

To: nejo@philadelphia.libertynet.org
 From: George Gerbner <GGerbner@pobox.asc.upenn.edu>
 Subject: Revised Death for Soros draft for comment and completion
 Cc:
 Bcc:
 X-Attachments:

Nejat - FYI and comment. When ready, please send draft proposals for crime and drugs, ASAP. We must get this going if we want to replenish our research budget.

DEATH AND DYING IN MASS MEDIA NEWS AND FICTION: REALITY OR DENIAL?
 A PROPOSAL TO THE OPEN SOCIETY INSTITUTE

Everybody must die, right? Wrong. In the stories we tell, death is not an act of nature or fact of life but a fate bestowed upon those who deserve it. They can be martyrs, tragic heroes, other victims of accident or of injustice (or justice), villains getting their just deserts, or just plain losers.

A preliminary search of our Cultural Indicators database shows that death and dying are significant themes in 28 percent of prime time television plays, 60 percent of feature movies, and 30 percent of music videos. But they rarely show real life causes, consequences and depictions. Less than 1 percent of media characters die as real people die - illness, age, accidents, drugs, etc.

The proposition we wish to investigate is that media exposure contributes to a culture of denial. We will analyze trends in the proportion of characters who die, their demographic composition, character traits, and their roles in the stories, in samples of prime time television, top grossing movies, daytime serial drama, music videos, and news stories from evening network newscasts.

For samples collected after the commencement of this project we will augment the trend analysis by creating new coding items that will also include detailed documentation of the causes of death, consequences to the social environment of the deceased, and the specific moral, ethical and philosophical statements, if any, made about death and the fact of dying.

The report of the results will include highlights and a detailed technical report, and appropriate charts, and tables.

Make up a budget of \$150,000

BUDGET

(I do have the line item budget in spreadsheet, but I am including only subtotals here. Each line item is percentaged for Soros. I used slightly different percentages for different items - e.g. a different percentage for Kate and admin. assistant, as opposed to me and Brian. And a totally different one for you, equipment etc. are mostly chalked up to NIH and FORD, etc. etc. Anyway, such percentages are easy to play with and come up with desired totals.)

	REQUESTED	
CI TOTAL	SUPPORT	OTHER SUPPORT
BUDGET	FROM SOROS	(NIH, FORD)

PERSONNEL	278,000	98,400	179,600
OTHER DIRECT COSTS	38,400	10,180	28,220
INDIRECT COSTS	10,000	2,000	8,000
GRAND TOTAL	326,400	110,580	215,820