

Cultural Indicators: Violence Profile No. 9

by George Gerbner, Larry Gross, Marilyn Jackson-Beeck, Suzanne Jeffries-Fox, and Nancy Signorielli

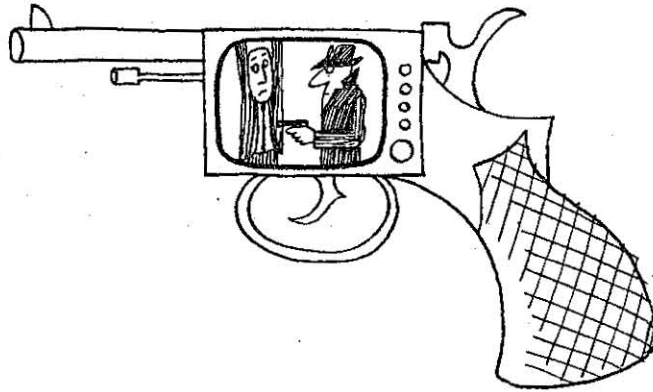
*Latest report stresses methodology,
current findings on the distribution
of power in television drama, and the
behaviorial correlates of viewing.*

This is a progress report in the long-range research called Cultural Indicators that also yields the annual television drama Violence Profile. The first reports were published in 1969 (4) and 1972 (5). The general theory and design of Cultural Indicators was described in 1969 (6) and 1973 (7). Previous reports in this *Journal* described the history and theory of the research and findings from Violence Profile No. 7 in 1976 (8), and presented the highlights of Violence Profile No. 8 in 1977 (9). This report will discuss the expansion, diversification, and application of the Cultural Indicators research design, and present findings from Violence Profile No. 9. We shall stress methodology, current findings on the distribution of power in the world of television drama, and some behavioral correlates of viewing. A full Technical Report is also available (12).

This research began with the investigation of violence in network television drama in 1967-68 for the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence. It continued under the sponsorship of the Surgeon General's Scientific

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Copies of the Technical Report, "Violence Profile No. 9," are available from the authors for \$15.50 (checks to be made payable to the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania).



Advisory Committee on Television and Social Behavior, the National Institute of Mental Health, and the American Medical Association. Although violence-related findings and indicators have been published most widely, the approach was broadly based from the beginning to collect observations on the role and symbolic functions of general patterns of life presented in television drama.

The research consists of two interrelated parts: (1) Message System Analysis—monitoring of the world of television drama, and (2) Cultivation Analysis—determining the conceptions of social reality that television tends to cultivate in different groups of child and adult viewers. The analyses provide information about the geography, demography, character profiles, and action structure of the world of television, and focus these images and lessons upon specific issues, policies, and topics.

The Cultural Indicators design and data archives have generated a considerable amount of research during the past ten years. Theoretical papers have presented and discussed methodological issues (11) and examined the importance of applying the Cultural Indicators paradigm to the study of television news (13) and to the assessment of television's impact upon children and adolescents (14, 15, 19). One study examines personal and social characteristics of the non-viewers of television (18). Message System Analysis data have been analyzed to isolate the image of the elderly who portray major roles in prime-time network dramatic programming (30).

Several analyses of cultivation data have revealed that heavy television viewing by school children is consistently related to lower IQ and achievement (especially reading comprehension) scores. Moreover, the amount of television a child watches is a better predictor of IQ than numerous other variables such as social class (26, 27, 28). Cultural Indicators researchers have also looked at six occupations in terms of their portrayal in prime-time programming and how children's conceptions of these occupations reflect these images (21), and how television viewing is related to educational aspirations and sexist attitudes among adolescents (15).

One analysis (17) found that, over time, newspaper reading predicted significant increases in children's political interest and knowledge, while television

exposure was related to significant reductions in these aspects of political learning. Moreover, when compared with interpersonal political discussion, television and newspaper exposure maintained equal or greater relevance to children's political socialization. Another study (19) found that adult heavy television viewers were less active and interested in political affairs than light viewers.

Current plans call for extending the research to aspects of aging, health, family life, occupational choices, education, and other areas, to include news and commercials, and to conduct the research cross-culturally. In each case, the focus of the investigation is the contribution of television to viewers' conceptions of social reality.

*This article continues the series of
Violence Profiles and expands on previous
descriptions of Cultural Indicators research.*

Television is the chief creator of synthetic cultural patterns (entertainment and information) for the most heterogeneous mass publics in history, including large groups that have never before shared in any common public message systems. The repetitive pattern of television's mass-produced messages and images forms the mainstream of the common symbolic environment that cultivates the most widely shared conceptions of reality. We live in terms of the stories we tell—stories about what things exist, stories about how things work, and stories about what to do—and television tells them all through news, drama, and advertising to almost everybody most of the time.

Television drama is the heart of that process because it offers the most diverse audience of viewers a common and stable pattern of "facts" about life and the world. No member of society escapes the lessons of almost universally enjoyed entertainment, and many millions of viewers seek little other information.

Cultural Indicators research begins with Message System Analysis, a flexible tool for making orderly, reliable, and cumulative observations of programming content. The technique allows us to identify almost any aspect of the television world, so that we can then test its contribution to viewers' conceptions of the real world.

*Large aggregates of television output (rather
than individual selections from it) are the
systems of messages to which total communities are exposed.*

Message System Analysis focuses on the gross, unambiguous, and commonly understood facts of portrayal. These are the features that can be expected to provide bases for interaction and common assumptions and definitions (though not necessarily agreement) among large and heterogeneous mass publics.

Message System Analysis has been performed on annual sample-weeks of prime-time and weekend daytime network dramatic programming since 1967

by trained analysts who observe and code various aspects of television content. To date, 1437 programs, 4106 major characters, and 10,429 minor characters have been analyzed.

The purpose of the analysis is to provide systematic, cumulative, and reliable observations. The analysis identifies many different aspects of program content. The findings reported here focus primarily upon the portrayal of violence defined as the overt expression of physical force, with or without a weapon, against self or other, compelling action against one's will on pain of being hurt or killed, or actually hurting or killing.

A rigorous three- to four-week training period assures that coders isolate all and only clear, unambiguous, overt physical violence. To be recorded at all, a violent incident must be plausible and credible. It must be directed against human or human-like beings, and it must hurt or kill, or threaten to do so, as part of the script's plot. No idle threats, verbal abuse, or gestures without credible violent consequences are included. However, once an unmistakably violent incident is observed, it is recorded whether the script calls for murder, "natural" catastrophies, or "accidents." (Although accidents are very rare in fiction, they are neither "natural" nor "accidental." "Accidents" written into scripts victimize characters who fall prey to them, and the message of victimization is one significant aspect of exposure to violence.)

Violence in a realistic or "serious" context is recorded along with violence in a fantasy or "humorous" context (the tone of each incident is also coded so that trends can be examined both separately and together). Clear-cut violence in any context is coded because the social lessons of such violence can be demonstrated—and learned—in any context. There is evidence (1, 2, 3, 16, 24) to suggest, for example, that exposure to fantasy or "humorous" violence is effective in conveying some lessons of violence. Therefore, its exclusion, or that of "accidents" and "catastrophies," would be analytically unacceptable (11).

Observations are recorded in three types of units: the program as a whole, each specific violent action (if any) in the program, and each dramatic character appearing in the program.

Program means a single fictional story presented in dramatic form. This may be a play produced for television, a feature film telecast during the sample period, or a cartoon story (of which there may be one or more in a single program). Each of these is analyzed separately and recorded as a "program." All such programs telecast during the study periods were analyzed whether or not they contained violence.

A *violent episode* as a unit of analysis means a scene of some violence confined to the same participants. If a scene is interrupted by flashback or shifts to another scene, but continues in "real time," it is still the same episode. Any change in the cast of characters—such as a new agent of violence entering the scene—starts another episode.

Characters analyzed in all programs are of two types. Major characters are the principal roles essential to the story. Minor characters include all other

speaking roles and are subjected to a less detailed analysis. The findings summarized in this report include analysis of major characters only.

Because nationally distributed programs provide the most broadly shared television fare, the analytical source material is comprised of network dramatic programs transmitted in evening prime time (8 p.m. to 11 p.m. each day), and network children's dramatic programs shown on weekend mornings (Saturday and Sunday between 8 a.m. and 2 p.m.).¹

Our sample of programs is videotaped and consists of all dramatic programs broadcast during one week, usually in the fall, of each year.² Several sampling experiments conducted during the course of this research confirm the stability of a one-week sample (11). The present analysis combines some of the yearly samples to simplify the presentation of a large amount of information. Data from the 1967 and 1968 fall seasons have been combined, as were data from the fall of 1969 and 1970. Data from the fall of 1971, 1972, and 1973 are reported separately. The fall 1974 and the spring 1975 samples have been combined to reflect findings for the 1974-75 television season, and similarly, data from fall 1975 and spring 1976 are presented together and represent the 1975-76 season. Data from the fall of 1976 and 1977 are reported separately.

For the analysis of each sample of programs, a staff of between 16 and 20 coders is recruited. After approximately three weeks of training and testing, coders analyze the season's videotaped program sample. During both the training and data-collection phases, coders work in independent pairs and monitor their assigned videotaped programs as often as necessary. All programs in the sample are coded by two separate coder-pairs to provide double-coded data for reliability comparisons. Final measures, computed on the study's entire corpus of double-coded data, determine the acceptability of information for analysis and provide guidelines to its interpretation (22, 23).³

The Violence Index is composed of three types of direct observational data.

They show the extent to which violence occurred at all in the program-samples, the frequency and rate of violent episodes, and the number of roles in which characters were the perpetrators of violence (violents), its victims, or both. These data are called *prevalence*, *rate*, and *role*, respectively.

¹ In 1967 and 1968, the hours included were 7:30 to 10 p.m. Monday through Saturday, 7 to 10 p.m. Sunday, and children's programs 8 a.m. to noon Saturday. Beginning in 1969, these hours were expanded to 11 p.m. each evening and from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. As of 1971, however, network evening programming has been reduced by the FCC's prime-time access rule. The effective evening parameters since 1971 are therefore 8 to 11 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 7 to 11 p.m. Sunday.

² Programs broadcast during one week in the spring of 1975 and 1976 were also videotaped and analyzed as part of our on-going research on sampling.

³ Information about the reliability of content items can be obtained by writing to Dr. Nancy Signorielli.

Prevalence is the percent of programs containing any violence in a particular program sample. Prevalence is calculated both as percent of programs (%P) and as percent of program hours containing violence. Only %P is part of the Index.

Rate expresses the *frequency* of these acts in units of programming and in units of time. The acts themselves are called "violent episodes." The number of such episodes divided by the total number of programs (violent or not) yields the rate per program (R/P). The rate per hour (R/H) is the number of episodes divided by the number of program hours in the sample. The latter measures the concentration or saturation of violence in time, and compensates for the difference in rates between a long program unit, such as a movie, and a short one, such as a 10-minute cartoon.

Role is defined as the portrayal of characters as violent (committing violence) or victims (subjected to violence), or both and yields several measures. They are: percent of violent out of all characters in a sample; percent of victims out of all characters in a sample; all those involved as violent or as victims or both (%V); percent of killers (those committing fatal violence); percent of killed (victims of lethal violence); and all those involved in killing, either as killers or as killed (%K).

Findings from these data are combined to form an *Index*. The Index itself is not a statistical finding but serves to illustrate trends and to facilitate gross comparisons.

Prevalence (%P), rate per program (R/P), and rate per hour (R/H) are reflected in the *program score* (PS) which is computed as follows: $PS = (\%P) + 2(R/P) + 2(R/H)$.

Roles involving characters in any violent act, weighted by roles involved in killing, are expressed in the *character score* (CS). The formula $CS = (\%V) + (\%K)$ represents the percent of all leading characters committing violence, suffering violence, or both (%V), with added weight given to the percent of those involved in killing as killers, as fatal victims, or both (%K).

The Violence Index is obtained by adding the program score to the character score. Prevalence, rate, and role are thus reflected in the Index, giving it a multidimensional quality sensitive to a variety of measures of violent portrayals and lending it a certain stability not easily altered or manipulated by superficial script changes. The prevalence, rate of incidence, and character involvement in violence must all change in the same direction to register a substantial change in the Index.

The present analysis indicates that the amount of violence in network dramatic programming has decreased almost across the board in the fall 1977 television season.

With each of its components showing a decline, the 1977 Violence Index was close to the record low of the 1973 season. However, violence still appeared in more than two-thirds of all prime-time programs and in nine out of ten weekend

morning programs at the rate of five incidents per program and 16 incidents per hour respectively. The "family viewing hour" lost its restraining power, with violence rising between 8 and 9 p.m. EST on both NBC and CBS. Movies sampled were also more violent.

Figure 1 shows the Violence Index and its components from 1967 through the fall of 1977. After a steady, seven-year decline to a record low in 1973, the Index rose to its 1976 peak and then plunged in 1977 to its second lowest point. The individual components of the Index reflect this trend, showing that the trends remain essentially the same whether they are measured by prevalence, rate of incidents per program, or percentage of major characters involved in violence.

The percentage of programs containing violence has usually ranged from 80 to 90 percent; last season it was 75.5 percent. The rate of violent episodes per hour rose to a record high of 9.5 in 1976; last year it dropped to 6.7 episodes per hour. The same rate per program (play) fell from its 1976 peak of 6.2 to last season's 5.0.

Figure 2 charts the level of violence for the time periods and program types included in this analysis. Children's (weekend morning) programming was still the most violent. Although the level of violence in the 8 to 9 p.m. EST "family viewing" time slot dropped briefly in the 1975-76 season, the level of violence

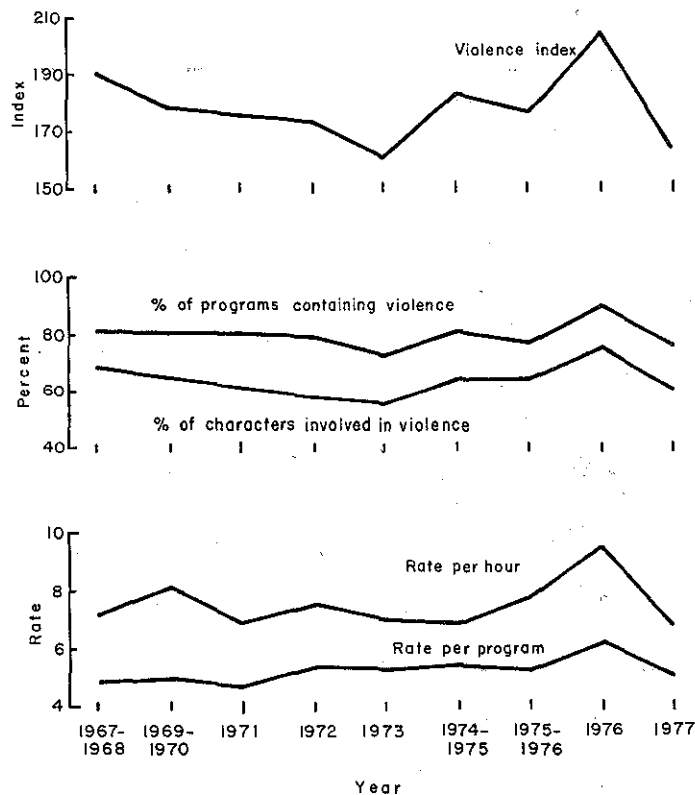


Figure 1: Violence index and major components for all programs, 1967-1977

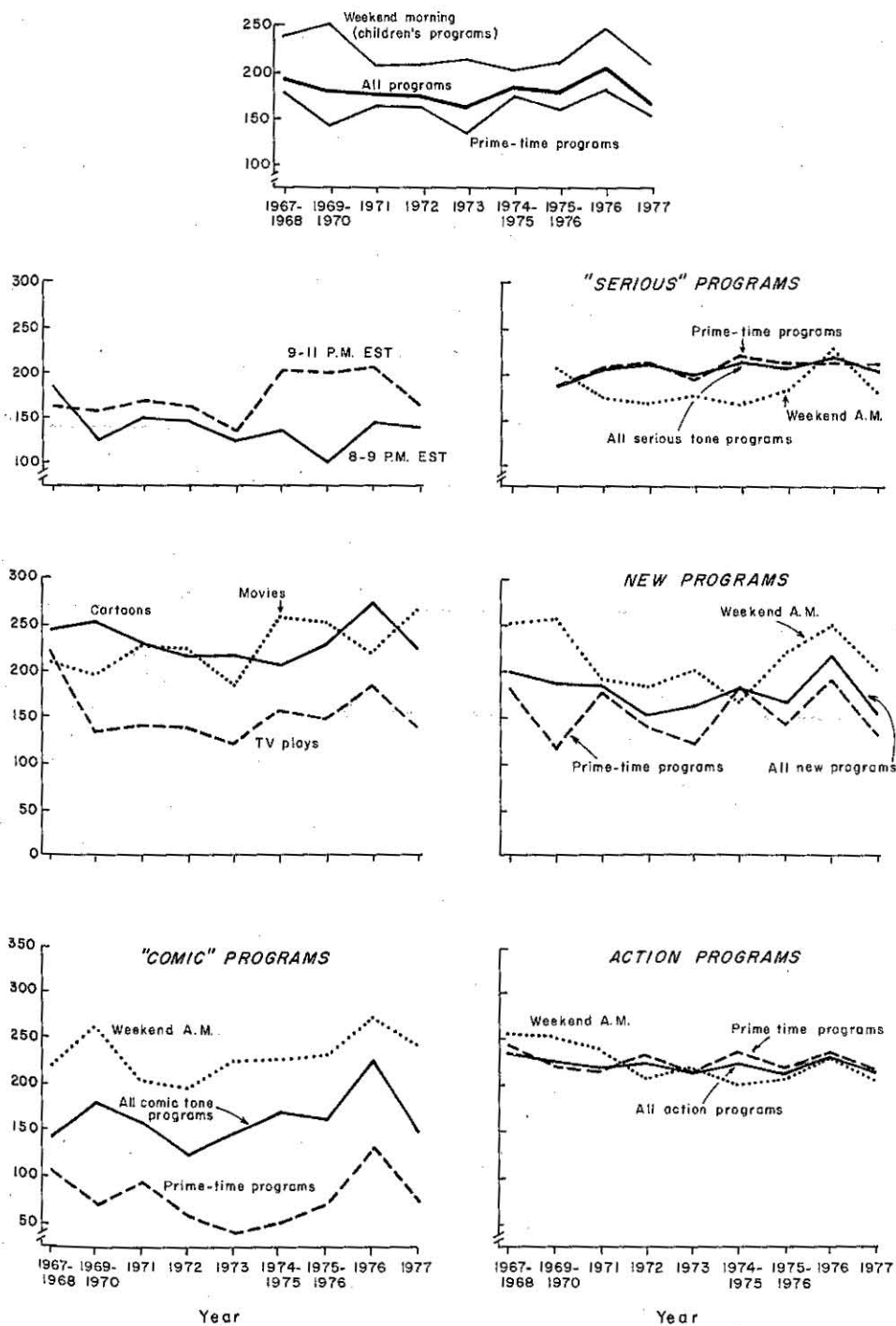


Figure 2: Violence index for different programs, 1967-1977

in late evening programming increased sharply in that period. The level of violence did not decline in late evening programming (9 to 11 p.m. EST) until last season. Violence levels across different program types—including new programs—reflect these trends. Overall, prime-time comic-tone programs were less violent than other types of programs.

Figure 3 records the level of violence on each network. For the first time since 1973, ABC is the "least violent" network, CBS a close second, and NBC the "most violent" overall, as it has been for nine of the last eleven years. However, the differences are slight compared to previous years. While CBS, a leader in the "family viewing" concept, increased violence in "family hour" (8 to 9 p.m. EST) programs for the second year in a row, all of the networks, but especially NBC, reduced the level of violence in late evening (9 to 11 p.m. EST) and cartoon programming.

Although the Violence Index has received more public attention than the rest of the Violence Profile, it is not the most significant part.

Violence is not a simple one-dimensional act. Its frequency alone is not very illuminating. Violence is a complex social scenario involving victims as well as violents. As such, it is a dramatic demonstration of the power of certain types of persons to inflict violence and the tendency of others to fall victim to it. The scenario may cultivate several different lessons for all, and perhaps different lessons for different groups of viewers. These may include lessons of victimization and ways to avoid as well as to commit violence; caution and prudence as well as pugnacity; a calculus of one's risks as well as of opportunities to be gained from violence; a sense of relative strengths and weaknesses in conflict situations; a tendency to assume high levels of violence; to acquiesce to the use of violence by others, as well as to imitate violence; and a sense of fear and need for protection as well as of aggression. Any and all of these lessons may well come from realistic, fantastic, serious, comic, or any other program context, and from "accidental" or "natural," as well as the purposefully contrived violence of dramatic scripts. Our research is designed to investigate all of these potential lessons rather than only those presumed (or feared) by conventional wisdom.

As a scenario of social relationships and power, the *pattern*, rather than sheer frequency, is the essential feature in portrayals of violence. And, as we have just seen, we are looking at features of aggregate patterns implicit in hundreds and thousands of violent incidents generated at the average rate of 6 to 10 per hour of programming. This analysis of a daily ritual may include but is little affected by exceptional dramas telecast once or twice a year. Our type of study is designed for the investigation of mass-produced aggregates exhibiting features of a wholesale production process rather than the analysis of outstanding and individually crafted single works of drama.

The principal question when considering these aggregate patterns of relative power is one of distribution rather than number. Are the patterns equitable or

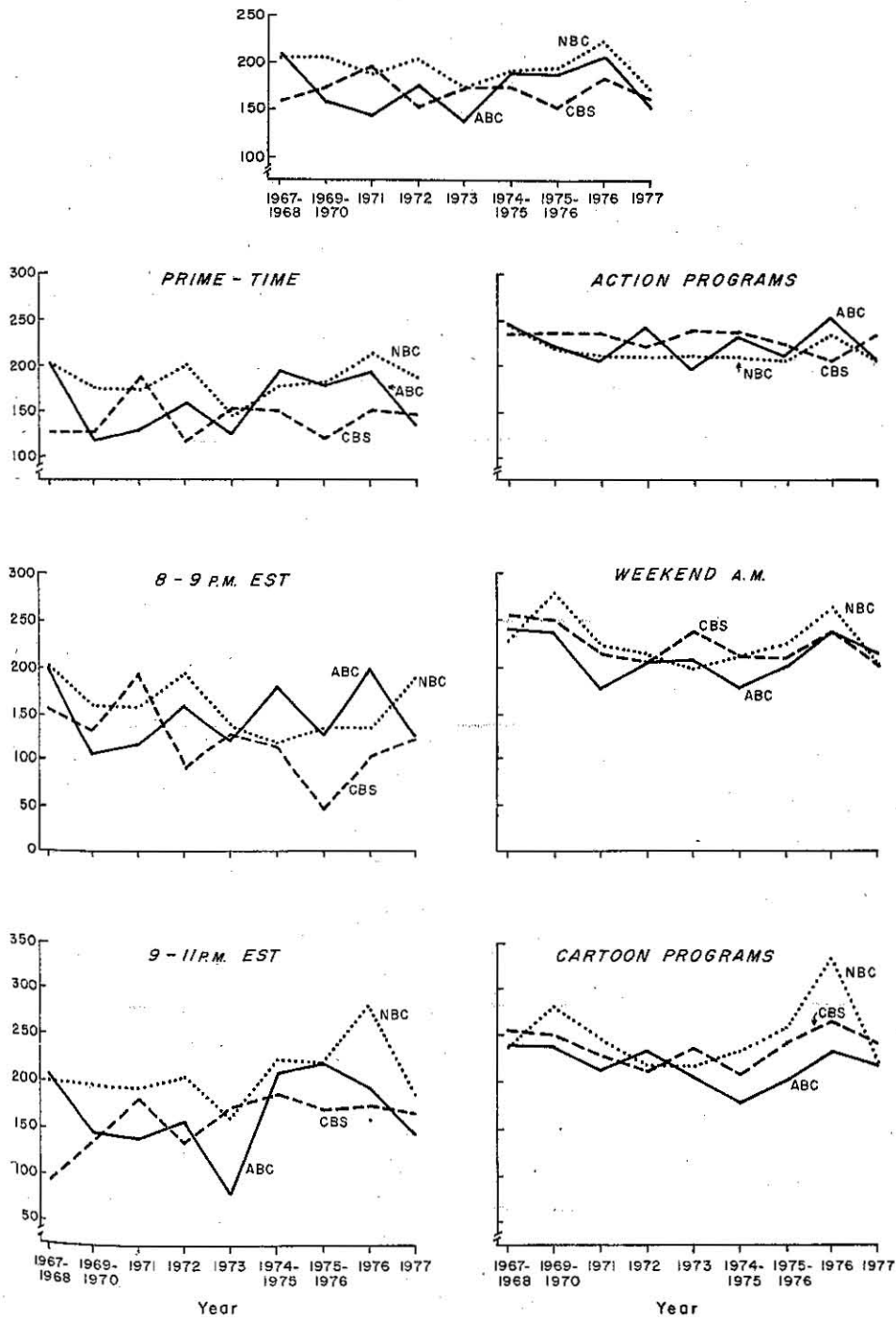


Figure 3: Violence index by network and program type, 1967-1977

do they impose greater burdens on some groups? What structures of power, what pecking orders of fictional society do they reveal? And, finally, what lessons may stem from exposure to these patterns?

We shall report the findings that pertain to these questions in two parts. First we shall discuss the indices of relative power demonstrated by aggregate portrayals of television violence. Then we shall report the findings of our Cultivation Analysis, suggesting some lessons associated with exposure to the television portrayals.

*Indices of power are expressed in terms of chances
for involvement in violence and the balance of risks
in some kind of hurting and/or killing.*

Involvement occurs in a scene of overt physical force, and an "involved" character may commit or suffer violence, or both. For example, a victimized character is clearly hurt, killed, or compelled to act under a credible threat of pain or death. A violent perpetrates these actions, and both characters' choices are written into the script as part of characterization and plot element.

Hurting and killing represent different symbolic (and, we might add, human) functions. Hurting controls behavior (typically against the injured party's will); killing terminates the role. Therefore, while hurting usually signifies contest, killing typically signals fate. Dramatic contest and fate both demonstrate the encounter of different human types and the causes they embody.

Popular drama typically comes to a satisfying (and happy) ending when threats to established values and powers are defeated. As we shall see later, heroes may be hurt even more than villains (hence the threat or provocation), but the ultimate balance of fate usually favors the good, the just, and the strong.

In the world of television, "involvement" means entry into the arena of power. Involvement in any violence places characters in the ring, while involvement in killing thrusts them into the inner circle.

Risk ratio, on the other hand, signifies a character's chances for positive or negative outcome once involved in violence. It indicates the burden of risk with which each dramatic and social type enters the arena. The violent-victim ratio denotes chances for being a violent or a victim. The killer-killed ratio marks the risk of killing or being killed. Both ratios are calculated within each dramatic and social category.

Measuring the ratio of risk of each group's chances for involvement also relates to the cultivation of real-life concepts. We may watch all kinds of characters to assess the general risk of involvement, but when we apply that generalized risk personally, we may be especially receptive to seeing how characters *like ourselves* (male or female, young or old, black or white, etc.) fare in the world of television. Regardless of how often they do get involved in violence, if they are usually hurt or killed, the lesson learned may well be one of high risk.

Involvement in violence and in killing may range from 0 to 100 percent of a particular group. Risk ratios are obtained by dividing the more numerous of

these two roles by the less numerous *within each group*. A plus sign indicates more violent and killers, a minus sign more victims and killed. A ratio of 1.00 means that they are even; a ratio of 0.00 means that there are none. When there are *only* violent or *only* killers shown, the ratio will read +0.00. Conversely, when there are *only* victims or *only* killed, the ratio will read -0.00. The number of characters, the percent of characters involved in violence and killing, and risk ratios are presented in Tables 1 through 6.

*After discussing involvement and risk for
all characters and representational social groups,
we shall look at the overall "pecking
order" of society in the world of television drama.*

More than six out of ten (63.2 percent) of all 3651 major characters studied from 1969 through 1977 were involved in some type of violence over the years. The percentage of those involved ranged from 56 to 75 percent, the highest being in 1976. Involvement in killing averages at 8.7 percent, ranging between 12.9 percent in 1974-75 and 5.3 percent in 1977.

The outcome of involvement is generally negative. Victims outnumber violent by a ratio of -1.19; i.e., for every violent, there are 1.19 victims. The violent-victim ratio ranged from -1.40 in 1973 to -1.06 in 1977, suggesting persistently negative but perhaps decreasing risks of general victimization. That negative ratio also suggests, as we shall see, that the fear of victimization may be the most pervasive correlate of exposure to violence.

While almost any character can (and most do) get hurt in the world of television, the risks of getting killed are more "positively" skewed. The killers outnumber those who are killed by a ratio of +1.92. The killer-killed ratio ranged from a low of +1.59 in 1969-70 to a high of +3.00 in 1977. The stability of both involvement scores and risk ratios over the years suggests that changes in programming styles and types do not really alter the power structure of the television world.

The distribution of resources, values, and life-chances is both a consequence and indicator of the exercise of power. Through its functional "distortions" of reality television presents allocations of chances and risks that are most likely to preserve and enhance a traditional structure of power. We shall examine these allocations by sex role, age, marital status, class, race, nationality, and dramatic types.

Sex roles. Although men are more likely to enter the arena of violent contest, women carry greater risks of victimization. Nearly seven out of every ten men, as compared to less than five out of every ten women, are involved in some violence. However, overall men's risks are +1.18, while women's are +1.27.

Although 10.3 percent of men and 4.3 percent of women are involved in some killing, male killers outnumbered males killed by a ratio of +2.04, while female killers outnumber females killed by a ratio of only +1.17. Even more striking, however, are the differences in life chances and risks when we combine sex with other role characteristics.

Age, sex, and marital status. In general, more young characters get battered but more old characters get killed. Table 1 reveals that being a woman reduces the odds of involvement but boosts the risks of victimization.

Table 1: Risks by age and gender

	Percent involved in violence	Percent involved in killing	Ratio of violents to victims	Ratio of killers to killed
<u>All characters</u> (N = 3651)	63.2	8.7	-1.10	+1.92
Males (N = 2740)	68.5	10.3	-1.18	+2.04
Females (N = 865)	45.1	4.3	-1.27	+1.17
<u>Males</u>				
Children/ adolescents (N = 278)	65.5	1.4	-1.69	+4.00
Young adults (N = 512)	69.9	12.1	-1.23	+2.08
Settled adults (N = 1176)	65.7	12.4	-1.12	+2.18
Elderly (N = 74)	48.6	6.8	+1.04	-2.00
<u>Females</u>				
Children/ adolescents (N = 109)	49.5	0.0	-1.23	0.00
Young adults (N = 241)	53.5	5.8	-1.73	+1.33
Settled adults (N = 462)	38.3	4.3	-1.07	+1.44
Elderly (N = 25)	36.0	8.0	-3.00	-0.00

Children and adolescents of both sexes are heavily involved in violence and absorb considerable punishment. But as they age, their chances diverge. In the television world, young boys are the males most likely to be victims rather than perpetrators of violence. Although seldom involved in killing, when involved they are the most lethal of all age groups; boys killers outnumber boys killed 4 to 1.

With increasing age, the male's risk of general victimization declines. Old men have the only positive victimization ratio of the four male age-related groups. Young boys get hurt a lot and old men do a lot of hurting. The contest of boys and old men favors the old—until it becomes lethal. Then, just as boys are the most likely killers, old men tend to be killed. With a killer-killed ratio of -2.00, old men are near the bottom of the heap in fatal victimization.

For women, increasing age means increasing risks of *both* being hurt and being killed. Young (and generally unmarried) women have an even higher victimization ratio than boys. Old women, unlike old men, are three times as likely to get hurt as to hurt others. When old women are cast in parts that involve killing, the role calls for them to get killed but (in our 9-year sample) never to kill.

The exception to the female age-risk pattern is found in "settled adulthood," the category that includes the largest proportion of married women. The "settled adult" woman is the "safest" of all female categories. A pattern of

power trade-off can be seen in Table 2, which presents risk by marital status. Both married men and married women are less likely to become involved in violence than those not married. However, men take on higher risks with marriage while women gain some security with it.

Table 2: Risks by marital status

	Percent involved in violence	Percent involved in killing	Ratio of violents to victims	Ratio of killers to killed
<u>Males</u>				
Not married (N = 1283)	69.8	9.7	-1.18	+2.06
Married (N = 582)	52.9	12.9	-1.26	+1.87
<u>Females</u>				
Not married (N = 438)	53.7	4.8	-1.38	+1.20
Married (N = 333)	31.2	4.2	-1.15	+1.14

Class. Class distinctions offer no protection (see Table 3). In the world of television drama it is somewhat dangerous to be a member of any but the large and indistinct middle-class of characters. Clearly recognizable upper-class characters get most involved in killing. Middle-class characters *do* the most killing. Lower-class characters are most likely to be killed.

Table 3: Risks by class

	Percent involved in violence	Percent involved in killing	Ratio of violents to victims	Ratio of killers to killed
<u>Males</u>				
Upper (N = 171)	68.4	17.0	-1.28	+1.57
Middle, mixed (N = 2469)	68.2	9.7	-1.17	+2.23
Lower (N = 185)	77.0	12.0	-1.20	-1.13
<u>Females</u>				
Upper (N = 79)	43.0	10.1	-1.81	+1.25
Middle, mixed (N = 762)	45.0	3.5	-1.22	+1.15
Lower (N = 24)	54.2	8.3	-1.71	1.00

Women are less likely to be involved than men but stand a higher chance of victimization when involved. Lower-class women are second only to lower-class men in their risks of getting killed relative to their own lethal activity.

Race. To be other than clearly white is similarly risky. Table 4 reveals that characters coded as "other" (not including those who could not be coded for race) are more likely to be victimized and less likely to be cast as killers than whites. Women fare worse, as usual, except that no non-white woman in our sample was shown as involved in any killing.

Table 4: Risks by race

	Percent involved in violence	Percent involved in killing	Ratio of violents to victims	Ratio of killers to killed
<u>Males</u>				
White (N = 2079)	65.3	11.8	-1.16	+2.12
Other (N = 268)	61.9	10.1	-1.27	+1.83
<u>Females</u>				
White (N = 768)	46.0	4.7	-1.25	+1.24
Other (N = 72)	30.6	0.0	-1.82	0.00

Nationality. To be of a distinct nationality, as of a class or race other than the majority, is to assume special burdens of involvement and victimization. Although it is revealing that foreign women are more likely to be killers than either U.S. women or foreign men, they also have the highest rate of overall victimization among all sex and nationality groups (see Table 5).

Character type. The conflict of good and evil is the explicit message of popular drama. The upbeat ending of characters getting their just deserts makes the underlying power play appear to be the fair or "natural" workings of an orderly universe. That is the social power of popular fiction: to invent a world in which things work out as market-oriented story-tellers want them.

Table 5: Risks by nationality

	Percent involved in violence	Percent involved in killing	Ratio of violents to victims	Ratio of killers to killed
<u>Males</u>				
U.S. (N = 2098)	63.2	11.6	-1.16	+2.29
Other (N = 203)	80.8	12.8	-1.29	+1.27
<u>Females</u>				
U.S. (N = 740)	42.7	4.3	-1.31	+1.20
Other (N = 61)	49.2	3.3	-1.47	+2.00

"Bad" characters are most involved in violence and killing (see Table 6). "Good" characters, especially women, are victims of the most violence relative to their ability to inflict it upon others. But "good" males are also the most likely to commit violence as well, having the highest killer-killed ratio of all characters.

"Bad" males run a lower risk of being battered than "good" males but they also have a higher risk of being killed. Among females, it is the "good" woman who bears the highest burden of both fatal and other kinds of victimization. By contrast, the "bad" woman is the most likely to commit both general violence

Table 6: Risks by character type

	Percent involved in violence	Percent involved in killing	Ratio of violents to victims	Ratio of killers to killed
<u>Males</u>				
"Good" (N = 1553)	63.7	5.6	-1.23	+4.17
Mixed (N = 714)	65.9	9.0	-1.21	+1.31
"Bad" (N = 442)	89.6	28.7	-1.03	+1.81
<u>Females</u>				
"Good" (N = 557)	41.7	1.8	-1.40	-1.50
Mixed (N = 239)	43.9	5.0	-1.29	+1.17
"Bad" (N = 68)	77.9	22.1	+1.13	+1.67

and murder. It is as if an underlying scenario calls for evil women to provide provocation (and perhaps justification) for the high amount of violence to which women are subjected. "Good" women are the most likely to be cast in the role of sympathetic (or just pathetic) victims rousing the hero to righteous, if often lethal, indignation.

*The chances of involvement and ratios of
violents to victims and killers to killed
define the pecking order of television society.*

The characters most involved in violence are men classified as "bad," foreign, or lower-class, and women categorized as "bad," lower-class, or unmarried. The least involved are old and married characters of both sexes.

If and when involved, however, the ratio of risks indicates different life chances for different types of characters. Furthermore, as we have seen, general mayhem (including both hurting and killing) plays a role in the dramatic pattern which is different from the final blow in the form of killing and being killed. The details can be seen in Table 7.

The pecking order of both general mayhem and killing is dominated by men—American, white, middle-class, and in the prime of life. But at the very top of the general order of victimizers are "bad" women, old men, and "bad" men, in that order. The presence of evil at the top of the power hierarchy suggests the dramatic role of villains provoking heroes to action. Indeed, heading the ranking of killers over killed are "good" men followed by boys and other majority-type males. We can begin to discern not only the provocative role of the "bad" but also the retributive function of the "good" and the strong.

At the bottom of the dramatic pecking order (lower part of Table 7), we find women, lower-class people, and old people. Of the 20 most victimized groups (both for total mayhem and killing), all but three are composed of women.

Table 7: The pecking order of television society¹

Top 10 in rank order of violent-victim ratios			Top 10 in rank order of killer-killed ratios		
R	Characters	V-V	R	Characters	K-K
1	"Bad" women	+1.13	1	"Good" men	+4.17
2	Old men	+1.04	2	Boys (children, adolescents)	+4.00
3	"Bad" men	-1.03	3	U.S. men	+2.29
4	Settled adult women	-1.07	4	Middle- and mixed-class men	+2.23
5	Settled adult men	-1.12	5	Settled adult men	+2.18
6	Married women	-1.15	6	White men	+2.12
7.5	U.S. men	-1.16	7	Young adult men	+2.08
7.5	White men	-1.16	8	Not married men	+2.06
9	Middle- and mixed-class men		9	All men	+2.04
10	All men	-1.18	10	Foreign women	+2.00
Bottom 10 in rank order of violent-victim ratios			Bottom 10 in rank order of killer-killed ratios		
R	Characters	V-V	R	Characters	K-K
26	U.S. women	-1.31	24	Not married women	+1.20
27	Not married women	-1.38	25.5	All women	+1.17
28	"Good" women	-1.40	25.5	Neither "good" nor "bad" women	+1.17
29	Foreign women	-1.47	27	Middle- and mixed-class women	+1.15
30	Boys (children, adolescents)	-1.69	28	Married women	+1.14
31	Lower-class women	-1.71	29	Lower-class women	1.00
32	Young adult women	-1.73	30	Lower-class men	-1.13
33	Upper-class women	-1.81	31	"Good" women	-1.50
34	Non-white women	-1.82	32	Old men	-2.00
35	Old women	-3.00	33	Old women	-0.00 ²

¹ All 35 groups whose risk ratios were presented in Tables 1 through 6 were ranked according to violent-victim and killer-killed ratios. This table represents the top and bottom ten ranks by those ratios, except that there were only 33 killer-killed ratios to rank (girls and nonwhite women never appeared in our samples as either killers or killed).

² -0.00 means that there were no killers, only killed.

Old women are at the very bottom of the heap of both the battered and the killed. Nonwhite, young, and other than middle-class women are next in line of general victimization.

Some groups again appear in several roles. For example, old men involved in violence commit much more mayhem than they receive; they are also second most likely to be killed. Finally, "good" women are among characters most

likely to be both general and fatal victims of violence rather than the perpetrators. "Good" men have power as indicated by their heading up the killer-killed list; "good" women, on the other hand, end up near the bottom of the power hierarchy. When it comes to violence, "good" are the strong men and weak women of the world of television.

Cultivation Analysis is the study of what is usually called effects or impact.

As we explained more fully in an earlier report (8), we consider the latter terms inappropriate to the study of broad cultural influences. The "effects" of a pervasive medium upon the composition and structure of the symbolic environment are subtle, complex, and intermingled with other influences. Also, the concept of causation, borrowed from simpler experimental studies in the physical and biological sciences, is not fully applicable to the steady flow of images and messages that comprise much contemporary popular culture.

People are born into a culture that cultivates their needs as well as their satisfactions. Culture affects assumptions about facts as well as responses to them. In modern cultures demand and supply are manufactured. Social and psychological characteristics draw individuals to select certain types of content which, in turn, nourish and cultivate those characteristics. Innumerable facts (and values) outside of personal experience can only be learned—and related values derived—from the mass media or from others who have learned them from the mass media. Increasingly, media-cultivated facts and values become standards by which we judge even personal experiences and family and community behavior. The general stability of, rather than any specific change in, these patterns is the principal contribution of media to ideas and behavior.

A persistent difference in the exposure to messages that cultivate perspectives need not result in a major shift in personal outlook and behavior to have profound consequences. A barely perceptible shift of a few degrees average temperature can lead to an ice age or make the desert bloom. A slight but pervasive tilt in the cultural climate can have major social and public policy implications. The closer a vote, a decision, a public policy issue, the smaller the shift needed for change, and the more rigid the forces of stability might be. This is one reason why we prefer to speak of the contribution of television to the cultivation of common perspectives rather than of its achieving any specific or preconceived goals, impact, or effects.

Cultivation Analysis begins with the patterns found in the "world" of television drama. The message system composing that world presents coherent images of life and society. How are these images reflected in the assumptions and values held by audiences? How are the "lessons" of symbolic behavior presented in fictional forms applied to conceptions about real life?

The problem of studying television's "effects" is compounded by the fact that today nearly everyone "lives" to some extent in the world of television (18). Without control groups of non-viewers it is difficult to isolate television's im-

pact. Experiments do not solve the problem, for they are not comparable to people's day-to-day television viewing. Our approach reflects the hypothesis that heavier viewers of television, those more exposed than lighter viewers to its messages, are more likely to understand social reality in terms of the "facts of life" they see on television. To investigate this hypothesis, we partition the population and our samples according to television exposure. By contrasting light and heavy viewers, some of the difference television makes in people's conception of social reality can be examined.

Naturally, we are aware that factors other than television viewing may account for some of these differences. Since we have found, as have others, that heavy television viewing is part and parcel of a complex syndrome which also includes lower education, lower mobility, lower aspirations, higher anxieties, and other class-, age- and sex-related characteristics, our analyses are designed with statistical controls for these and other demographic and descriptive variables. These characteristics are held constant when comparing responses of heavy and light viewers in relatively homogeneous groups. For example, college-educated respondents may answer differently than non-college respondents. Therefore, we examine heavy and light viewer respondents *within* the college and non-college groups as well as between them.

The investigation of television's relationship to viewers' conceptions of social reality begins with systematic analysis of the world of television drama.

Message System Analysis reveals how certain "facts" and aspects of social reality are presented in television drama; these "facts" are then compared with other conceptions of the same "facts" and aspects derived from direct and independent observations, such as U.S. Census figures. For example, in prime-time television drama aired from 1969 through 1977, 64 percent of major characters and 30 percent of all characters (major and minor) were involved in violence as perpetrators, victims, or both. According to the 1970 Census, there were only .32 violent crimes per 100 persons.⁴ In the world of television, therefore, one has between a 30 and 64 percent chance of being involved in violence, but, in the real world, only a one-third of one percent chance.

Next, we question heavy and light viewers (both children and adults) about their perceptions of the facts. To the extent that patterns of life presented in dramatic television programs cultivate distinct conceptions of social reality, heavy viewers are expected to be more likely than light viewers to choose answers that reflect television perspectives. Our research strategy, instrumentation, and samples are designed to establish the extent to which and the ways in which television cultivates such patterned responses.

⁴ Newer data on personal violent crime victimization range from .41 per 100 (based on 1973 police-reported figures which include homicide) to 3.3 per 100 persons over 12 (based on 1974 probability sample which doesn't include homicide).

Once the "television view" and the "real world" or some other view of selected facts and aspects of social reality have been determined, we construct questions dealing with these facts and aspects of life. Each question has an inferred or objectively determined "television response" reflecting the "television view" of the facts, and a "non-television answer." For example, one cultivation question asks: "During any given week, what are your chances of being involved in some kind of violence? About one in ten? About one in a hundred?" The first answer—"about one in ten"—more closely reflects the world of television and is used as the "television answer," while the "one in a hundred" answer more closely matches U.S. Census data and reflects the real-life circumstances of most Americans.

To test our hypothesis we continually gather data reflecting television viewers' beliefs and behaviors. These data have been collected from samples diverse in characteristics such as age, location, and institutional affiliation.⁵ Within each sample, television viewers' responses are further analyzed in terms of age, education, sex, and other social and personal characteristics. Our policy is to administer the same or similar questions repeatedly to various samples, including both children and adults, whenever possible.⁶

Cultivation Analysis during the past five years has revealed a consistent and significant relationship between television exposure and many aspects of social reality.

Two such aspects seem to be particularly salient to the Violence Profile—perceived danger, and mistrust and alienation.

Previous Violence Profiles (10) have reported that more heavy viewers tend to respond in terms of the world of television than do light viewers in the same demographic groups. When asked about chances of encountering violence, about the percentage of men employed in law enforcement and crime detection, and about the percentage of crimes that are violent, significantly more heavy viewers than light viewers respond in terms more characteristic of the television world than of the real world. Mistrust is also reflected in responses suggesting that heavy viewers believe that most people just look out for themselves, take advantage of others, and cannot be trusted. These relationships usually cannot be explained by social or personal characteristics, although they make important contributions to baseline levels of criterion variables and to differences in the strength and intensity of television's apparent role in cultivating certain assumptions.

⁵ We gratefully acknowledge the National Opinion Research Center, University of Chicago, for sharing its 1975 and 1977 General Social Surveys, and the Center for Political Studies, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, for its 1976 American National Election Study disseminated through the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research.

⁶ A complete description of the samples may be found in (12).

The current results extend these findings. Two samples of school children were asked the following question (25):

How often is it all right to hit someone if you are mad at them? Is it almost always all right, or almost never all right?

Table 8 indicates that heavy viewers of television, more often than light viewers, respond that it is "almost always all right" to hit someone. This relationship was found to be particularly strong among girls in the suburban/rural (New Jersey) school sample. Light-viewing girls were relatively unlikely to respond that it is all right to hit someone, while their heavy-viewing counterparts were as likely as boys to give this answer. Both boys and girls in an urban private (Bank Street) school were less likely than those in the first school to agree that it is all right to hit someone, but heavier viewers were more likely than lighter viewers to give this response.

Respondents' fear of walking in the city or in their own neighborhood at night was studied among New Jersey child viewers and in the 1976 American National Election Study and the 1977 NORC General Social Survey. Generally, the question is:

Would you be afraid to walk in the city (or, around here) at night? Yes, no.

Table 9 shows that among the school children, heavy viewers more than light viewers respond that they would be afraid to walk alone in a city at night. The relationship is particularly strong among boys, while for girls, lighter as well as heavier viewers express this fear. As shown in Table 10, there is a slight tendency among adults for heavy viewers more than light viewers to indicate fear of walking alone at night, but this relationship is weak compared to the strong association between heavier viewing and fear among children.

In our most recent secondary analysis, four⁷ of a series of five items reflecting crime-defensive behavior of adult respondents were analyzed in relation to viewing evening crime and police television programs. The 1976 American National Election Study respondents were asked:

Now we would like to ask about how crime affects you personally. Some people find it necessary to take certain precautions in order to be safe from crime. Please tell me if you've done any of the following things to protect yourself against crime:

- bought a dog for purposes of protection;*
- put new locks on windows or doors for purposes of protection;*
- kept a gun for purposes of protection;*
- stayed away from certain areas in a town or city for purposes of protection.*

⁷ A fifth item, installation of alarm systems, was analyzed but not included here because the small number of respondents who had purchased alarm systems (N=110) made cross-tabular analysis impossible.

Table 8: Percent of children agreeing: "it's almost always all right to hit someone if you are mad at them" (by level of television viewing)

	New Jersey School					Bank Street School				
	Television Viewing ²			GD (Difference		Television Viewing ²			GD (Difference	
	Light (N=141)	Medium (N=339)	Heavy (N=161)	% Heavy- % Light)	gamma	Light (N=65)	Medium (N=61)	% Medium- % Light)	gamma	
Overall (N=625)	31	35	41	+10	.13**	Overall (N=116)	10	24	+14	.49**
controlling for:										
Grade in School					Age					
sixth (N=68)	20	37	44	+24	.28*	9 - 11 (N=43)	18	35	+17	.42*
seventh (N=266)	35	32	41	+ 6	.09	12 - 14 (N=80)	5	19	+14	.63**
eighth (N=230)	35	39	40	+ 5	.06					
ninth (N=68)	17	28	33	+16	.28					
Sex					Sex					
Male (N=304)	37	44	39	+ 2	.04	Male (N=56)	14	42	+28	.62**
Female (N=328)	24	26	42	+18	.27**	Female (N=67)	6	10	+ 4	.28
Parents' Education					Father's Education					
Neither went to college (N=228)	29	40	47	+18	.20**	No college (N=11)	20	33	+13	.33
Father or both went to college (N=349)	33	29	36	+ 3	.03	Some college (N=103)	9	24	+15	.53*

¹ Question for New Jersey School: "How often is it all right to hit someone if you are mad at the person for a good reason?"
 Question for Bank Street School: "How often is it all right to hit someone if you are mad at them?"

² "Altogether, about how many hours a day do you usually spend watching TV, including morning, afternoon and evening?"
 New Jersey School: light = 2 hours or less
 medium = 2 to 6 hours
 heavy = 6 hours or more
 Bank Street School: light = less than 2 hours
 medium = 2 hours or more

* $p \leq .05$ (tau)

** $p \leq .01$ (tau)

Table 9: Percent of adults who would be afraid to walk alone at night¹ (by level of television viewing)

	NORC 1977 General Social Survey					CPS 1976 American National Election Study					
	Television Viewing ²			CD (Difference)		Television Viewing ³			CD (Difference)		
	Light (N=766)	Medium (N=311)	Heavy (N=448)	% Heavy- % Light)	gamma	Light (N=881)	Medium (N=887)	Heavy (N=629)	% Heavy- % Light)	gamma	
Overall (N=1516)	43	44	49	+ 6	.08*	Overall (N=2335)	41	39	44	+ 3	.03
controlling for:						controlling for:					
Age:						Age					
Under 31 (N=405)	43	41	43	0	-.00	Under 30 (N=660)	32	35	33	+ 1	.02
31-54 (N=642)	39	37	45	+ 6	.06	30-54 (N=903)	28	33	40	+12	.16**
55 or older (N=462)	51	55	58	+ 7	.11	55 and older (N=759)	57	53	62	+ 5	.04
Sex						Sex					
Male (N=686)	22	21	28	+ 6	.10	Male (N=965)	24	22	25	+ 1	.01
Female (N=830)	65	61	62	- 3	-.06	Female (N=1370)	50	52	58	+ 8	.09*
Education						Education					
No high school (N=530)	50	47	53	+ 3	.04	No college (N=1194)	54	47	50	- 4	-.04
High school grad (N=737)	42	44	46	+ 4	.07	Some college (N=1133)	31	31	31	0	.01
Some college (N=244)	38	32	45	+ 7	.03						

¹ Question for NORC 1977 General Social Survey: "Is there any area right around here -- that is, within a mile -- where you would be afraid to walk alone at night? Yes, no."
Question for Center for Political Studies 1976 American National Election Study: "Would you say it is safe to go out walking around here alone at night? Yes, no."

² "On the average day, about how many hours do you personally watch television?"
Light: 2 hours or less
Medium: 3 hours
Heavy: 4 hours or more

³ "How often do you watch evening entertainment programs about police and crime? Frequently, sometimes, rarely, never."
Light: rarely or never
Medium: sometimes
Heavy: frequently

* $p \leq .05$ (tau)

** $p \leq .01$ (tau)

**Table 10: Percent of schoolchildren who would be afraid to walk alone at night¹
(by level of television viewing)**

	New Jersey School			CD (Difference % Heavy-% Light)	gamma
	Television Viewing ²				
	Light (N=141)	Medium (N=339)	Heavy (N=161)		
<u>Overall</u> (N=623)	72	76	81	+ 9	.14**
controlling for:					
<u>Grade in school</u>					
Sixth (N=69)	90	71	74	-16	-.15
Seventh (N=261)	74	77	83	+ 9	.18*
Eighth (N=233)	68	76	80	+12	.19*
Ninth (N=67)	71	72	83	+12	.10
<u>Sex</u>					
Male (N=299)	60	61	69	+ 9	.11*
Female (N=331)	87	90	89	+ 2	.02
<u>Parents' Education</u>					
Neither went to college (N=228)	65	76	81	+16	.23**
Father or both went to college (N=345)	73	75	82	+ 9	.14*

¹ "Would you be afraid to walk alone in the city at night?"

² "Altogether, about how many hours a day do you usually spend watching TV -- including morning, afternoon, and evening?"
Light: 2 hours or less
Medium: 2 to 6 hours
Heavy: 6 hours or more

* $p \leq .05$ (tau)

** $p \leq .01$ (tau)

Table 11 shows that heavy viewers take more precautionary measures than light viewers. Those who report that they "frequently" watch evening police and crime programs also report that they have obtained dogs, guns, and locks for purposes of protection in greater proportions than those respondents who "sometimes" or "rarely/never" watch crime and police programs.

The response dimension of "mistrust and alienation" has been measured by existing indicators that have been constructed and tested by other researchers. Beginning with our secondary analysis of the NORC General Social Survey data, three of Rosenberg's (29) "faith in people" index items have been used. These items were administered to two samples of school children and two samples at the University of Pennsylvania, and were analyzed among respondents in the 1976 American National Election Study. Our analysis shows that heavy viewers of television are significantly more likely than light viewers to say that you can't be too careful in dealing with people, that people will take advantage if they get the chance and that people look out for themselves only (10).

We have also extended these analyses by investigating the relationship between television viewing and responses to three items reflecting "anomie" (31). Respondents in the 1977 NORC General Social Survey were asked:

Table 11: Percent who took precautions in order to be safe from crime¹ (by level of television viewing) among a sample of adults²

	Percent who bought a dog for purposes of protection					Percent who put new locks on windows or doors for purposes of protection				
	Television Viewing ³			CD (Difference % Heavy-% Light)	gamma	Television Viewing ³			CD (Difference % Heavy-% Light)	gamma
	Light (N=881)	Medium (N=887)	Heavy (N=629)			Light (N=881)	Medium (N=887)	Heavy (N=629)		
<u>Overall</u> (N=2374)	10	12	16	+ 6	.18**	28	31	32	+ 4	.07*
controlling for:										
<u>Age</u>										
Under 30 (N=669)	12	15	16	+ 4	.11	30	34	31	+ 1	.02
30-54 (N=920)	11	12	18	+ 7	.20**	25	24	31	+ 6	.08
55 and older (N=772)	8	8	14	+ 6	.18*	29	39	35	+ 6	.12*
<u>Sex</u>										
Male (N=981)	6	12	16	+10	.31**	24	29	30	+ 6	.11*
Female (N=1394)	12	12	17	+ 5	.11*	30	33	33	+ 3	.06
<u>Education</u>										
No college (N=1220)	9	12	16	+ 7	.24**	24	28	29	+ 5	.08*
Some college (N=1147)	11	12	17	+ 6	.13*	30	34	36	+ 6	.09*

¹ Question: "Now we would like to ask about how crime affects you personally. Some people find it necessary to take certain precautions in order to be safe from crime. Please tell me if you've done any of the following things to protect yourself against crime:
 -- bought a dog for purposes of protection
 -- put new locks on windows or doors for purposes of protection
 -- kept a gun for purposes of protection
 -- stayed away from certain areas in a town or city for purposes of protection."

² Center for Political Studies 1976 American National Election Study

³ "How often do you watch evening entertainment programs about crime and police? Frequently, sometimes, rarely, never."
 Light: rarely or never
 Medium: sometimes
 Heavy: frequently

* $p \leq .05$ (tau)

** $p \leq .01$ (tau)

Table 11 (continued): Percent who took precautions in order to be safe from crime¹ (by level of television viewing) among a sample of adults²

	Percent who kept a gun for purposes of protection					Percent who avoided areas of town or city for purposes of protection				
	Television Viewing ³			CD (Difference % Heavy-% Light)	gamma	Television Viewing ³			CD (Difference % Heavy-% Light)	gamma
	Light (N=881)	Medium (N=887)	Heavy (N=629)			Light (N=881)	Medium (N=887)	Heavy (N=629)		
Overall (N=2374)	19	21	29	+10	.18**	53	55	54	+ 1	.03
controlling for:										
Age										
Under 30 (N=669)	20	20	30	+10	.19**	55	56	55	0	.00
30-54 (N=920)	18	22	23	+ 5	.09	53	51	54	+ 1	.01
55 and older (N=772)	19	20	35	+16	.25**	51	59	55	+ 4	.07
Sex										
Male (N=981)	24	26	35	+11	.16**	48	49	48	0	.00
Female (N=1394)	15	17	24	+ 9	.17**	56	59	60	+ 4	.06
Education										
No college (N=1220)	20	22	28	+ 8	.15**	46	49	52	+ 6	.08*
Some college (N=1147)	18	19	29	+11	.18**	58	61	58	0	.02

¹ Question: "Now we would like to ask about how crime affects you personally. Some people find it necessary to take certain precautions in order to be safe from crime. Please tell me if you've done any of the following things to protect yourself against crime: -- bought a dog for purposes of protection -- put new locks on windows or doors for purposes of protection -- kept a gun for purposes of protection -- stayed away from certain areas in a town or city for purposes of protection."

² Center for Political Studies 1976 American National Election Study

³ "How often do you watch evening entertainment programs about crime and police? Frequently, sometimes, rarely, never."
 Light: rarely or never
 Medium: sometimes
 Heavy: frequently

* p < .05 (tau)

** p < .01 (tau)

In spite of what some people say, the lot of the average man is getting worse, not better. Agree, disagree.

It's hardly fair to bring a child into the world with the way things look for the future. Agree, disagree.

Most public officials are not really interested in the problems of the average man. Agree, disagree.

Table 12 shows that on all three measures of anomie, heavy viewers are more likely than light viewers to agree with these statements. They are significantly more likely to report that "things" look bad—so bad that it would be unfair to have children, that officials do not care about the public, and that the lot of the average man is getting worse rather than better.

Secondary analysis of television viewers' outlooks on international affairs was conducted by using the following (or a similar) item in the 1975 NORC General Social Survey and the 1976 American National Election Study:

Do you think it would be best for the future of the country if we take an active part in world affairs or if we stay out of world affairs?

Table 13 indicates that heavy viewers in both samples are more likely than light viewers to respond that it would be best to stay out of world affairs. This relationship is particularly strong among NORC respondents who were asked about daily television viewing, compared to respondents in the Election Study who were only asked about viewing crime and police shows.

A final note of gloom is found (20) among respondents in the 1975 NORC General Social Survey. They were asked:

Do you expect the United States to fight in another war within the next ten years? Yes, no.

Heavy viewers more than light viewers envisioned another war within the next ten years (70 percent of light viewers compared to 76 percent of heavy viewers, $\gamma = .14$, $p \leq .01$).

Aggregate patterns of dramatic scenarios need not have specific behavioral correlates.

Even less can we expect isolated elements of these patterns, such as violence, to have specific correlates of their own. Viewers do not watch just violence (or any other abstracted element) *per se*. Typically, they do not even watch selected plays, as such. They watch *television*, and watch it by the clock rather than by the program. Most viewers watch non-selectively what is on when they habitually turn on the television set. Some of the more repetitive elements of the world presented on television appear to be associated with viewers' assumptions about facts of life. These assumptions provide a background for all behavior; if they change, the *meaning* of much behavior—and eventually some of the behavior itself—is also likely to change.

Table 12: Percent agreeing with statements of anomie (by level of television viewing) among a sample of adults¹

	Percent agreeing that the lot of the average man is getting worse ²					Percent agreeing that it is hardly fair to bring a child into the world ³					Percent agreeing that most public officials are not really interested in the problems of the average man ⁴				
	Television Viewing ⁵			% Heavy-Light	gamma	Television Viewing ⁵			% Heavy-Light	gamma	Television Viewing ⁵			% Heavy-Light	gamma
	Light	Medium	Heavy			Light	Medium	Heavy			Light	Medium	Heavy		
Overall (N=1461)	51	61	62	+11	.18**	34	41	46	+12	.18**	59	69	72	+13	.22**
controlling for:															
Age															
Under 30 (N=394)	55	56	65	+10	.15*	34	40	43	+ 9	.14	57	70	72	+15	.25**
30-54 (N=622)	49	60	59	+10	.18**	33	37	44	+11	.18**	57	68	71	+14	.23**
55 and older (N=438)	51	64	62	+11	.17*	38	45	50	+12	.19**	65	69	74	+ 9	.15*
Sex															
Male (N=669)	51	58	59	+ 8	.13*	34	33	39	+ 5	.05	59	72	75	+16	.29**
Female (N=792)	51	63	64	+13	.20**	34	47	50	+16	.25**	59	66	71	+12	.18**
Education															
No high school (N=498)	66	70	72	+ 6	.12	60	55	58	- 2	-.03	77	72	80	+ 3	.05
High school grad (N=719)	51	59	55	+ 4	.07	30	37	38	+ 8	.13*	58	68	67	+ 9	.15**
Some college (N=242)	34	46	43	+ 9	.20	12	20	24	+12	.31*	39	62	59	+20	.37**

¹ NORC 1977 General Social Survey

² Question: "In spite of what some people say, the lot of the average man is getting worse, not better. Agree, disagree."

³ Question: "It's hardly fair to bring a child into the world with the way things look for the future. Agree, disagree."

⁴ Question: "Most public officials are not really interested in the problems of the average man. Agree, disagree."

⁵ "On the average day, about how many hours do you personally watch TV?"
 Light: 2 hours or less
 Medium: 3 hours
 Heavy: 4 hours or more

* $p \leq .05$ (tau)

** $p \leq .01$ (tau)

Table 13: Percent agreeing that it would be best for the future of the United States to stay out of world affairs¹ (by level of television viewing) among two samples of adults

	NORC 1975 General Social Survey					CPS 1976 American National Election Study					
	Television Viewing ²			CD (Difference		Television Viewing ³			CD (Difference		
	Light (N=707)	Medium (N=291)	Heavy (N=484)	% Heavy- % Light)	gamma	Light (N=861)	Medium (N=887)	Heavy (N=620)	% Heavy- % Light)	gamma	
<u>Overall</u> (N=1420)	32	33	47	+15	.23**	<u>Overall</u> (N=2216)	27	26	34	+ 7	.10**
controlling for:						controlling for:					
<u>Age</u>						<u>Age</u>					
Under 30 (N=391)	34	26	47	+13	.20**	Under 30 (N=642)	25	23	30	+ 5	.08
30-54 (N=607)	26	32	41	+15	.24**	30-54 (N=870)	21	21	31	+10	.17**
55 and older (N=394)	39	41	54	+15	.23**	55 and older (N=692)	35	35	42	+ 7	.09
<u>Sex</u>						<u>Sex</u>					
Male (N=649)	29	30	45	+16	.24**	Male (N=937)	22	26	29	+ 7	.11*
Female (N=779)	35	36	49	+14	.21**	Female (N=1279)	30	25	38	+ 8	.10*
<u>Education</u>						<u>Education</u>					
No college (N=985)	37	39	51	+14	.21**	No college (N=1096)	45	36	40	- 5	-.06
Some college (N=440)	23	21	30	+ 7	.07	Some college (N=1113)	14	15	24	+10	.17**

¹ Question for NORC 1975 General Social Survey: "Do you think it will be best for the future of this country if we take an active part in world affairs, or if we stay out of world affairs?"
 Question for CPS 1976 American National Election Study: "This country would be better off if we just stayed home and did not concern ourselves with problems in other parts of the worlds. Agree, disagree?"

² "On the average day, about how many hours do you personally watch television?"
 Light: 2 hours or less
 Medium: 3 hours
 Heavy: 4 hours or more

³ "How often do you watch evening entertainment programs about police and crime?" Frequently, sometimes, rarely, never."
 Light: rarely or never
 Medium: sometimes
 Heavy: frequently

* $p \leq .05$ (tau)

** $p \leq .01$ (tau)

The aggregate patterns of the scenarios themselves may also cultivate assumptions about *how things work*. That again need not have specific behavioral correlates, but may relate to ranges of behavior. Furthermore, the same background of assumptions about what things are and how things work may contain different lessons for different groups whose interests and status relate differently to those assumptions.

Although some of these lessons may be enhanced by a preference for watching crime and police shows, they cannot and need not be specifically related to specific elements of those or other shows. They can and should be seen as generalized responses to the central dynamics of the world of television drama.

In general, by depicting a sex, age, and social hierarchy, television drama may cultivate assumptions and actions that tend to maintain this hierarchy. (This is not to assert that television alone is responsible or necessarily decisive, only that it makes a contribution in that direction.)

Specific symbolic functions include definitions of evil and good in terms of social types (or sub-types), and of provocation and restoration of order. Television presents a world in which the balance of power is couched, and often obscured, in moral terms. It is a world of constant threat to and vigilance on behalf of a social order embodying conventional morality. We can distill the essential dynamics of violence in television drama: evil provokes the good to victimize the weak.

These lessons, as is the world in which they are embedded, are of course entirely synthetic and policy-directed (even if the policies may have other goals). These policies are made on pragmatic, mostly economic, grounds and are justified in moral terms of convention and "freedom" (despite the fact that there is no free market in television production). If judged on the same grounds, they may be said to achieve their short-run economic (i.e., marketing) goals as well as goals of socialization into a power structure. However, they may be seen as falling short of achieving the long-range social and moral goal of justice defined as equity of life chances and of the cultivation of equitable normative assumptions about power, risk, and trust.

*There are some aspects of program policy
that can also be related to specific
results of the Cultivation Analysis.*

Limitations of time, resources, and the sizes of our samples of respondents have not yet permitted the investigation of perceptual, conceptual, and behavioral correlates that different groups of viewers may associate with the structure of power demonstrated by patterns of violence in television drama. But some centrally significant results pertaining to most groups of viewers have been found.

First, these studies have provided massive, systematic, and fairly coherent evidence that exposure to television is significantly associated with having

conceptions of social reality that reflect some of the patterns of facts and actions presented in the world of television drama.

Second, the current report extends the findings of earlier studies (8, 9), revealing that these patterns include heightened perceptions of danger, mistrust, alienation, and the expectation of violence.

Third, new data indicate that the tendency to justify violence, to expect U.S. involvement in a new war, to want the U.S. to keep out of world affairs, and to take specific personal protective action are also associated with television viewing.

Finally, television makes somewhat different contributions to the perspectives of different social groups. These differences cannot be expected to replicate the structure of power shown on television because many other factors enter into the overall determination of real-life relative powers. However, they may and often do cultivate perceptions and actions in the direction of the patterns demonstrated in the world of television drama. A more refined analysis of these differential cultivation patterns is a task of our continuing research.

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