released Monday.

The two-year study, the first independent sampling of religious television viewers, concluded that "viewers of religious programs are, by and large, also the believers, the churchgoers, the contributors."

Hagadone, pastor of Midway Hills Christian Church, said he was not surprised by the report, prepared by the Gallup Organization and the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania.

A few years ago, many ministers worried about losing members to television, but experience proved that concern unfounded, he said.

"I think there was some concern when network programs came on that it would drain people away," he said. "I still hear some questions and concerns about the impact, but as far as real anxiety, I don't hear that anymore."

Reflecting this shift in attitudes, most Dallas ministers interviewed Monday agreed that, rather than fighting religious television, either local churches or mainline denominations need to get involved in broadcasting.

But the problem is the enormous time and expense involved in television production, said the Rev. A. Harrison, pastor of Christ Episcopal Church.

George Gallup Jr., president of the polling organization, agreed that a broader spectrum of churches needs to get involved in the television medium, now dominated by fundamentalists.

"It's an important dimension in people's spiritual lives," he said. "The way to reach the American public is through television."

About 13.3 million people, fewer than many broadcasters have claimed in the past, watch religious programs at least once a month, the study found.

Like most of the personalities and evangelists on religious television, these viewers tend to be more conservative, more fundamentalist, more rural, it said.

The study found that 48 percent of those who had watched a religious program in the last month attended church once a week or more, 28 percent attended one to three times a month, 13 percent went on special occasions and 11 percent never attended.

Among non-viewers, 33 percent were weekly churchgoers, 23 percent went to church one to three times a month, 24 percent attended on special occasions and 20 percent never attended.

The largest proportion of viewers — 37 percent — lived in the South, including Texas, while 29 percent lived in the Midwest, 18 percent in the East and 16 percent in the West.

Programs produced in the Dallas-Fort Worth area were not particularly popular with survey participants. About 4 percent reported they had watched the Ken Copeland program, based in Fort Worth, in the last month, while 2 percent had viewed the Euless-based James Bison program.

The most popular evangelists were Jimmy Swaggart, with 25 percent; Oral Roberts, 20 percent; "The 700 Club"/Pat Robertson, 18 percent; Jim Bakker, 16 percent; Billy Graham, 14 percent; Robert Schuller, 13 percent; Jerry Falwell, 12 percent; and Rex Humbard, 8 percent.

About 72 percent of the viewers were Protestant, 19 percent Catholic and 9 percent listed "other" as their religion. Among Protestants, 15 percent were Southern Baptists, 15 percent were members of Baptist denominations, 10 percent Methodists, 6 percent Lutherans and 3 percent Presbyterians.

Los Angeles Times
LARGEST CIRCULATION IN THE WEST
LOS ANGELES CAL.
D. 1,052,637 SUN. 1,306,002

Programs Found to Have Smaller Audiences Than Widely Believed

TV Ministries Not a Threat to Churches, Study Shows

By JOHN DART, *Times Religion Writer*

NEW YORK—Television preachers do not siphon money or members away from local churches, but neither do they have sizable audiences or make many converts to their cause, a long-awaited research report on the impact of the electronic church said Monday.

The study, undertaken by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications with the help of the Gallup polling organization, also found that viewers of religious programs are older, less-educated, with lower incomes and are politically conservative. Those traits are similar to heavy viewers of television in general, the authors pointed out, except that those watching religious shows are more likely to vote in general elections.

CONTINUED

Network at the news conference, said when good religious programs are shown in prime time they will get much larger audiences. Clark said a personality-filled special shown by his network last January in prime time slots received a 10.5 national rating, or 14 million to 16 million viewers.

To the question of whether excessive millions were being spent by television evangelists on programs for a very small audience, Clark responded that the big television networks can spend $25 million on one night of election coverage.

"No one is coerced to give money to the television ministers. They give freely to what they feel is of value to them," Clark said.

Gerbner said the prime competitor to the local church is not religious television but general TV shows.

Other findings of the study included:

- Men outnumber women considerably on all religious programs and are often authoritative figures, such as clergy.
- Women on religious programs are generally younger than men, rarely quote the Bible and are more likely than men to reveal that they suffer from physical ailments and to talk about personal problems.
- Discussion of political issues is not confined to shows by conservative evangelists, but instead covers the spectrum of religious programming.

Some religious spokesmen saw some gaps in the study, however. Armstrong of the National Religious Broadcasters noted that cable programming was not studied, and "we have access to 25 million homes through cable television."

CONTINUED FROM FIRST COLUMN

13.3 Million Viewers

Researchers said the regular viewers are fewer in number than usually thought—13.3 million persons, or 6.2% of the potential audience. Sponsors of the study, however, disagreed somewhat at a news conference here on the statistics and their significance since many of the religious shows are aired at odd hours.

The religious programs, contrary to earlier fears by mainline churches, do not substitute for churchgoing. Instead, the authors said, the programs appear to complement existing beliefs and church attendance patterns of the viewers.

First requested in 1980, the two-year research project eventually was funded by at least 39 fundamentalist to liberal Christian denominations and evangelists—"strange bedfellows," as Executive Director Ben Armstrong of the conservative National Religious Broadcasters put it.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School of Communications.

"Our study has found no support for that charge," Gerbner said.

A Damper on Criticism

The Rev. Jerry Falwell, leader of the Moral Majority whose fundamentalist church services are telecast under the name "Old Time Gospel Hour," said two days ago in Washington that he was pleased to have scientific data to try to silence critics. But, he added pessimistically, "My enemies won't be convinced."

Armstrong said many of the 1,000 religious broadcasters "will be concerned" about the low finding on the number of religious viewers.

He said he puts more trust in the Gallup Poll responses in which 18% said they watched a religious television program at least once during a week and 32% said at least once in the last month.

Gerbner said he believes the Gallup answers were high and that his school's breakdown of viewers' television-watching habits might have been low.

The Annenberg analysis found, indeed, that those who watched at least an hour of religious programming a week amounted to only a little more than 3% of the potential audience, or fewer than 7 million people.

David Clark, representing Christian Broadcasting

Montgomery Journal (Chevy Chase, MD)

APR 17 1984

BURRELLE'S

Newskey

AIR WAVE MINISTRY

Who is watching?

RELIGIOUS television programming attracts fewer people than is commonly believed, a major study says, and does not affect the behavior of church goers.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania and a member of the research team that studied religious television.

"Our study found no support for that charge," he said.

At the same time, Gerbner said the study found the "audience for religious television is smaller than has been claimed" — about 13.3 million regular viewers — about 6.2 percent of the persons in households with television sets.

The Annenberg study, conducted jointly with the Gallup organization, was commissioned by a broad range of religious groups, including Jerry Falwell's Old Time Gospel Hour, the National Council of Churches, the Christian Broadcasting Network, the U.S. Catholic Conference, the Southern Baptist Convention and some 30 other groups.

It is the first in-depth look at the audience for religious broadcasting.

Most of the religious broadcasting audience are not converted by the charismatic television preachers but are church members with "a long-standing allegiance to organized religion."

The study drew a profile of the religious TV audience as older, having less education and income, are more conservative politically and more fundamentalist in their religious beliefs. They are also more likely to live in rural areas and in the South and Midwest.

Study Assesses Effects From TV Evangelism

By PETER KERR

Religious television shows are not cutting into church attendance as some social scientists and religious organizations had suggested in recent years, according to a study of religious television programming released yesterday.

The two-year study, conducted by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications, also found that religious broadcasts appeal to 13.3 million people — 6.2 percent of American television viewers — who, for the most part, already have strong religious beliefs. The programs, the study suggested, fail to reach large numbers of viewers who are not actively religious, nor do they seem likely to make many new converts.

"This is both good news and bad news for evangelical broadcasters," said Dr. George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School. "The good news is that they do not reduce the number of people going to local churches. On the bad side, we found they are reaching a stable audience of those who are already religiously active."

Big Increase From 1960's

The study, which was commissioned by a group of more than 30 religious organizations, represents the most extensive research to date on the phenomenon of "electronic church" programs. Since the 1960's the number of evangelical radio and television stations has risen dramatically, from fewer than 150 in the mid-1960's to more than 1,000 this year, according to the National Religious Broadcasters, an umbrella organization for television and radio evangelical groups.

But some religious organizations questioned whether television preachers, who often espouse fundamentalist beliefs, were taking people and money away from local churches by providing worshippers with an alternative at home. This was a major subject of discussion in a 1980 conference of religious organizations and social scientists under the auspices of the National Council of Churches and the United States Catholic Conference in New York City.

The study, designed to clarify the effects of religious programs, was supported both by groups that produce evangelical broadcasts and so-called mainline groups, such as the National Council of Churches. The Gallup Organization in Princeton, N.J., assisted in the project, which cost $175,000.

The study found that viewers of religious programs were mostly people who attended churches and made contributions to religious organizations. These viewers also tend to be older, have lower incomes and less education than people who do not watch religious programs.

In addition, they are more likely to live in the South or Middle West, are more likely to have fundamentalist religious attitudes and more likely to be disturbed by what they see as moral laxity on regular television programs.

Those Who Watch Regularly

The study found that regular viewers of religious programming of any denomination numbered about 6.2 percent of the total number of people in television households, or about 13.3 million people.

Viewers of religious television, the study found, are no less likely to attend services than churchgoers who do not view such programming. The audience for religious programs, the study found, generally sees the programs as a complement to more traditional religious activities.

Another finding of the study was that religious programs, like other television fare, tend to underrepresent women, the elderly, children and members of minority groups.

Representives of religious groups that supported the study appeared to draw varied conclusions from the data.

The New York Times/William E. Sauro

Dr. George Gerbner, dean of Annenberg School, speaking yesterday about the results of study.

"These are a very small number of viewers from a homogeneous group of people," said William F. Fore, a spokesman for the National Council of Churches. About the programs, Mr. Fore said, "I do not believe this is good evangelism, and I think the study shows that."

But David W. Clark, the vice president of marketing for the Christian Broadcasting Network, a major producer of religious programming in Virginia Beach, Va., said the study provided support for his organization's type of evangelical programming.

"We finally have an absolute finding that the programs don't decrease attendance at local churches," Mr. Clark said. As for the findings that the size of the religious programs' audience was limited, Mr. Clark said he believed the programs would reach more Americans if the programs were presented at more popular time periods. Most of the producers of the religious programs, he said, can only afford to buy television time late or early in the schedule when relatively few viewers are watching.

Study: TV ministry not recruiting tool

By Michael D. Schaffer
Inquirer Staff Writer

NEW YORK — Religious television programs serve more as rallying points for believers than as tools for recruiting converts, according to a study released yesterday.

Religious programming reaches a relatively small audience, by commercial network standards, of "about 13.3 million, or 6.2 percent of the estimated total number of persons in television households," according to the study, prepared by researchers at the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications and the Gallup organization of Princeton, N.J.

Regular viewers of religious television "tend to be older, more fundamentalist and lower in income and education than nonviewers," the study found. They also are more likely to live in rural areas in the South and Midwest.

"They are greatly dissatisfied with what they perceive to be contemporary morality and interested in spreading the Gospel more than social justice," the report continued.

The findings were released during a news conference here yesterday at the Graduate Center of City University. The study, which took two years to complete, was financed by the Ad Hoc Committee on Religious Television, a broad coalition of more than 30 church organizations, including the National Council of Churches, Jerry Falwell's Old-Time Gospel Hour, the U.S. Catholic Conference, the Southern Baptist Convention and the Christian Broadcasting Network.

The research included an analysis of the contents of religious television programs, a telephone survey of viewers and nonviewers in the Southeastern and Northeastern United States by Annenberg researchers, and personal interviewers nationwide by Gallup researchers.

The researchers found that television ministries do not appear to be taking members away from local churches.

"Viewers of religious programs, including the prominent television ministries, are no less likely than nonviewers to attend, contribute to and participate in local church activities," the study concluded.

And viewers who contribute to the support of television evangelists "do not correspondingly contribute less to their local churches," the researchers found.

The view of the world expressed in religious programming competes less with mainline religion or with local churches than with the "broader and, in some important respects, divergent world of commercial television itself," according to the study.

"Heavy viewers of religious programs are more likely than nonviewers to describe themselves as conservatives, oppose a nuclear freeze, favor tougher laws against pornography, and report voting in the last general election," the study found.

Heavy viewers of commercial television tend to think of themselves as political moderates, are more likely to favor a nuclear freeze, are not as concerned with the nation's moral climate and "are far less likely to say they voted in a general election," according to the study.

The study also shows that television has "an enormous and pervasive power ... to provide a substitute for religion ..., to provide many answers that, in earlier times, religion used to provide," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School and one of the researchers.

Heavy viewers of general television are less likely to attend and support the local church than are those who watch television less often, the study found.

The audience for religious programs is small in comparison to the audience for commercial shows.

"The minimal audience for a successful network television program is larger than we're estimating the entire audience for these religious programs," said Larry Gross, one of the Annenberg researchers.

The size of the audience for religious programs depends on access to prime time, according to David W. Clark, vice president for marketing of the Christian Broadcasting Network Center in Virginia Beach, Va.

The current viewers of religious programs "have been won largely on the fringes of television time," Clark said. "Most of the programs are aired at 6 in the morning, 8 in the morning, 9 in the morning. Our program, 'The 700 Club,' is aired nationally at 10 a.m. daily ... When we can put that program in prime time, at 9 p.m. at night ... then you begin to get much larger audiences."

"We do have a tremendous, let's say, job ahead of us to get into that prime time, which is an access matter, not a programming matter," said the Rev. Ben Armstrong, executive director of the National Religious Broadcasters. "People are not turned off so much by religious television as they're not there when the programs are on."

THE ANNENBERG SCHOOL OF
COMMUNICATIONS
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Dr. Peggy Schriver
Assistant General Secretary for
Research, Evaluation & Planning
National Council of Churches
475 Riverside Drive, Rm 870
New York, NY 10115

June 10, 1984

Dear Peggy,

Enclosed you will find xerox copies of stories in the press on "Religion on Television." These stories were collected by the University of Pennsylvania news bureau, Burrell's clipping service and The Annenberg School and, hopefully, there are not many that were missed. The study seems to have been widely reported and has generated much interest judging from the number of telephone inquiries we have received. These are still coming in.

As we add to the file I will send copies along to you.

Sincerely,

Susanne Bradford
Publicity Coordinator

SB/me
encl:

cc: George Gerbner

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3620 Walnut Street C5 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104 Telephone 215-898-7041

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APR 17 84

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PM—5,965

TV Doesn't Hurt Church Attendance

PHILADELPHIA (AP) —People worried about the "erosion" of church attendance and financial contributions shouldn't blame television evangelists, according to researchers who conducted a two-year study of religion and TV.

Contrary to what many may feel, the researchers said, the growth of TV evangelism has not caused many people to stop attending or donating money to their local churches.

Television ministries have attracted millions of viewers, but those audiences are usually comprised of people with long-standing allegiance to organized religion, according to researchers from the University of Pennsylvania and the Gallup Organization of Princeton, N.J.

The researchers, working out of Penn's Annenberg School of Communications, were to release a report on their two-year study today.

The study was commissioned by a group of more than 30 religious organizations, including the United Presbyterian Church, the U.S. Catholic Conference and television ministries such as PTL Network and the Old Time Gospel Hour.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School. "Our study found no support for that charge."

Gerbner, a member of the research team, said communication research over the years indicates that prime time television drama, and not religious programming, has become the "new religion" in the United States.

The surveys conducted for the Annenberg study show that about 13.3 million people regularly watch religious programs, or about 6.2 percent of all people with televisions in their homes.

The programs "appeal to an older, traditional audience and watching these programs appears to be a confirmation of their religious beliefs, not a substitute for them," the researchers said in their statement.

"Their interest in the electronic church is complementary to other forms of religious practice, like church worship."

Followers of TV evangelism typically are older, have less education and income, are more conservative politically and are more "fundamentalist" in their religious beliefs than the average person, the study found.

Evening NEWS
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS
D. 77,066

APR 17 1984
BURRELLE'S

Study: TV evangelism doesn't cut church crowd

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The growth of TV evangelism has not caused many people to stop attending or donating money to their local churches, according to researchers who conducted a two-year study of religion and TV.

Television ministries have attracted millions of viewers, but those audiences are usually made up of people with long-standing allegiance to organized religion, according to researchers from the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania and the Gallup Organization of Princeton, N.J.

The study was commissioned by a group of more than 30 religious organizations, including the United Presbyterian Church, the U.S. Catholic Conference and television ministries such as PTL Network and Jerry Falwell's Old Time Gospel Hour.

The surveyers found that about 13.3 million people regularly watch religious programs.

JERRY FALWELL
... TV minister

Converted

Gardner of the PTL public rela-
f said PTL would have no com-
il it sees a complete copy of the

BURRELLE'S

Study: Church shows rally believers

NEW YORK — Religious television programs serve more as rallying points for believers than as tools for recruiting converts, according to a study released Monday.

Religious programming reaches a relatively small audience, by commercial network standards, of "about 13.3 million, or 6.2 percent of the estimated total number of persons in television households," according to the study, prepared by researchers at the University of Pennsylvania Annenberg School of Communications and the Gallup organization of Princeton, N.J.

Regular viewers of religious television "tend to be older, more fundamentalist and lower in income and education than non-viewers," the study found. They also are more likely to live in rural areas in the South and Midwest.

4/17/1984 Santa Ana Register

SUN-GAZETTE
WILLIAMSPORT, PA.
PM—31,289

Television Evangelism Does Not Hurt Church Attendance: Study

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — People worried about the "erosion" of church attendance and financial contributions shouldn't blame television evangelists, according to researchers who conducted a two-year study of religion and TV.

Contrary to what many may feel, the researchers said, the growth of TV evangelism has not caused many people to stop attending or donating money to their local churches.

Television ministries have attracted millions of viewers, but those audiences are usually comprised of people with long-standing allegiance to organized religion, according to researchers from the University of Pennsylvania and the Gallup Organization of Princeton, N.J.

The study was commissioned by a group of more than 30 religious organizations, including the United Presbyterian Church, the U.S. Catholic Conference and television ministries such as PTL Network and the Old Time Gospel Hour.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School. "Our study found no support for that charge."

Gerbner, a member of the research team, said communication research over the years indicates that prime time television drama, and not religious programming, has become the "new religion" in the United States.

"Watching television has become a ritual that meets certain needs that used to be satisfied by religion," he said in a prepared statement.

The surveys conducted for the Annenberg study show that about 13.3 million people regularly watch religious programs, or about 6.2 percent of all people with televisions in their homes.

The programs "appeal to an older, traditional audience and watching these programs appears to be a confirmation of their religious beliefs, not a substitute for them," the researchers said in their statement.

"Their interest in the electronic church is complementary to other forms of religious practice, like church worship."

Followers of TV evangelism typically are older, have less education and income, are more conservative politically and are more "fundamentalist" in their religious beliefs than the average person, the study found.

They are also more likely to live in rural areas and in the South and Midwest than people who don't watch religious programs, the researchers said.

People who watch religious programs frequently express greater confidence in their local church leaders than "light viewers" and "non-viewers," they said.

Staten Island Advance
STATEN ISLAND, N.Y.
D. 73,110 SUN. 80,254

St. Petersburg Times
ST. PETERSBURG, FLA.
D. 293 860 SUN. 293 852

TV evangelism's impact studied

The growth of TV evangelism has not caused many people to stop attending or donating money to their local churches, according to researchers who conducted a two-year study of religion and TV. Television ministries have attracted millions of viewers, but those audiences are usually made up of people with long-standing allegiance to organized religion, according to researchers from the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania and the Gallup Organization of Princeton, N.J. The study was commissioned by a group of more than 30 religious organizations.

APR 17 1984
BURRELLE'S
New York Tribune

Study says religious TV appeals to limited audience

By Werner Hoffman
NEW YORK TRIBUNE STAFF

Religious television shows do not convert audiences and attract fewer viewers than evangelists claim, according to a report released yesterday.

The study also found that audiences for religious programming have less income, are older, less educated, politically conservative and "fundamentalist" in their religious beliefs.

They are also more likely to live in rural areas and in the South and Midwest than viewers of commercial television.

"The programs appeal to an older, traditional audience, and watching these programs appears to be a confirmation of their religious beliefs, not a substitute for them," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania.

Gerbner, who helped research the study, said television ministries have been "suspected of causing or at least contributing to the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation.

"Our study found no support for that charge," he said at a news conference in Manhattan.

Commissioning of study

The study, conducted by the school and the Gallup Organization, was commissioned by 39 religious organizations of different denominations, including the National Council of Churches, the U.S. Catholic Conference and a number of evengelists, including the Rev. Jerry Falwell.

"There must be other explanations if church attendance has declined and there is a lack of financial support," Gerbner said.

He said research over the years has shown that prime-time television drama, with its much larger audience, is "the new religion," not the programs that are religious in content.

"Watching television has become a ritual that meets certain needs that used to be satisfied by religion," he said.

The report, the first in-depth look at the audience for religious broadcasting, estimated there are about 13.3 million regular viewers of religious programs from all denominations.

"We found that the audience for religious television is smaller than has been claimed, though this group is consistent in its viewing habits," Gerbner said.

The study found most viewers of religious broadcasting are not converted to religion by evangelists but are instead church members with "a long-standing allegiance to organized religion."

"Religious programming can consist of the same distortions as commercial television," said Peggy Shriver, assistant general secretary for research, evaluation and planning at the National Council of Churches.

"They often under-represent minorities, women, blue-collar workers and the elderly," she said.

NORFOLK, VA
THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT
D. 136,023 S. 210,599

APR 17 1984

BURRELLE'S

Churches holding own against TV ministries, study says

By APRIL WITT
Staff writer

NEW YORK — Religious television programs are not draining members or money from local churches, and electronic preachers attract a much smaller audience than they have claimed, a study released Monday says.

Many churches have charged that religious television programs, which have been on the increase since the mid-70s, have caused erosion in their attendance and financial support.

However, a study commissioned by a broad coalition of religious organizations, including television ministries and their critics, found no evidence for that charge.

"If anything, viewers of religious broadcasting are slightly more likely than nonviewers to attend and financially support their local church," said George Gerbner, a member of the research team and the dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania.

The study, which was conducted by the Annenberg School and the Gallup Organization, is being hailed by some religious leaders as the most important study of religion and television in 30 years. It holds good and bad news for both television preachers and their critics.

Among the findings to hit religious broadcasters hardest was that only 13.3 million people — or about 6 percent of all television viewers nationwide — say that they watch religious programming at least 30 minutes weekly.

This is only a small fraction of the 50 million to 130 million viewers some electronic preachers have claimed.

Ben Armstrong of the National Religious Broadcasters said those figures are cause for "concern" among his association, which helped pay for the study. As a result of this finding, the NRB will explore ways to attract a larger audience, he said.

However, a spokesman for Christian Broadcasting Network, David Clark, disagreed with the study's audience estimate. CBN, which contributed $27,000 of the $175,000 total cost of the study, estimates that there are at least 25 million regular viewers of religious programming, he said.

Another controversial finding of the study was that, contrary to popular belief, charismatic television personalities have not created a new and expanding audience of religious converts.

Rather, the researchers found that the audience for these shows has remained fairly stable over several years, and its members have a longstanding allegiance to organized religion.

"They are preaching to the converted," said William Fore, the head of communications for the National Council of Churches, which also helped pay for and design the study.

☐ Please see Churches, Page A2

Churches holding own against TV ministries, study says

☐ Churches, from Page A1

"I do not believe that religious broadcasting is good evangelism, and I think the study shows that," Fore said. "I do not believe that it converts people, and I think the study shows that."

However, Clark of CBN said: "I don't believe that. The letters we get from viewers at CBN tell us that their Christian faith is quickened and activated by the programs. In our view, that is evangelism."

In general, the study found that people who watch religious television are older, have less education and income, and are more politically conservative than either viewers of commercial television or the general population. Most live in rural areas and in the South and Midwest, the study found.

These viewers are also more "fundamentalist" in their religious beliefs and are more dissatisfied with what they view as the prevailing moral climate than non-viewers of religious programming.

Although the study indicates that religious television viewers have not been "converted" by television preachers, the researchers did find that electronic preachers exert a strong influence on their followers.

People who told researchers that they regularly view religious programming are far more likely than non-viewers of the television ministries to have voted in the election 1980, the study showed.

This is in direct contrast to the heavy viewing audience for commercial television, which the study found votes far less frequently than the typical citizen.

"If these programs are having an effect on the political process, it is to mobilize more of the conservative vote than might otherwise participate," said Dr. Larry Gross, a professor at the Annenburg School and a member of the research team.

Dr. Michael Morgan, another member of the research team said: "The study indicates that the national press was accurate in assessing the role of the Religious Right and the New Right in the 1980 elections. It shows the New Right was not exaggerated by the press."

However, researchers said that commercial, not religious, television has had the greatest effect on religion nationwide.

The more people watch commercial television, the less likely they are to say that religion is important in their lives, the study shows.

In many respects, prime-time television drama, with its much larger audience, is the "new religion" in America, Gerbner said.

"Watching television has become a ritual that meets certain needs that used to be satisfied by religion," Gerbner said. "It is as if general, commercial television has supplanted or replaced religion."

The Washington Post
WASHINGTON, D. C.
D. 730,000 SUN. 952,540

APR 17 1984

BURRELLE'S

Religious TV Programs No Competition To Local Church Support, Report Says

By Marjorie Hyer
Washington Post Staff Writer

NEW YORK, April 16—The 13.3 million Americans who watch religious television programs are more likely to vote than frequent viewers of general television programming. They may send money to three or more TV ministers, but they support their local churches as well. They are a little older than general TV watchers, have less income and education and lean toward religious fundamentalism.

These are a few of the findings of a new and far-reaching study on religion and television, conducted by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications and the Gallup Organization. The study was released today in a news conference at New York University's skyscraper campus, across from the New York Public Library.

The study found that religious TV programs supplement rather than compete with the local congregation, in terms of both dollars and church attendance. In recent years, leaders of mainline denominations have watched their congregations and budgets shrink and blamed the popular TV ministries, with their constant appeals to send money, for the empty pews.

"Our study has found no support for that charge," the researchers said in their report. "Viewers of religious programs, including the prominent television ministries, are no less likely than nonviewers to attend, contribute to, and participate in local church activities."

The research project, the most comprehensive study of religious broadcasting ever undertaken, was sponsored and financed by the Ad Hoc Committee on Electronic Church Research.

The 39 organizations and churches involved ran the gamut from the National Council of Churches and the United States Catholic Conference to Jerry Falwell's Old Time Gospel Hour, the Jimmy Swaggart Ministries and the PTL Television Network.

Forty percent of religious TV viewers send money to three or more religious broadcasters, the study found.

Larry Gross, a member of the Annenberg research team, told the crowded news conference that although TV ministers encourage their listeners to vote, researchers found no instance of endorsement of a specific candidate.

Other findings of the study:

- Men not only outnumber women in religious TV programs—although it's the other way around in the audiences—but are almost universally "in charge." Women are depicted as having "little authority and power."
- Although only 1 percent of participants in the religious programs studied claimed to be healers, personal problems were mentioned in 75 percent of the programs.
- Dissatisfaction with moral standards and practices prevailing in society emerged as "one of the most distinctive bonds" distinguishing religious viewers from general TV viewers, with half of religious viewers saying they are "very dissatisfied" with the nation's morals, usually defined in sexual terms.

BURRELLE'S 4/17/1984 Winston-Salem, NC Sentinel

Study: TV Ministries Reach Converted

6220

CHARLOTTE (AP) — Television ministries are mainly reaching an audience that is converted, but a two-year study says religious television is not to blame for a lack of money and a drop in membership in local churches.

The conclusions were drawn from research by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications and the Gallup Organization of Princeton, N. J. Results were released in New York yesterday.

The study was commissioned by a diverse, ad hoc group of more than 30 religious organizations, including the PTL Network, based near Fort Mill, S. C., the Rev. Jerry Falwell's Old Time Gospel Hour, the National Council of Churches of Christ, the U. S. Catholic Conference and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Research included one national and two regional surveys of viewers of religious programs and other programs and a "content analysis" of religious television.

Television ministries are a conservative religious core group's alternative to what researchers called the "mainstream" of "general television." The survey said that group is more dissatisfied with the "prevailing moral climate" in television than unhappy with local churches.

Although television ministries have long hailed the medium's reach to nonbelievers, the study summary said religious television "serves more to rally believers than to recruit or convert others."

The study's research shows an estimated 13.3 million people watch religious television, about 6.2 percent of the nation's TV households. About 3.14 percent watch one or more hours of religious television a week.

Teresa Gardner of the PTL public relations staff said PTL would have no comment until it sees a complete copy of the results. PTL estimates its daily audience could be as high as 12 million, she said.

The Annenberg-Gallup study said the audience for religious television is "more stable and compact than has been supposed." It is "somewhat older, lower in education and income, more conservative, more 'fundamentalist,' and more likely to live in rural areas and in the South and Midwest."

These viewers are "no less likely" than nonviewers to attend or give money to a local church, said the summary.

"It's a loyal audience, but it's not the young, it doesn't really seem to be growing and it's not very diverse," said Dr. George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School of Communications.

THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL
MEMPHIS, TENN.
D. 200,189 SUN. 282,054

APR 18 1984

BURRELLE'S

Commentary—

TV preachers' audience viewed in many lights

By FRANK P. L. SOMERVILLE
Baltimore Sun

6270

NEW YORK — A two-year study financed by 39 Catholic and Protestant organizations has determined that the actual audience for even the most successful of the TV preachers is far smaller than many of them had believed.

"Infinitesimally small for the huge amounts of money spent" was the way Rev. Everett C. Parker of the United Church of Christ characterized the 13.3 million "regular viewers" of such religious programs estimated by the polling.

That total, which Rev. William F. Fore of the National Council of Churches said reflects the number of Americans who watch as little as 15 minutes of religious broadcasting at a time, amounts to about 6.2 percent of the number of people in households with TV sets, according to the research.

But at a recent press conference for release and discussion of the data, it became clear that interpretations will vary as widely as the theology of the sponsors of the study.

The more liberal, mainstream denominations, which had felt threatened by claims that TV evangelists were drawing 130 million regular viewers or more and siphoning contributions away from the local churches, breathed a sigh of relief.

Their representatives already are beginning to reassess financial commitments to competing religious broadcast time.

Mr. Fore observed that when the study zeroed in on "regular" viewers of an hour or more of the religious programs, the audience dropped below 7 million people, or 3.14 percent of the total with TV sets.

George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania and a member of the research team, said he disagreed with describing as "infinitesimal" the audiences for such religious broadcasters as Pat Robertson, Jimmy Swaggart and Jerry Falwell. "Limited, stable, yes," Gerbner said. "But clearly they are supporting the programs."

David W. Clark, vice president for marketing at Robertson's Christian Broadcasting Network Center in Virginia Beach, Va., added, "No one is forced or coerced to give, as with the Internal Revenue Service. They give freely."

In response to an assertion by one of the researchers that the bulk of the funding for TV evangelists in general comes from a relatively few large contributors, not many small ones, Clark said that only about 20 percent of Robertson's support comes from major donors. He said the annual budget for Robertson's CBN network is about $20 million.

Ben Armstrong, executive director of National Religious Broadcasters, said the "big question" facing his membership is, "How do we reach out to the large number of people not in our audience?"

He said he was "concerned that minorities and women are underrepresented" in the content of the religious programs studied. "We will review that," he said.

Armstrong was especially pleased with the study's conclusions that the national, nondenominational, mostly fundamentalist religious broadcasters in his group are not draining the resources of local churches, but rather that their loyal audiences displayed a longtime allegiance to organized religion.

"Televison ministries have been suspected of causing, or at least contributing to, the erosion of mainline church membership," Gerbner said. "Our study found no support for that charge. There must be other explanations if church attendance has declined and there is a lack of financial support."

The combined survey of TV viewers by the Annenberg School and the Gallup polling organization "found that the audience for religious TV is smaller than has been claimed, though this group is consistent in its viewing habits. The programs appeal to an older, traditional audience and watching these programs appears to be a confirmation of their religious belief, not a substitute for them."

The viewers, the report said, are more likely to live in rural areas and in the South and Midwest compared to those who do not watch religious programs.

DAILY VARIETY
HOLLYWOOD, CAL.
D. 19,300

APR 18 1984

BURRELLE'S

Study Appraises The Impact Of Ministries On Television

The "electronic church" of television is not responsible for declining attendance in church and has not created a new, expanding audience of religious converts, according to the results of a two-year study by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications.

While "television ministries have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," said Annenberg School dean George Gerbner, "our study found no support for that charge."

The report found that about 13,300,000 people watch religious programs. This represents about 6.2% of the total possible viewership in the U.S., says the study.

"We found that the audience for religious television is smaller than has been claimed, though his group is consistent in its viewing habits."

The average viewer of such fare is older and watches these programs to confirm his religious beliefs, and not as a substitute for them, the study found.

They are "older, have less education and income, are more conservative politically and are more 'fundamentalist' in their religious beliefs. They are also more likely to live in rural areas and in the South and Midwest, compared to those who do not watch religious programs."

Viewers' Views

Of the regular viewers of religious programming, said the with the prevailing moral cli- mate" (as compared to one-third of nonviewers); half consider evangelicalism and missionary work to be the church's main goal (as compared to one-third of nonviewers), and one-fifth say the church should be "working for social justice" (as compared to one-third of nonviewers).

Heavy religious program viewers show greater confidence in local church leaders than light viewers and nonviewers, and heavy viewers of general tv programming are less likely to read the Bible than light viewers, the study said.

In terms of religious programming content, "there is frequent condemnation of abortion, homosexuality and other behavior described as deviant," the report states. In one of every 10 programs, it said, viewers were urged to attend church.

Most commonly mentioned problems in evangelical programming were family tensions, financial and health problems, unemployment and physical handicaps. "In one of every four programs," the report said, "a solution suggested for these difficulties was a financial contribution to the ministry."

The Annenberg School study also found that characters in religious programming are "similar to the characters who populate the fictional world of primetime drama."

"Men outnumber women by a considerable margin...Men are portrayed in roles of authority...Women are generally younger than the man and are rarely, if ever, portrayed as clergy; also they rarely quote the Bible...Women are more likely than men to reveal that they suffer from physical ailments and to talk about their personal problems."

GREENSBORO NEWS
AND RECORD
GREENSBORO, NC
DAILY & SUN. 113,205

APR 18 1984
BURRELLE'S

Women not sharing limelight in 'electronic church' — study

(6220

CHARLOTTE (AP) — Far more men than women are depicted on religious broadcasts, and those women seen are rarely shown as clergy or as interpreters of the Bible, according to a study on the "electronic church."

That conclusion is one of several drawn from two years of research by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications and the Gallup Organization of Princeton, N.J.

The study also said women are more likely to be shown in religious telecasts as having personal problems or physical ailments.

Other findings in the reports include:

- Reading the Bible is seen or discussed in 90 percent of religious broadcasts but is "virtually absent from commercial programs."
- "Sinful sexual conduct" is attacked in one of four religious broadcasts.
- Only a fifth of religious television viewers believe churches should work for "social justice" — a view held by a third of nonviewers.
- Political issues are discussed on more than half of television ministry broadcasts. Regular viewers are more likely to vote than those who do not watch religious television.

The survey also said television ministries mainly are preaching to the converted. However, religious television is not draining money and members from local churches and cannot be blamed for membership losses in mainline churches.

The study was commissioned by a diverse, ad hoc group of more than 30 religious organizations — including the PTL Network, based near Fort Mill, S.C. Others included the Rev. Jerry Falwell's Old Time Gospel Hour, the National Council of Churches of Christ, the U.S. Catholic Conference and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Research included one national and two regional surveys of viewers of religious and other programs and a "content analysis" of religious television.

The study's research shows an estimated 13.3 million people watch religious television, about 6.2 percent of the nation's TV households. About 3.14 percent watch one or more hours of religious television a week.

The Annenberg-Gallup study said the audience for religious television is "more stable and compact than has been supposed." It is "somewhat older, lower in education and income, more conservative, more 'fundamentalist' and more likely to live in rural areas and in the South and Midwest."

These viewers are "no less likely" than nonviewers to attend or give money to a local church, the summary said.

"It's a loyal audience, but it's not the young, it doesn't really seem to be growing and it's not very diverse," said Dr. George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School of Communications.

He noted the study "has a little bit of good news and bad news in it for everybody."

Representatives of more conservative television ministries are disappointed with the audience figures, although "so far" none has disputed their accuracy, Gerbner said in a telephone interview.

One of the survey's clearest findings, he said, is that television is "just not a very effective way to do evangelism. What reaches large numbers of people is commercial entertainment .... It's hard for evangelism to be entertainment."

COLUMBUS, GA.
LEDGER
D. 24,792

APR 18 1984
BURRELLE'S

TV Evangelism Isn't Hurting Churches

6270

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The growth of TV evangelism has not caused many people to stop attending or donating money to their local churches, according to researchers who conducted a two-year study of religion and TV.

Television ministries have attracted millions of viewers, but those audiences are usually made up of people with long-standing allegiance to organized religion, according to researchers from the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania and the Gallup Organization of Princeton, N.J.

The study was commissioned by a group of more than 30 religious organizations, including the United Presbyterian Church, the U.S. Catholic Conference and television ministries such as PTL Network and Jerry Falwell's Old Time Gospel Hour.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School. "Our study found no support for that charge."

Gerbner, a member of the research team, said communication research over the years indicates that prime time television drama, and religious programming, has become the "new religion" in the United States.

"Watching television has become a ritual that meets certain needs that used to be satisfied by religion," he said in a statement issued Sunday.

The surveyers found that about 13.3 million people regularly watch religious programs, or about 6.2 percent of all people with television sets in their homes.

The programs "appeal to an older, traditional audience and watching these programs appears to be a confirmation of their religious beliefs, not a substitute for them," the researchers said.

"Their interest in the electronic church is complementary to other forms of religious practice, like church worship."

Followers of TV evangelism typically are older, have less education and income, are more conservative politically and are more fundamentalist in their religious beliefs than the average person, the study found.

They also are more likely to live in rural areas and in the South and Midwest than people who don't watch religious programs, the researchers said.

People who watch religious programs frequently express greater confidence in their local church leaders than "light viewers" and "non-viewers," they said.

Ledger-Star
NORFOLK, VIRGINIA
D. 92,141

APR 18 1984
BURRELLE'S

Study says TV preachers dwell on viewer woes, gifts

FRONT PAGE

By APRIL WITT
Staff writer

Television preachers talk more on the air about politics and personal problems than they do about religious or theological issues.

And, in one out of four programs, the best-known television evangelists offer only one specific solution to viewers' personal problems — sending a donation to their ministry.

These are among the findings released this week in a major study of television and religion, which was conducted by the University of Pennsylvania and the Gallup Organization.

The two-year study was commissioned by a coalition of religious organizations — including television ministries, such as Christian Broadcasting Network, and their critics.

It was prompted, the researchers said, because the role of the electronic church in modern life is often debated, but rarely studied scientifically.

Surprisingly, the study showed that religious and theological issues are discussed infrequently in "religious broadcasts."

This holds true, the study found, for all religious programs — those sponsored by mainline denominations as well as by television evangelists with independent ministries.

Hell and the second coming, for example, are mentioned in only 25 percent of all religious broadcasts, the study showed. The devil is mentioned in about one-third of all religious shows.

Religious broadcasters are far more likely to discuss political, social and moral issues, personal problems or fund-raising, the study found.

Political issues, for example, were discussed in about half of all religious programs.

And television evangelists in particular frequently condemn abortion, homosexuality and other behavior they view as deviant, researchers said. "Sinful sexual behavior" was addressed in one out of four religious programs.

However, the topic most often discussed — particularly by television evangelists — is human misery. Researchers found that personal problems and physical ailments are mentioned in 75 percent of all religious programs.

They are mentioned most frequently by the 10 most popular television ministries, a group including Jim Bakker's Praise the Lord Club, M.G. "Pat" Robertson's 700 Club, Robert Schuller's Crystal Palace and Jimmy Swaggart.

—Please turn to page A4, col. 1

TV preachers dwell on woes, study reports

— From page one

More than 60 percent of these big-name electronic preachers mention three or more ailments or problems a show, the study found. Family tension, financial and health problems, unemployment and physical handicaps are the most commonly discussed.

The solutions that religious broadcasters offer their viewers for these problems are generally "spiritual in nature," the study said.

But, reasearchers could pinpoint only one specific cure that television evangelists suggest to viewers — making a financial contribution to their program.

One out of four of the big-name evangelists studied suggested sending money to solve a personal problem, but no mainline denominational shows did so, researchers found.

Fund-raising in general was prominent in most religious programs — with more than half making some explicit request for money.

However, the big-name evangelists were the most likely group to ask for contributions, and they asked for larger amounts than other religious programs, the study showed.

In fact, 60 percent of the big-name evangelical preachers made three or more requests for money during each program, the study found. Their average requests ranged from $31 to $600, researchers said.

An area in which television evangelists were similar to other religious broadcasters — and all other commercial television — is their tendency to exclude minorities and women from their shows, the study found.

Dr. Peggy Shriver of the National Council of Churches, which helped fund the study, called the evidence that women and minority have been badly under represented in religious shows "sobering."

As a result of the study, the association of National Religious Broadcasters, which also helped fund the study, will discuss how to include both these groups in their programs, a spokesman said.

"We are very much concerned that women and minorities are underrepresented in many programs, and we will review that," said Ben Armstrong of the NRB.

According to the study, men outnumber women by a large margin in all religious programs. The women who do appear in religious shows are generally younger than male participants, and have far less authority, the study showed.

Women, for example, rarely quote the Bible on religious shows although men often do.

Meadville Tribune
MEADVILLE, PA.
A3—16,223

TV Preaching Doesn't Hurt Churchgoing

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Televised evangelism may have attracted millions of loyal viewers, but it has not cut down on support for more traditional forms of worship, according to a study by researchers from the University of Pennsylvania and the Gallup Organization.

Researchers working out of Penn's Annenberg School of Communications found that contrary to popular opinion, people who support the electronic ministries also attend and contribute to their local churches.

The two-year study, which was to be released Monday, was commissioned by a group of more than 30 religious organizations, including the United Presbyterian Church, the U.S. Catholic Conference and television ministries such as PTL Network and the Old Time Gospel Hour.

The findings contradict the notion that TV evangelism has contributed to a decline in support for local churches, said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School.

"Television ministries have been suspected of

RIVERSIDE, CALIF.
PRESS-ENTERPRISE
(EVENING) 34,505

APR 18 1984

BURRELLE'S

Entertainment Briefs

Compiled from wire and staff reports

'Accidental overdose' fells singer

G 270

Rock singer Rick James was hospitalized in Buffalo, N.Y., in fair condition Monday after being found unconscious in a bed at his suburban home.

James

The 36-year-old "punk-funk" singer was felled by a combination of "an accidental overdose" of Valium and alcohol and "stress and fatigue," said Ron McCabe, a police spokesman in East Aurora.

The singer had a prescription for the Valium, a tranquilizer and muscle relaxant, and only a "small quantity" was involved, McCabe said.

KCET to produce Williams play

Channel 28 (KCET) officials have announced that they are ready to start production on the adaptation of "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" they are preparing for PBS' "American Playhouse." Jack Hofsiss is directing the Tennessee Williams drama that will star Rip Torn as Big Daddy, Tommy Lee Jones as Brick and Jessica Lange as Maggie.

"Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" will be the second Williams play to receive a major TV treatment this year. Earlier in the season ABC presented a version of "A Streetcar Named Desire."

Latin dance band leader dies

Machito, a bandleader who helped revolutionize Latin dance music and change the course of jazz, has died in London after suffering a stroke last week. He was 75 years old.

Machito, whose real name was Frank Grillo, was born in Havana in 1908 and was nicknamed Macho because he was his parent's first son after three daughters. He worked in Cuba as a backup singer and maracas player, and in 1937 immigrated to the United States.

Impact of religious TV programs studied

Religious television shows are not cutting into church attendance as some social scientists and religious organizations had suggested in recent years, according to a study of religious television programming.

The two-year study, conducted by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications, also found that religious broadcasts appeal to 13.3 million people — 6.2 percent of American television viewers — who, for the most part, already have strong religious beliefs. The programs, the study suggested, fail to reach large numbers of viewers who are not actively religious, nor do they seem likely to make many new converts.

"This is both good news and bad news for evangelical broadcasters," said Dr. George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School. "The good news is that they do not reduce the number of people going to local churches. On the bad side, we found they are reaching a stable audience of those who are already religiously active."

Since the 1960s the number of evangelical radio and television stations has risen dramatically, from fewer than 150 in the mid-1960s to more than 1,000 this year, according to the National Religious Broadcasters, an umbrella organization for television and radio evangelical groups.

San Antonio Express
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS
D. 80,286

APR 18 1984

BURRELLE'S

TV church fears eased

ASSOCIATED PRESS (270)

America's booming "electronic church," operating via television and often criticized as siphoning off membership, participation and funds from regular churches, has no such effects, a major national study concludes.

It found that audiences of the evangelical broadcasters also attend and contribute to their local churches and see "no conflict between syndicated religious television programs and more traditional forms of worship."

'Complementary'

Rather, the two are regarded as "complementary and mutually reinforcing activities rather than as substitutes for one another," says the report.

The two-year study, "Religion and Television," was carried out by the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania and the Gallup Organization for a cross-section of about 40 Christian organizations.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," says George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg school and member of the research team.

"Our study found no support for that charge."

Instead, the study says the real competitor seems to be commercial television itself — what Gerbner calls present-day society's "new religion."

Heavy viewers were found less likely than light viewers to read the Bible, indicating an influential rivalry between commercial television and biblical faith.

Conflict seen

While no basic, institutional conflict was found between religious television and the churches, the report says "a conflict with established forces exists," epitomized in general television.

It is "the central expression of those forces" and the new "pervasive cultural arm of secular society," the report says.

The rise of the electronic church, until now getting scant scientific analysis, seems to be an echo of "fundamentalist upheavals that have shaken large parts of the world," the report saus.

It says that the broadcast evangelism audience, totaling about 13.3 million, tends to be more conservative, more fundamentalist and rural than non-viewers and more dissatisfied with "the prevailing moral climate."

"In fact, their dissatisfaction with the prevailing moral climate may be one of the most distinctive bonds between religious programs and their viewers," the report says.

LAS VEGAS, NV
SUN
D. 58,948 SUN. 64,602
SAT. 56,758

APR 13 1984

BURRELLE'S

Religious shows save few souls

6270

By PETER KERR
New York Times

NEW YORK — Religious television shows are not cutting into church attendance as some social scientists and religious organizations had suggested in recent years, according to a study of religious television programming released Monday.

The two-year study, conducted by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications, also found that religious broadcasts appeal to 13.3 million people — 6.2 percent of American television viewers — who, for the most part, already have strong religious beliefs. The programs, the study suggested, fail to reach large numbers of viewers who are not actively religious, nor do they seem likely to make many new converts.

"This is both good news and bad news for evangelical broadcasters," said Dr. George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School. "The good news is that they do not reduce the number of people going to local churches. On the bad side, we found they are reaching a stable audience of those who are already religiously active."

The study, which was commissioned by a group of more than 30 religious organizations, represents the most extensive research to date on the phenomenon of "electronic church" programs. Since the 1960s the number of evangelical radio and television stations has risen dramatically, from fewer than 150 in the mid-1960s to more than 1,000 this year, according to the National Religious Broadcasters, an umbrella organization for television and radio evangelical groups.

But some religious organizations questioned whether television preachers, who often espouse fundamentalist beliefs, were taking people and money away from local churches by providing worshippers with an alternative at home. This was a major subject of discussion in a 1980 conference of religious organizations and social scientists under the auspices of the National Council of Churches and the United States Catholic Conference in New York City.

The News and Observer
RALEIGH, N.C.
D. 129,411 SUN. 171,027

APR 18 1984

BURRELLE'S

TV ministries show women in lesser roles, two-year study finds

CHARLOTTE (AP) — Far more men than women are presented on religious broadcasts, and those women seen are rarely shown as clergy or as interpreters of the Bible, according to a study on the "electronic church."

That conclusion is one of several drawn from two years of research by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications and the Gallup Organization of Princeton, N.J.

The study also said women are more likely to be shown in religious telecasts as having personal problems or physical ailments.

Other findings in the reports include:

- Reading the Bible is seen or discussed in 90 percent of religious broadcasts but is "virtually absent from commercial programs."
- "Sinful sexual conduct" is attacked in one of four religious broadcasts.
- Only a fifth of religious television viewers believe churches should work for "social justice" — a view held by a third of non-viewers.
- Political issues are discussed on more than half of television ministry broadcasts. Regular viewers are more likely to vote than those who do not watch religious television.

The survey also said television ministries mainly are preaching to the converted. However, religious television is not draining money and members from local churches and cannot be blamed for membership losses in mainline churches, the study said.

The study was commissioned by a diverse, ad hoc group of more than 30 religious organizations — including the PTL Network, based near Fort Mill, S.C. Others included the Rev. Jerry Falwell's Old Time Gospel Hour, the National Council of Churches of Christ, the U.S. Catholic Conference and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Research included one national and two regional surveys of viewers of religious and other programs and a "content analysis" of religious television.

Although television ministries have long hailed the medium's reach to non-believers, the study summary says religious television "serves more to rally believers than to recruit or convert others."

The study's research shows an estimated 13.3 million people watch religious television, about 6.2 percent of the nation's TV households. About 3.14 percent watch one or more hours of religious television a week.

The Annenberg-Gallup study said the audience for religious television is "more stable and compact than has been supposed." It is "somewhat older, lower in education and income, more conservative, more 'fundamentalist' and more likely to live in rural areas and in the South and Midwest."

These viewers are "no less likely" than non-viewers to attend or give money to a local church, said the summary.

"It's a loyal audience, but it's not the young, it doesn't really seem to be growing and it's not very diverse," said Dr. George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School of Communications.

He noted the study "has a little bit of good news and bad news in it for everybody."

Representatives of more conservative television ministries are disappointed with the audience figures, although so far none has disputed their accuracy, Gerbner said in a telephone interview.

One of the survey's clearest findings, he said, is that television is "just not a very effective way to do evangelism. What reaches large numbers of people is commercial entertainment... It's hard for evangelism to be entertainment."

On the other side, he said mainline churches are "going to have to rethink their approach to religious television and ... some of their criticisms of these ministries in light of what we learned."

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C.
JOURNAL
D. 71,485 S. 95,325

APR 18 1984
BURRELLE'S

Religious Broadcasts Fail to Convert Non-Believers, Study Says

6240

ARLOTTE (AP) — Although television ministries have hailed the medium's reach to non-believers, religious ision "serves more to rally believers than to recruit or rt others," according to a study on the "electronic h."

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These viewers are "no less likely" than non-viewers to attend or give money to a local church, said the summary.

George Gerbner, the dean of the Annenberg School of Communications, said, "It's a loyal audience, but it's not the you it doesn't really seem to be growing, and it's not very divers

Gerbner said, however, that mainline churches are "going have to rethink their approach to religious television and some of their criticisms of these ministries in light of what learned."

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH
ST. LOUIS, MO.
D. 236,888 S. 430,030

APR 19 1984
BURRELLE'S

TV Comment

Religion Shows Don't Cut Into Church Attendance

By Peter Kerr

NEW YORK

Religious television shows are not cutting into church attendance as some social scientists and religious organizations had suggested in recent years, according to a study of religious television programming.

The two-year study, conducted by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications, also found that religious broadcasts appeal to 13.3 million people — 6.2 percent of American television viewers — who, for the most part, already have strong religious beliefs. The programs, the study suggested, fail to reach large numbers of viewers who are not actively religious, nor do they seem likely to make many new converts.

"This is both good news and bad news for evangelical broadcasters," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School. "The good news is that they do not reduce the number of people going to local churches. On the bad side, we found they are reaching a stable audience of those who are already religiously active."

The study, which was commissioned by a group of more than 30 religious organizations, represents the most extensive research to date on the phenomenon of "electronic church" programs. Since the 1960s, the number of evangelical radio and television stations has risen dramatically, from fewer than 150 in the mid-1960s to more than 1,000 this year, according to the National Religious Broadcasters, an umbrella organization for television and radio evangelical groups.

But some religious organizations questioned whether television preachers, many of whom espouse fundamentalist beliefs, were taking people and money away from local churches by providing worshippers with an alternative at home. This was a major subject of discussion in a 1980 conference of religious organizations and social scientists under the auspices of the National Council of Churches and the United States Catholic Conference in New York City.

The study, designed to clarify the effects of religious programs, was supported both by groups that produce evangelical broadcasts and so-called mainline groups, such as the National Council of Churches. The Gallup Organization in Princeton, N.J., assisted in the project, which cost $175,000.

The study found that viewers of religious programs were mostly people who attended churches and made contributions to religious organizations. These viewers also tend to be older, have lower incomes and less education than people who do not watch religious programs.

In addition, they are more likely to live in the South or Middle West, are more likely to have fundamentalist religious attitudes and more likely to be disturbed by what they see as moral laxity on regular television programs.

The study found that regular viewers of religious programming of any denomination numbered about 6.2 percent of the total number of people in television households, or about 13.3 million people.

Viewers of religious television, the study found, are no less likely to attend services than churchgoers who do not view such programming. The audience for religious programs, the study found, generally sees the programs as a complement to more traditional religious activities.

Another finding of the study was that religious programs, like other television fare, tend to under-represent women, the elderly, children and members of minority groups.

Representives of religious groups that supported the study appeared to draw varied conclusions from the data.

"These are a very small number of viewers from a homogeneous group of people," said William F. Fore, a spokesman for the National Council of Churches. About the programs, Fore said, "I do not believe this is good evangelism, and I think the study shows that."

But David W. Clark, the vice president of marketing for the Christian Broadcasting Network, a major producer of religious programming in Virginia Beach, Va., said the study provided support for his organization's type of evangelical programming.

"We finally have an absolute finding that the programs don't decrease attendance at local churches," Clark said. As for the findings that the size of the religious programs' audience was limited, Clark said he believed the programs would reach more Americans if the programs were presented at more popular time periods.

Most of the producers of the religious programs, he said, can only afford to buy television time late or early in the schedule when relatively few viewers are watching.

TV evangelists don't affect church attendence

By Jan Snyder

The television ministries that attract millions of viewers and contributors are influential with their audiences, but watching religious programs doesn't keep people from going to church.

Those who support evangelical broadcasters also attend and contribute to local churches, according to a two-year study of religion and television released today by researchers at the Annenberg School of Communications.

The Gallup Organization of Princeton, N.J. also participated in the study, which was commissioned by a group of more than 30 religious organizations ranging from the "mainline" United Presbyterian Church and the U.S. Catholic Conference to television ministries such as the PTL Network and the Old Time Gospel Hour.

The idea that the "electronic church" is responsible for declining participation in local churches was contradicted by the research findings. But also disproved was the belief that charismatic television personalities have created a new and expanding audience of religious converts. Rather, the researchers found that this stable and loyal television audience displayed a long-standing allegiance to organized religion.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions, and general participation," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School and a member of the research team. "Our study found no support for that charge.

"There must be other explanations if church attendance has declined and there is a lack of financial support," he said. Gerbner added that research over the years has shown that, in many respects, prime-time television drama—with its much larger audience—is "the new religion," not the programs that are religious in content.

"Watching television has become a ritual that meets certain needs that used to be satisfied by religion," Gerbner said.

Investigators for the research project on religion and television were George Gerbner, Larry Gross, Stewart Hoover, Michael Morgan and Nancy Signorielli, all of the Annenberg School; Harry Cotugno of the Gallup organization; and Robert Wuthnow, a sociologist at Princeton University.

According to surveys conducted for this report, there are about 13.3 million regular viewers of religious programs covering all denominations. This is about 6.2 percent of the estimated number of persons in households with televisions.

"We found that the audience for religious television is smaller than has been claimed, though this group is consistent in its viewing habits," said the researchers. "The programs appeal to an older, traditional audience and watching these programs appears to be a confirmation of their religious beliefs, not a substitute for them. Their interest in the electronic church is complementary to other forms of religious practice, like church worship."

Members of this audience, drawn by television content not found on other television shows, are older, have less education and income, are more conservative politically, and are more "fundamentalist" in their religious beliefs. They are also more likely to live in rural areas and in the South and Midwest compared to those who do not watch religious programs.

Other characteristics comparing viewers to non-viewers:

—Half of the viewers say they are dissatisfied with the "prevailing moral climate," compared to only one-third of non-viewers.

—Half of the viewers consider evangelicism and missionary work to be the main goal of the church; only one-third of the non-viewers felt this way.

—Conversely, only one-fifth of the viewers said the church should be "working for social justice;" but one-third of the non-viewers consider this a priority of the church.

—Heavy viewers of religious programs express greater confidence in local church leaders than both light viewers and non-viewers.

—Heavy viewers of general television are less likely than light viewers to read the Bible.

In addition to the evangelical broadcasters, television programs are also produced by local church organizations. According to an analysis of their content, the essential features of both types of programs are similar. Discussions of political issues occur in about half of both types of programs. There is frequent condemnation of abortion, homosexuality, and other behavior described as deviant. "Sinful sexual behavior," for example, was addressed in one out of four religious programs.

Regarding the relationship between the television ministries and local congregations, the study revealed that local churches are mentioned in one of every four of these religious programs. And, in one out of 10 programs viewers were urged to attend church.

On the evangelical programs, the most often mentioned personal problems were family tensions, financial and health problems, unemployment and physical handicaps. In one of every four programs a solution suggested for these difficulties was a financial contribution to the ministry.

In fact, a key distinction between the two types of programs is the solicitation of funds. The television evangelists are more likely to ask for money, to make more numerous requests, and ask for greater amounts.

Who are the participants in religious television programs? According to the researchers, these individuals are predominantly white and male. Distinctions between the sexes are portrayed in traditional ways. "People who inhabit religious television are similar to the characters who populate the fictional world of prime-time drama," they said.

The researchers found that:

—Men outnumber women by a considerable margin in all religious programs.

—Men are portrayed in roles of authority, as clergy, for instance.

—Women are generally younger than the men and are rarely, if ever, portrayed as clergy; also, they rarely quote the Bible.

—Women are more likely than men to reveal that they suffer from physical ailments and to talk about their personal problems.

The religious organizations that sponsored this research were members of a coalition called the Ad Hoc Committee on Electronic Church Research, representing the National Council of Churches, the PTL Network, The Old Time Gospel Hour, the United States Catholic Conference, the Southern Baptist Convention, the United Presbyterian Church, National Religious Broadcasters and 30 other religious organizations.

NORFOLK, VA
THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT
D. 136,023 S. 210,599

APR 19 1984

TV preachers skimp on religious issues

By APRIL WITT
Staff writer

Television preachers talk more on the air about politics and personal problems than they do about religious or theological issues.

And, in one out of four programs, the best-known TV evangelists offer only one specific solution to viewers' personal problems — sending a donation to their ministry.

These are among the findings released this week in a major study of television and religion conducted by the University of Pennsylvania and the Gallup Organization.

The two-year study was commissioned by a coalition of religious organizations — including TV ministries such as the Christian Broadcasting Network and their critics.

It was prompted, the researchers said, because the role of the electronic church in modern life is often debated but rarely studied scientifically.

The study showed that religious and theological issues are discussed infrequently in "religious broadcasts."

This holds true, the study found, for all religious programs — those sponsored by mainline denominations as well as by TV evangelists with independent ministries.

Hell and the second coming, for example, are mentioned in 25 percent of all religious broadcasts, the study showed. The devil is mentioned in about one-third of all religious shows.

Religious broadcasters are far more likely to discuss political, social and moral issues, personal problems or fund raising, the study found.

Sixty percent of the big-name evangelical preachers made three or more requests for money during each program, the study found. Their average requests ranged from $31 to $600, researchers said.

Political issues, for example, were discussed in about half of such programs.

TV evangelists in particular frequently condemn abortion, homosexuality and other behavior they view as deviant, researchers said. "Sinful sexual behavior" was addressed in one out of four religious programs.

However, the topic most often discussed — particularly by TV evangelists — is human misery. Researchers found that personal problems and physical ailments are mentioned in 75 percent of all religious programs.

They are mentioned most frequently by the 10 most popular TV ministries, a group including Jim Bakker's Praise the Lord Club, M.G. (Pat) Robertson's 700 Club, Robert Schuller's Crystal Palace and Jimmy Swaggart.

More than 60 percent of these big-name electronic preachers mention three or more ailments or problems a show, the study found. Family tension, financial and health problems, unemployment and physical handicaps are the most commonly discussed.

The solutions that religious broadcasters offer their viewers for these problems are generally "spiritual in nature," the study said.

Researchers could pinpoint one specific cure that TV evangelists suggest to viewers — making a financial contribution to their program.

One out of four of the big-name evangelists studied suggested sending money to solve a personal problem, but no mainline denominational shows did so, researchers found.

Fund raising in general was prominent in most religious programs — with more than half making some explicit request for money.

The big-name evangelists, however, were the most likely group to ask for contributions, and they asked for larger amounts than other religious programs, the study showed.

Sixty percent of the big-name evangelical preachers made three or more requests for money during each program, the study found. Their average requests ranged from $31 to $600, researchers said.

An area in which TV evangelists were similar to other religious broadcasters — and all other commercial television — is their tendency to exclude minorities and women from their shows, the study found.

Peggy Shriver of the National Council of Churches, which helped fund the study, called the evidence that women and minorities have been badly under-represented in religious shows "sobering."

As a result of the study, the Association of National Religious Broadcasters, which also helped fund the study, will discuss how to include both these groups in their programs, a spokesman said.

"We are very much concerned that women and minorities are under-represented in many programs, and we will review that," said Ben Armstrong of the NRB.

Men outnumber women by a large margin in all religious programs, the study said. The women who do appear in religious shows are generally younger than male participants and have far less authority.

Women, for example, rarely quote the Bible on religious shows, although men often do. Women also are more likely than men to appear on religious programs to talk about their physical ailments or other personal problems, researchers said.

AMARILLO, TEXAS
GLOBE TIMES
D. 30,260

APR 20 1984
BURRELLE'S

Study: TV Ministries Don't Decrease Church Attendance

6270

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The growth of TV evangelism has not caused many people to stop attending or donating money to their local churches, according to researchers who conducted a two-year study of religion and TV.

Television ministries have attracted millions of viewers, but those audiences are usually made up of people with long-standing allegiance to organized religion, according to researchers from the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania and the Gallup Organization of Princeton, N.J.

The study was commissioned by a group of more than 30 religious organizations, including the United Presbyterian Church, the U.S. Catholic Conference and television ministries such as PTL Network and Jerry Falwell's Old Time Gospel Hour.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School. "Our study found no support for that charge."

Gerbner, a member of the research team, said communication research over the years indicates that prime time television drama, and religious programming, has become the "new religion" in the United States.

"Watching television has become a ritual that meets certain needs that used to be satisfied by religion," he said in a statement issued Sunday.

The surveyers found that about 13.3 million people regularly watch religious programs, or about 6.2 percent of all people with television sets in their homes.

The programs "appeal to an older, traditional audience and watching these programs appears to be a confirmation of their religious beliefs, not a substitute for them," the researchers said.

"Their interest in the electronic church is complementary to other forms of religious practice, like church worship."

Followers of TV evangelism typically are older, have less education and income, are more conservative politically and are more fundamentalist in their religious beliefs than the average person, the study found.

They also are more likely to live in rural areas and in the South and Midwest than people who don't watch religious programs, the researchers said.

People who watch religious programs frequently express greater confidence in their local church leaders than "light viewers" and "non-viewers," they said.

About one of every four religious programs mentions local churches, and one in 10 urges viewers to attend church, the study found.

The Charlotte Observer
CHARLOTTE, N. C.
D. 172,066 SUN. 243,823

APR 20 1984

BURRELLE'S

The Failure Of TV Evangelists

E 6276

The documentation this week of the ineffectiveness of television as an instrument of Christian evangelism was surprising on the surface, but it probably shouldn't have been.

A study by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications and the Gallup Organization concluded that religious television "serves more to rally believers than to recruit or convert others."

The two-year study, commissioned by such diverse organizations as the PTL Network and the National Council of Churches, concluded that only about 6.2% of TV households watch any religious television at all — and only 3.14% watch an hour a week or more. If the study is accurate — and it seems to be the most comprehensive to date — then television evangelists are raising vast amounts of money to reach far fewer people than they had previously supposed.

For those evangelists who are sincere about their calling — who are not simply embarked on an ego trip — the study represents an opportunity for serious reflection.

At the PTL Network, for example, a number of staff members over the years have urged Jim Bakker to broaden his appeal. Led by Roger Flessing, then a PTL vice president, they argued that in addition to its daily talk show, PTL should produce documentaries on such subjects as world hunger, and sit-coms and dramas with a Christian theme.

Generally, Mr. Bakker rejected that advice, preferring instead the narrower message and format of his daily talk show. Mr. Bakker is within his rights to make that choice, and most television evangelists have made similar decisions. But as the Gallup study shows, they have paid a price in effectiveness.

The hard truth is that in the eyes of many Americans, Mr. Bakker, Jerry Falwell and others like them have trivialized Christianity and have brought even less imagination to their tasks than their Hollywood counterparts in commercial television.

That is quite an indictment.

NEWPORT NEWS, VA
PRESS
D. 59,559 S. 103,415

APR 20 1984
BURRELLE'S

TV evangelists mainly rally flock, study says

6270

From wire and staff reports

Religious television programs serve more as rallying points for believers than as tools for recruiting converts, according to a study released this week.

Religious programming reaches a relatively small audience, by commercial network standards, of "about 13.3 million, or 6.2 percent of the estimated total number of people in television households," according to the study, prepared by researchers at the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications and the Gallup organization of Princeton, N.J.

Regular viewers of religious television "tend to be older, more fundamentalist and lower in income and education than non-viewers," the study finds. They also are more likely to live in rural areas in the South and Midwest.

"They are greatly dissatisfied with what they perceive to be contemporary morality and interested in spreading the gospel more than social justice," the report continues.

The findings were released during a news conference at the Graduate Center of City University in New York City. The study, which took two years to complete, was financed by the Ad Hoc Committee on Religious Television, a broad coalition of more than 30 church organizations, including the National Council of Churches, Jerry Falwell's Old-Time Gospel Hour, the U.S. Catholic Conference, the Southern Baptist Convention and the Christian Broadcasting Network.

The research included an analysis of the contents of religious television programs, a telephone survey of viewers and non-viewers in the Southeastern and Northeastern United States by Annenberg researchers, and personal interviews nationwide by Gallup researchers.

The researchers found that television ministries do not appear to be taking members away from local churches.

"Viewers of religious programs, including the prominent television ministries, are no less likely than non-viewers to attend, contribute to and participate in local church activities," the study concludes.

Many viewers of televised religious programs are "Christians and church members who use it as a tool in addition to the local church and as an aid to their spiritual life," said the Rev. V. Allen Gaines of Parkview Baptist Church in Newport News.

This segment of the audience poses unique challenges for local churches, according to the Rev. Carolee Scheiderer of Hope Lutheran Church in Hampton. "Some (television) evangelists have quite a different perspective theologically. That is a point of difficulty in helping our parishioners work through their faith," she said.

The Rev. Jack N. Waddell, pastor of Newmarket Baptist Church in Newport News, said Christians who use religious television programs "as a substitute for the greater reality of being identified with the local church" are also "difficult to minister to."

These viewers "lack familiarity and communication with the local church. When they have a more personal problem that requires a tangible touch, they are difficult to reach," he said.

Ms. Scheiderer agreed, adding, "As pastor, I am the one who gets the phone call to visit them in the hospital."

And viewers who contribute to the support of television evangelists "do not correspondingly contribute less to their local churches," the researchers found.

While "some individuals will shift

See Appeals Page 20

Appeals for money worry some

Continued from Page 15

their giving away from the local church, generally, once they loosen their purse strings, they tend to give to both," Ms. Scheiderer said. She is concerned, she said, that "some evangelists maybe are trying to line a pocket or two."

Some programs, she said, have a "small ratio of worship experience and a large ratio of asking for money."

"I am a little concerned that some of our older members may be nickeled and dimed to death on a fixed income with appeals for donations," Waddell said. "A few (television evangelists) have integrity, but I'm not 100 percent sold on them."

Gaines noted that the most popular religious program among his congregation is that of Atlanta minister Charles Stanley. "He does not make any appeal at all for money on the program," he said. "The main point is his message, and he has a tremendous audience in this area."

> "I am a little concerned that some of our older members may be nickeled and dimed to death on a fixed income with appeals for donations. A few have integrity, but I'm not 100 percent sold on them."
>
> Jack N. Waddell
> Baptist pastor

The view of the world expressed in religious programming competes less with mainline religion or with local churches than with the "broader and, in some important respects, divergent world of commercial television itself," according to the study.

"Heavy viewers of religious programs are more likely than nonviewers to describe themselves as conservatives, oppose a nuclear freeze, favor tougher laws against pornography, and report voting in the last general election," the study found.

Heavy viewers of commercial television tend to think of themselves as political moderates, are more likely to favor a nuclear freeze, are not as concerned with the nation's moral climate and "are far less likely to say they voted in a general election," according to the study.

The study also shows that television has "an enormous and pervasive power ... to provide a substitute for religion ... to provide many answers that, in earlier times, religion used to provide," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School and one of the researchers.

Heavy viewers of general television are less likely to attend and support the local church than are those who watch television less often, the study found.

SOUTH BEND, IND.
D. 104,440 SUN. 124,936

South Bend Tribune

APR 20 1984

BURRELLE'S

Religious TV impact studied

By Peter Kerr

NEW YORK (NYT) — Religious television shows are not cutting into church attendance as some social scientists and religious organizations had suggested in recent years, according to a study of religious television programming released Monday.

The two-year study, conducted by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications, also found that religious broadcasts appeal to 13.3 million people — 6.2 percent of American television viewers — who, for the most part, already have strong religious beliefs. The programs, the study suggested, fail to reach large numbers of viewers who are not actively religious, nor do they seem likely to make many new converts.

"This is both good news and bad news for evangelical broadcasters," said Dr. George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School. "The good news is that they do not reduce the number of people going to local churches. On the bad side, we found they are reaching a stable audience of those who are already religiously active."

THE STUDY, which was commissioned by a group of more than 30 religious organizations, represents the most extensive research to date on the phenomenon of "electronic church" programs. Since the 1960s the number of evangelical radio and television stations has risen dramatically, from fewer than 150 in the mid-1960s to more than 1,000 this year, according to the National Religious Broadcasters, an umbrella organization for television and radio evangelical groups.

But some religious organizations questioned whether television preachers, who often espouse fundamentalist beliefs, were taking people and money away from local churches by providing worshippers with an alternative at home. This was a major subject of discussion in a 1980 conference of religious organizations and social scientists under the auspices of the National Council of Churches and the United States Catholic Conference in New York City.

The study, designed to clarify the effects of religious programs, was supported both by groups that produce evangelical broadcasts and so-called mainline groups, such as the National Council of Churches. The Gallup Organization in Princeton, N.J., assisted in the project, which cost $175,000.

The study found that viewers of religious programs were mostly people who attended churches and made contributions to religious organizations. These viewers also tend to be older, have lower incomes and less education than people who do not watch religious programs.

AMARILLO, TEXAS
NEWS
D. 43,020

APR 21 1984
BURRELLE'S

Study: TV ministries don't decrease church attendance

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The growth of TV evangelism has not caused many people to stop attending or donating money to their local churches, according to researchers who conducted a two-year study of religion and TV.

Television ministries have attracted millions of viewers, but those audiences are usually made up of people with long-standing allegiance to organized religion, according to researchers from the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania and the Gallup Organization of Princeton, N.J.

The study was commissioned by a group of more than 30 religious organizations, including the United Presbyterian Church, the U.S. Catholic Conference and television ministries such as PTL Network and Jerry Falwell's Old Time Gospel Hour.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School. "Our study found no support for that charge."

Gerbner, a member of the research team, said communication research over the years indicates that prime time television drama, and religious programming, has become the "new religion" in the United States.

"Watching television has become a ritual that meets certain needs that used to be satisfied by religion," he said in a statement issued Sunday.

The surveyers found that about 13.3 million people regularly watch religious programs, or about 6.2 percent of all people with television sets in their homes.

The programs "appeal to an older, traditional audience and watching these programs appears to be a confirmation of their religious beliefs, not a substitute for them," the researchers said.

"Their interest in the electronic church is complementary to other forms of religious practice, like church worship."

Followers of TV evangelism typically are older, have less education and income, are more conservative politically and are more fundamentalist in their religious beliefs than the average person, the study found.

They also are more likely to live in rural areas and in the South and Midwest than people who don't watch religious programs, the researchers said.

People who watch religious programs frequently express greater confidence in their local church leaders than "light viewers" and "non-viewers," they said.

About one of every four religious programs mentions local churches, and one in 10 urges viewers to attend church, the study found.

TORRANCE, CAL.
BREEZE
D. 86,955 SUN. 102,410

APR 21 1984

BURRELLE'S

Religious TV not cutting into church attendance

Prime time preachers reaching church-primed viewers

By Peter Kerr
N.Y. Times News Service

6270

NEW YORK — Religious television shows are not cutting into church attendance as some social scientists and religious organizations had suggested in recent years, according to a study of religious television programming released this week.

The two-year study, conducted by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications, also found that religious broadcasts appeal to 13.3 million people — 6.2 percent of American television viewers — who, for the most part, already have strong religious beliefs. The programs, the study suggested, fail to reach large numbers of viewers who are not actively religious, nor do they seem likely to make many new converts.

"This is both good news and bad news for evangelical broadcasters," said Dr. George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School. "The good news is that they do not reduce the number of people going to local churches. On the bad side, we found they are reaching a stable audience of those who are already religiously active."

The study, which was commissioned by a group of more than 30 religious organizations, represents the most extensive research to date on the phenomenon of "electronic church" programs. Since the 1960s the number of evangelical radio and television stations has risen dramatically, from fewer than 150 in the mid-1960s to more than 1,000 this year, according to the National Religious Broadcasters, an umbrella organization for television and radio evangelical groups.

But some religious organizations questioned whether television preachers, who often espouse fundamentalist beliefs, were taking people and money away from local churches by providing worshippers with an alternative at home. This was a major subject of discussion in a 1980 conference of religious organizations and social scientists under the auspices of the National Council of Churches and the United States Catholic Conference in New York City.

The study, designed to clarify the effects of religious programs, was supported both by groups that produce evangelical broadcasts and so-called mainline groups, such as the National Council of Churches. The Gallup Organization in Princeton, N.J., assisted in the project, which cost $175,000.

The study found that viewers of religious programs were mostly people who attended churches and made contributions to religious organizations. These viewers also tend to be older, have lower incomes and less education than people who do not watch religious programs.

In addition, they are more likely to live in the South or Middle West, are more likely to have fundamentalist religious attitudes and more likely to be disturbed by what they see as moral laxity on regular television programs.

CHICAGO, IL
CHICAGO TRIBUNE
D. 758,255 SUN. 1,101,651

APR 21 1984

BURRELLE'S

Video vicars convert few, study concludes

6270

Bruce Buursma
Religion writer

THE FLICKERING blue light of the television screen appears to be more a baby-sitter for born-again believers than an effective electronic tool for Christian evangelism, according to a two-year study of religious broadcasting released this week.

The landmark survey, conducted by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications and the Gallup Organization, also found that the viewing audience for religion-oriented television programs is smaller than most experts expected—and significantly less than the number claimed by TV evangelists.

But the researchers also contended that religious broadcasts do not compete with local church congregations for money or members and may in fact be "complementary and mutually reinforcing activities rather than substitutes for one another."

Those were among the major findings of the $175,000 study, underwritten by a broad coalition of Christian groups in this country, including the National Council of Churches and the National Religious Broadcasters.

THE SURVEY, "Religion and Television," represented one of the first wide-ranging and objective examinations of the growing electronic church industry, which spends more than $1 billion a year on purchased air time alone.

Predictably, partisans of religious programming took refuge in the study's assertion that electronic ministries do not, as frequently alleged, siphon funds away from the institutional churches. And critics of television evangelism pointed to the relatively anemic audience for such fare as well as the survey's assertion that few converts are made through exposure to TV preachers.

Regular viewers of syndicated religious shows, the survey said, number 13.3 million, or 6.2 percent of the total people in American households with television sets. The figure differs markedly from previous Gallup research, which estimated that 18 percent of all Americans watched religious programming at least once a week and that more than 30 percent said they see a religion-oriented show during a given month.

Whatever the true number, the profile of the audience for Christian programming has remained remarkably consistent in all scientific studies. Those viewers are older, less educated, more likely to be living in rural areas in the South or Midwest, decidedly more conservative politically and more fundamentalist in their religious beliefs than the average American.

AND THE MESSAGE they receive from the video vicars, the new study suggested, is one that "serves more to rally believers than to recruit or convert others." The finding, though hardly surprising, undermines the oft-stated claim by TV evangelists, particularly when soliciting contributions, that their broadcast ministry is bringing thousands of lost souls into the Lord's ledgers.

Even so, the audience for religious television appears to be stable and loyal, "drawn by content they cannot find elsewhere on television," the study said.

Fully half the regular viewers of electronic ministry say they are dissatisfied with the "prevailing moral climate" in the United States. In addition, 50 percent identify "missionary work" as the chief goal of the church, while only 20 percent said that "working for social justice" should be a church priority.

Dr. Ben Armstrong, executive director of the National Religious Broadcasters organization in Morristown, N.J., said the new study "vindicated" his long-held belief that televised religion "has a good effect on the local church, that it does not take bucks and bodies away from the church."

BUT ARMSTRONG acknowledged that the survey underscored some deep weaknesses within the religious broadcasting industry, particularly in its treatment of women and minorities. It has long been known that women, blacks and Hispanics are overrepresented among those who watch religious television programs, said Armstrong, but vastly underrepresented in roles on such shows.

White males routinely are depicted as authority figures on religious programs, according to the survey, and women, if they appear, are far more likely than their male counterparts to discuss personal problems and physical ailments.

In a related matter, the May issue of U.S. Catholic magazine includes an essay by critic James Breig contending that Catholics should boycott TV preachers.

"Catholics are watching too much Christian television too openly and with too little critical analysis of what is being broadcast," he charged. "Thus, a new hybrid has been born—the fundamentalist Catholic, who knows a lot about the Rapture but nothing about the Real Presence.

"Catholic viewers, in search of something less offensive than 'Three's Company,' should not assume they have found it simply because they landed on a TV preacher's program," Breig concluded.

The Dallas Morning News
DALLAS, TEXAS
D. 317,280 S. 389,855

APR 21 1984
BURRELLE'S

Family concerns lead many back to church, survey finds

By Helen Parmley
Religion Editor of The News

Americans are returning to churches and synagogues in large numbers, but many who were turned off by large, impersonal institutions and an aloof clergy are seeking more intimate congregations.

That is what the staff of *Woman's Day* magazine learned in interviews to determine why Americans are turning back to religion.

An article on the subject in the current issue of the magazine cites a recent Gallup Poll that revealed that more than half of the seven of 10 Americans who are members of a church or synagogue attend their houses of worship regularly. The numbers equal those of 1939.

To determine the reason for such a resurgence of interest in religion, the magazine interviewed families of three different faiths who had been turned off by religion but who recently made a conscious choice to renew their religious commitments.

The interviews revealed they tend to choose the more traditional forms of religion. Those who rejected religion as hypocritical, irrelevant or lacking in spirituality said they have come to realize that individuals, not religion itself, are to blame for such abuses and that individuals have the power to change that for the better.

Although the catalyst for returning to corporate religion may be gratitude for birth, sorrow over death, joy in marriage or bitterness of divorce, the underlying reason usually is a desire to strengthen the family or create a family unity, the magazine reports.

■

A major study by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications found that television ministries have not caused many people to stop attending or giving money to their local churches.

Although the ministries have attracted millions of viewers, the audiences generally are comprised of people with longtime loyalties to organized religion, the study showed.

The study was commissioned by 30 religious organizations ranging from mainline Presbyterians, Southern Baptists and the U.S. Catholic Conference to the PTL religious television network and Jerry Falwell's *Old Time Gospel Hour*. The Gallup Poll organization also participated in the comprehensive survey.

According to the surveys, there are about 13.3 million regular viewers of electronic religion, about 6.2 percent of the estimated number of persons in households with television sets. This is a smaller number than usually claimed by the television ministries.

Researchers said the programs appeal to an older, traditional audience who seem to feel the programs confirm their religious beliefs.

They are older, have less education and money and are more politically conservative and more "fundamentalist" in their religious beliefs than the average person. They are more likely to live in rural areas and in the South and Midwest than those who do not watch the religious programming.

POTLUCK

■

Cela Inc. announced this week that its full-power, all-Christian commercial television station, KLTJ (Keep Looking to Jesus), will broadcast 24 hours daily on Channel 49 beginning Monday.

It will feature programs locally originated as well as supplemental programming by Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN) of Santa Ana, Calif.

Eldred Thomas, president of KVTT radio in Dallas and a Southern Baptist minister, is owner-founder of KLTJ and local studio facilities are at 1975 E. Irving Blvd.

■

For the third consecutive year, KERA (Channel 13) will broadcast the full-length version of Handel's *Messiah*, performed by the Bethany Oratorio Society of Lindsborg, Kan., at 2 p.m. Sunday.

Jim Lehrer will be host for the three-hour performance.

■

Dallas attorney Steve Gutow, chairman of the Jewish Community Relations Council of the Jewish Federation of Greater Dallas, is resigning that position June 1 to become regional director for the Southwest American Israel Public Affairs Committee.

He will be succeeded by Herbert Rosenthal.

■

A group of Presbyterian and Episcopal churches is staging a 10-mile hunger walk at 1 p.m. Saturday at White Rock Lake.

Proceeds from the effort will aid the Heifer Project International. Heifer works in this country and emerging nations through self-development programs providing cows, pigs, fowl, sheep, goats and honey bees and the means and know-how to develop animal-raising programs.

The walk is open to anyone wishing to participate.

The Hartford Courant
HARTFORD, CONN.
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APR 21 1984

Size of TV Church Overstated, Study Says

By ANDREW WALSH
Courant Staff Writer

62270

A two-year study of television's electronic church reveals that television evangelists are not to blame for declining attendance at mainline Protestant churches and attract a smaller number of viewers than many had thought.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," said George Gerbner, dean of the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications.

"Our study found no support for that charge," said Gerbner, a member of the research team that conducted the study with the Gallup Organization of Princeton, N.J.

The investigation of religion and television is one of the first scholarly studies of the rapidly growing phenomenon, which over the past two decades has grown from low-budget sermon broadcasts to an industry that includes Christian talk shows, soap operas and cable television networks.

It has also created a controversial — and largely conservative — core of preacher-personalities, including Billy Graham, Jerry Falwell, Jim Bakker, Oral Roberts, Jimmy Swaggart and Pat Robertson

One surprising finding is that rather than competing with more traditional forms of religious practice, such as church attendance, religious television programming competes mainly with other television programs.

Gerbner said that research into television has shown that for many people, prime time television is a replacement for religious practice.

"Watching television has become a ritual that meets certain needs that used to be satisfied by religion," he said.

The audience for religious programs seems to be composed largely of people who are drawn by values they don't find on other television programs.

The study, released earlier this week, was commissioned by more than 30 religious organizations, including the Presbyterian and Southern Baptist churches, the National Conference of Churches, the United States Catholic Conference, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, the PTL Network and the Rev. Jerry Falwell's "Old Time Gospel Hour."

It deflates arguments made by both liberals and fundamentalists.

For example, its findings contradict arguments made by liberals that televised religious programs sap the vitality of other forms of church life.

But it also finds no support for the common fundamentalist argument that the new forms of religious programming are attracting an expanding audience of new converts.

"The programs appeal to an older, traditional audience and watching these programs appears to be a confirmation of their religious beliefs, not a substitute for them," the report said.

The study estimates that Christian programs attract about 13.2 million regular viewers, roughly 6.2 percent of the total TV audience.

"We found the audience for religious television is smaller than has been claimed," the study said. But those who watch religious television programs are a steady and loyal audience.

The study reports that the audience for religious programs is older, less educated, lower in income and politically more conservative than the general television audience.

Steady viewers of religious television also tend towards fundamentalist beliefs and are more likely to be residents of rural areas, the South and the Midwest than others.

Half of the steady viewers of religious programs are dissatisfied with 'the prevailing moral climate' and consider evangelism and missionary work to be the main goal of the church, compared to only one third of non-viewers.

Only 20 percent of the viewers think the church should be "working for social justice," in contrast to one third of non-viewers.

Researchers also found surprising similarities in format and content between the programs of evangelical groups and those of local church organizations.

Discussions of political topics took up roughly half of both types of programs and in both there were frequent condemnations of abortion, homosexuality, and other forms of sexual conduct the groups consider sinful.

The key distinction between the two types of sponsors is that televison evangelists are "more likely to ask for money, make more numerous requests and ask for greater amounts."

Study Showing Limited Impact Fails to Daunt Religious TV

By JOHN DART, *Times Religion Writer*

The first comprehensive study of religious television, released this week and indicating that the electronic church has a much smaller audience and impact than previously believed, may not slow broadcasting plans by church-related groups. But certain data in the report promise to cause religious communicators to ask again whether their money is being wisely spent.

The two-volume, 160-page study released Monday to 39 Christian sponsors—ranging from Roman Catholic and ecumenical Protestant to evangelical and charismatic Protestant groups—demonstrated that the viewers of the so-called electronic church are surprisingly few in number, mostly have one or two favorite shows and are already churchgoers.

For instance, the findings by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications and the Gallup Organization include:

• Regular viewers of any religious program of any denomination number about 13.3 million, or 6.2% of the estimated total of people in television households—in contrast to the estimate of 20.5 million in 1980 by sociologists Jeffrey Hadden and Charles Swann in their book, "Prime-Time Preachers." But the new figure of 13.3 million represents those who watch a minimum of a quarter-hour of religious television a week; the figure drops to about 7 million for those who watch at least one hour a week.

• More than half of those who watch religious television watch only one or two programs. Another 21% named three shows they watch, 14% named four, leaving only 5% who watch more, according to a detailed study of regional samples in the South and Northeast.

• Seventy percent nationally said they never contribute money to religious television programs. Of the 28% who do, only 6% do so regularly. Again, the contributors have their favorite shows: Only 2% give money to three or more television evangelists or shows.

Mainline Protestant efforts and a new officially sponsored Roman Catholic network have generally tried to raise money from special fund drives or budgeting within their denominations, rather than rely on the generosity—or, critics would say, the gullibility—of the audience.

The audiences are largely conservative evangelical or charismatic Protestants, not surprising considering that is the theological perspective of the leading television ministries.

But a Catholic-oriented UHF station in Los Angeles will go on the air today with the hope of sustaining and growing through viewer contributions. KIHS, Channel 46, was established with financial backing from conservative philanthropist Harry G. John of Milwaukee. KIHS will have both Catholic and other religious programs as well as family and general shows, said associate director Ted Greene.

Greene said consultants have told KIHS' parent Santa Fe Communications that 30% of the viewers who send in contributions to existing Protestant programs are Catholic. However, the Gallup survey in the recently released report found that of people who said they gave to religious television, 81% were Protestant and only 14% were Catholic. Five percent were in other categories.

Nonetheless, the Eternal Word Television Network based in the South and founded by a nun, Mother Angelica, has indicated that an independent, Catholic-emphasis network—carried in Southern California on four cable systems—may be able to survive.

The reasons for having religious television still need some pondering, said another Catholic sister, Elizabeth Thoman, CHM, of Los Angeles. Editor of Media & Values, a magazine recently purchased by a United Methodist agency and renamed Interfaith Media Journal, Thoman contends that the study makes it clear that mainline Protestant and Catholic church bodies, in particular, have to ask what their goals are.

"Is it visibility and name identification or changing people?" Thoman asked rhetorically. This and previous studies on television, she said, have shown that "people don't make significant decisions in their lives this way." Television is primarily an entertainment and information medium, she said.

The Annenberg-Gallup study concluded that the religious television audience is rather stable, already considers religion quite important and is not being expanded by large numbers of converts. That lack of flux correlates with findings about commercial television. Annenberg Dean George Gerbner noted early this week that for all the money sponsors put into commercials, public buying habits change little. Still, small gains can be meaningful financially for their products.

But Thoman suggested it may not be meaningful for church groups. "Religious

Please see TELEVISION, Page 7

The religious television audience is rather stable, already considers religion quite important and is not being expanded by large numbers of converts, the new study shows. That lack of change correlates with findings about commercial television.

Reaching TV 'congregations': the Rev. Robert H. Schuller, top left; Oral Roberts, right, and Jim Bakker, lower left.

Los Angeles Times
LARGEST CIRCULATION IN THE WEST
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APR 21 1984
BURRELLE'S

TELEVISION: Study Fails to Daunt the Electronic Church

Continued from Page 1

people want to pour money into it because they think if they can just get their message out, people will respond," she said.

That is clearly the hope of most television ministries, including the ambitious Southern Baptist satellite network called ACTS (American Christian Television System), now set for launching May 15. ACTS President Jimmy R. Allen said $12 million has been spent so far and gifts and pledges of at least $2.8 million were raised last week at simultaneous dinner meetings linked by closed-circuit television.

"We're on the precipice of launching the single most powerful tool to win the world for Jesus Christ," said Houston Pastor John Bisagno, who will have an evangelistic program on the Fort Worth, Tex.-based network. California Southern Baptists said they hope to have ACTS programs on about 70 cable television systems in the state by December.

Revenue Picture

Bisagno said another $4.3 million in contributions is needed for ACTS over the next couple of years, but that, once on the air, the network will generate its own revenue.

The coordinated entry into religious television by Southern Baptists, the largest non-Catholic church body in the country, presumably puts them in competition with the independent evangelists and nondenominational Christian networks also aimed at a conservative evangelical audience.

But unlike the prominent television ministries, the Southern Baptists will not ask for money on the air, Bisagno said.

That difference in approach to money-raising was evident also in the study on religious television. "The television ministries were considerably more likely (55%) than mainline church programs (20%) to make such requests," the report said.

In addition, the report said, "The most prominent television ministries generally requested more money than the other types of programs; their average minimum request was $31 and their average maximum request was about $600. No mainline church program asked for a specific amount of money."

A significant percentage of viewers surveyed who are in lower income groups give money to television ministries.

But one of the major findings of the report was that people who contribute to religious programs also make donations in church (more than $180 a year). Regular contributors to religious television tend to go to church more than once a week. Their participation in the electronic church only "complements" their churchgoing, researchers said.

The United Methodist Church, which responded rather cooly in terms of money for a proposal to buy a commercial television station as a way to finance religious programming, will hear a new proposal at its quadrennial convention next month for $4.8 million to assist local churches and regional conferences of the 9-million-member denomination in religious programs and public service announcements.

Charles Cappleman, president of the United Methodist communications commission, indicated two television goals for the mainline churches: Trying to draw people to church and presenting moral issues from a mainline church perspective.

Cappleman, who is vice president for operations at CBS Television City, said his own church, St. Paul's in Tarzana, started putting a half-hour version of its Sunday service on Valley Cable in February.

He defended a local church's use of such money by noting that St. Paul's has a $120,000 annual budget for a 240-member congregation that has an average of 150 people attending on Sunday morning. For $11,000 in equipment and the annual $8,000 cost of editing, the church's service is potentially seen in 50,000 homes.

"If only 1% who watch Valley Cable tune in," Cappleman said, "you've got the opportunity to tell your story to five times as many people as you have in church." He indicated that the introduction of such church services on television might overcome fears some people have about entering a strange congregation.

In addition, Cappleman said he believes the mainline churches "try to speak to the trials of life." The prevailing ministries in the electronic church, he said, "talk mostly about success and easy success."

'Sobering' Findings

In a similar vein, Peggy Shriver, head of research and planning for the National Council of Churches, said she found the study's finding that religious television is very much like commercial television "sobering." Both present a world on screen that has mostly males, and mostly in authority roles (usually clergy), with minorities, blue-collar workers, the elderly and housewives rarely seen.

"The audience out there needs to know that somehow the religious world notices and sees them as valuable," Shriver said.

Responding to a question, Shriver said that perhaps drama with moral overtones would serve that purpose. However, the report appeared to show that such drama still has a limited audience. The program "Insight," made in Southern California by Paulist Productions, was mentioned by 1% of viewers in the Gallup survey in the report—the same percentage who mentioned programs featuring evangelists James Robison and Herbert W. Armstrong.

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BURRELLE'S

Poll finds few but stable viewers

TV preachers' audience small

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By FRANK P.L. SOMERVILLE
The Baltimore Sun

NEW YORK — A two-year study financed by 39 Catholic and Protestant organizations has determined that the actual audience for even the most successful of the TV preachers is far smaller than many of them had believed.

"Infinitesimally small for the huge amounts of money spent" was the way Rev. Everett C. Parker of the United Church of Christ characterized the 13.3 million "regular viewers" of such religious programs estimated by the polling.

That total, which Rev. William F. Fore of the National Council of Churches said reflects the number of Americans who watch as little as 15 minutes of religious broadcasting at a time, amounts to about 6.2 percent of the number of people in households with TV sets, according to the research.

But at a recent press conference, for release and discussion of the data, it became clear that interpretations will vary as widely as the theology of the sponsors of the study.

The more liberal, mainstream denominations, which had felt threatened by claims that TV evangelists were drawing 130 million regular viewers or more and siphoning contributions away from the local churches, breathed a sigh of relief.

Their representatives already are beginning to reassess financial commitments to competing religious broadcast time.

Fore observed that when the study zeroed in on "regular" viewers of an hour or more of the religious programs, the audience dropped below 7 million people, or 3.14 percent of the total with TV sets.

George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania and a member of the research team, said he disagreed with describing as "infinitesimal" the audiences for such religious broadcasters as Pat Robertson, Jimmy Swaggart and Rev. Jerry Falwell. "Limited, stable, yes," Gerbner said. "But clearly they are supporting the programs."

Ben Armstrong, executive director of National Religious Broadcasters, said the "big question" facing his membership is, "How do we reach out to the large number of people not in our audience?"

He said he was "concerned that minorities and women are under-represented" in the content of the religious programs studied. "We will review that," he said.

Armstrong was especially pleased with the study's conclusions that the national, nondenominational, mostly fundamentalist religious broadcasters in his group are not draining the resources of local churches but rather that their loyal audiences displayed a longtime allegiance to organized religion.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing, or at least contributing to, the erosion of mainline church membership," Gerbner said. "Our study found no support for that charge. There must be other explanations if church attendance has declined and there is a lack of financial support."

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BURRELLE'S

Electronic church studied

By Peter Kerr

Religious television programs are not cutting into church attendance, according to a new study.

A two-year study conducted by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications found that religious broadcasts appealed to 13.3 million people — 6.2% of US television viewers — who, for the most part, already have strong religious beliefs. The programs, the study suggested, fail to reach viewers who are not actively religious and do not seem likely to make many converts.

"This is both good news and bad news for evangelical broadcasters," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School. "The good news is that they do not reduce the number of people going to local churches. On the bad side, we found they are reaching a stable audience of those who are already religiously active."

The study, commissioned by more than 30 religious organizations, represents the most extensive research to date on the phenomenon of the so-called electronic church.

Since the 1960s, the number of evangelical radio and television stations has risen dramatically, from fewer than 150 in the mid-1960s to more than 1,000 this year, according to the National Religious Broadcasters, an umbrella organization for television and radio evangelists.

Resource drain feared

Some religious organizations wondered whether television preachers, who often espouse fundamentalist beliefs, were taking people and money away from local churches by providing worshipers with an alternative at home. This was a major subject of discussion in a 1980 conference of religious organizations and social scientists held in New York City under the auspices of the National Council of Churches and the United States Catholic Conference.

The study, designed to clarify the effects of religious programs, was supported both by groups that produce evangelical broadcasts and so-called mainline groups, such as the National Council of Churches. The Gallup Organization in Princeton, N.J., assisted in the project, which cost $175,000.

Viewers of religious television, the study found, are no less likely to attend services than churchgoers who do not view such programing. Most viewers already attended church and made regular contributions to religious organizations.

How they view shows

The audience for religious programs, the study found, generally sees the programs as a complement to more traditional religious activities.

These viewers tend to be older, have lower incomes and less education than people who do not watch religious programs. In addition, they are more likely to live in the South or Middle West, are more likely to have fundamentalist religious attitudes and more likely to be disturbed by what they see as moral laxity on regular television programs.

Another finding of the study was that religious programs, like other television fare, tend to underrepresent women, the elderly, children and members of minority groups.

Representatives of religious groups that supported the study drew varied conclusions from the data.

"There are a very small number of viewers from a homogenous group of people," said William F. Fore, a spokesman for the National Council of Churches. About the programs, Fore said, "I do not believe this is good evangelism, and I think the study shows that."

But David W. Clark, the vice president of marketing for the Christian Broadcasting Network, a major producer of religious programing, said the study provided support for his organization's type of evangelical programing.

"We finally have an absolute finding that the programs don't decrease attendance at local churches," Clark said.

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BURRELLE'S

TV religion viewers tend to be 'more fundamentalist'

By MICHAEL D. SCHAFFER
Knight-Ridder News Service

NEW YORK — Religious television programs serve more as rallying points for believers than as tools for recruiting converts, according to a study released this week.

Religious programming reaches a relatively small audience, by commercial network standards, of "about 13.3 million, or 6.2 percent of the estimated total number of persons in television households," according to the study, prepared by researchers at the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications and the Gallup organization of Princeton, N.J.

Regular viewers of religious television "tend to be older, more fundamentalist and lower in income and education than non-viewers," the study found. They also are more likely to live in rural areas in the South and Midwest.

"They are greatly dissatisfied with what they perceive to be contemporary morality and interested in spreading the Gospel more than social justice," the report continued.

The findings were released during a news conference this week at the Graduate Center of City University. The study, which took two years to complete, was financed by the Ad Hoc Committee on Religious Television, a broad coalition of more than 30 church organizations, including the National Council of Churches, Jerry Falwell's Old-Time Gospel Hour, the U.S. Catholic Conference, the Southern Baptist Convention and the Christian Broadcasting Network.

The research included an analysis of the contents of religious television programs, a telephone survey of viewers and non-viewers in the Southeastern and Northeastern United States by Annenberg researchers, and personal interviews nationwide by Gallup researchers.

The researchers found that television ministries do not appear to be taking members away from local churches.

"Viewers of religious programs, including the prominent television ministries, are no less likely than non-viewers to attend, contribute to and participate in local church activities," the study concluded.

And viewers who contribute to the support of television evangelists "do not correspondingly contribute less to their local churches," the researchers found.

The view of the world expressed in religious programming competes less with mainline religion or with local churches than with the "broader and, in some important respects, divergent world of commercial television itself," according to the study.

Heavy viewers of commercial television tend to think of themselves as political moderates

"Heavy viewers of religious programs are more likely than non-viewers to describe themselves as conservatives, oppose a nuclear freeze, favor tougher laws against pornography, and report voting in the last general election," the study found.

Heavy viewers of commercial television tend to think of themselves as political moderates, are more likely to favor a nuclear freeze, are not as concerned with the nation's moral climate and "are far less likely to say they voted in a general election," according to the study.

The study also shows that television has "an enormous and pervasive power . . . to provide a substitute for religion . . . , to provide many answers that, in earlier times, religion used to provide," said George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School and one of the researchers.

Heavy viewers of general television are less likely to attend and support the local church than are those who watch television less often, the study found.

The audience for religious programs is small in comparison to the audience for commercial shows.

"The minimal audience for a successful network television program is larger than were estimating the entire audience for these religious programs," said Larry Gross, one of the Annenberg researchers.

The size of the audience for religious programs depends on access to prime time, according to David W. Clark, vice president for marketing of the Christian Broadcasting Network Center in Virginia Beach, Va.

The current viewers of religious programs "have been won largely on the fringes of television time," Clark said. "Most of the programs are aired at 6 in the morning, 8 in the morning, 9 in the morning. Our program, 'The 700 Club,' is aired nationally at 10 a.m. daily. . . . When we can put that program in prime time, at 9 p.m. at night . . . then you begin to get much larger audiences."

"We do have a tremendous, let's say, jo ahead of us to get into that prime time, which is an access matter, not a programming matter," said the Rev. Ben Armstrong, executive director of the National Religious Broadcasters. "People are not turned off so much by religious television as they're not there when the programs are on."

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PHOENIX, ARIZ.

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BURRELLE'S

TV ministry's growth no peril to churches, researchers say

6270

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The growth of TV evangelism has not caused many people to stop attending or donating money to their local churches, according to researchers who conducted a two-year study of religion and TV.

Television ministries have attracted millions of viewers, but those audiences usually are made up of people with longstanding allegiance to organized religion, according to researchers from the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania and the Gallup Organization of Princeton, N.J.

The study was commissioned by a group of more than 30 religious organizations.

"Television ministries have been suspected of causing or at least contributing to the erosion of mainline church membership, financial contributions and general participation," George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School, said. "Our study found no support for that charge."

Gerbner, a member of the research team, said communication research over the years indicates that prime-time TV drama, and religious programming, has become the "new religion" in the United States.

The surveyers found that about 13.3 million people, or about 6.2 percent of all people with television sets in their homes, regularly watch religious programs.

The programs "appeal to an older, traditional audience and watching these programs appears to be a confirmation of their religious beliefs, not a substitute for them," the researchers said.

"Their interest in the electronic church is complementary to other forms of religious practice, like church worship."

Followers of TV evangelism typically are older, have less education and income, are more conservative politically and are more fundamentalist in their religious beliefs than the average person, the study found.

People who watch religious programs frequently express greater confidence in their local church leaders than "light viewers" and "non-viewers," they said.