

Comments on draft of June 17, 1995

On the whole, very good. I trust you have double-checked findings you are using; I have no time to do that now.

Page 4. "Two divergent perspectives," etc., misleading. C.I is certainly NOT focused on "pollution" any more than the weather report is. Nor is there any need to stress divergences instead of complementary contributions. So I suggest the following wording:

Two perspectives

Part of the strength of this report comes from a fusing of two perspectives. IMHI focuses on ways the mass media can enhance the public's well-being. CI research maps the "world" of prime time dramatic television and shows the problems that need to be overcome and opportunities that can be pursued to achieve IMHI's objectives.

CI focuses on an aggregate view, etc, -- as is

Page 5, first full para.:

The analysis was conducted by the Cultural Indicators (CI) research team lead by George Gerbner, Dean Emeritus of Communication at the University of Pennsylvania, conducting his ongoing CI research at the University City Science Center in Philadelphia. The CI project monitors television etc. -- as is.

Page 6. Last paragraph is misleading. What is a "meaningful context?" Certainly humor and fantasy are among the most meaningful. Or does this mean "realistic?" If so, there is not evidence that that is any more "meaningful" than any other style.

What is "harmful violence?" If violence is defined is harmful, isn't all violence harmful? There is also something wrong with that sentence. I would just skip this paragraph as too troublesome and confusing, and start this section with the next: Not all anger, etc.

Page 8: Lines 2-4 present straw-man and otherwise misleading and tendentious argument. Most cartoon violence is NOT slapstick or "head bopping" (which itself is not slapstick) but fairly gruesome, often more so than fatal violence, and certainly more effective than most. The studies I cite in the report indicate that sugar-coating of humor (and much cartoon violence is not even humorous) is an effective way to convey the message of power, victimization, and vulnerability, the chief messages of violence. The frequently somber, scary Gothic type violence in cartoons is

also at least as effective in conveying lessons of risk and danger as other forms. So I would skip (or reverse the thrust) of this paragraph. Why speculate about effects when the report does not give findings of research on effects, and even distorts them? Or just say we did not presume to predict specific effects of different styles and so reported violence in all styles and contexts.

There is a typo on Page 13 -- it should be "While" instead of "Where" as the first word of the third paragraph.

The rest seems fine to me. I would appreciate receiving a final (I hope) draft as soon as possible after July 7.