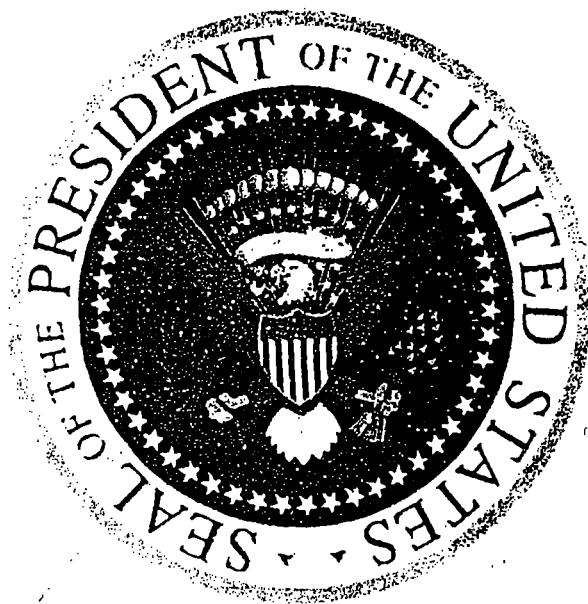

**WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON CHILDRENS
TELEVISION
MONDAY, JULY 29, 1996**



**BRIEFING BOOK FOR THE PRESIDENT, VICE
PRESIDENT, MRS. CLINTON AND MRS. GORE**

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July 27, 1996

WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON CHILDREN'S TELEVISION

LOCATION: East Room
DATE: July 29, 1996
TIME: 9:30 am - 12:00 pm
FROM: Greg Simon and Eric Anderson

I. PURPOSE

To discuss ways to improve the quality and quantity of children's programming. You announced in Glendale, California in June that you would invite leaders of the television networks and the nation's pre-eminent children's programming developers to come to the White House before the end of July. With approval of the three-hour rule, the availability of quality children's programming will become more important.

You and the Vice President had a successful meeting with media leaders in February which resulted in the industry's agreement to develop a ratings system that will be compatible with the v-chip.

II. BACKGROUND

See separate notebook for background paper and format for the meeting.

III. PARTICIPANTS

The President
The First Lady
The Vice President
Mrs. Gore

Decker Anstrom, president and CEO, National Cable Television Association
Barry Baker, president and CEO, River City Broadcasting
Jeff Bewkes, chairman, president and CEO, Home Box Office
David Britt, president, Children's Television Workshop (CTW)
LeVar Burton, TV Actor
Gary Chapman, president and CEO, LIN Television Corporation
Peggy Charren, founder, Action for Children's Television (ACT)
Betty Cohen, president, The Cartoon Network
Ervin Duggan, president and CEO, Public Broadcasting System
Peter Eio, president, Lego Systems
Linda Ellerbee, president, Lucky Duck Productions

Peter Engel, executive, NBC

Augusto Failde, co-founder and president, Tropix Media, Inc.

Rich Frank, president, Academy of TV, Arts, and Sciences

Edward Fritts, president and CEO, National Association of Broadcasters (NAB)

James Goodmon, president, Capitol Broadcasting

Dr. Kathleen Hall Jamieson, dean, University of Pennsylvania School of Communication

James Hedlund, president, Association of Local Television Stations

Neil Hoffman, vice president of programming, USA Network

Aletha Huston, University Distinguished Professor of Human Development and co-director of the Center for Research on the Influence of TV on Children, University of Kansas

Karen Jaffe, KidsNet

Lucy Johnson, senior vice president, CBS Entertainment

Philip A. Jones, chairman, National Association of Broadcasting

Jamie Kellner, chief executive officer, Warner Brothers Television Network

David Kleeman, executive director, American Center for Children's Television

Gary Krisel, Dreamworks SKG

Geraldine Laybourne, president, Disney/ABC Cable Network

Margaret Loesch, president, Fox Children's Network

Anne MacDonald, vice president for consumer marketing, Pizza Hut World Wide

Cindy Mahmoud, vice president of syndication, Black Entertainment Television (BET)

Virginia (Ginny) Markell, vice president for programming, National PTA

Judith McHale, president and CEO, Discovery Channel

Robert Meers, president and CEO, Reebok

Greg Meidel, chairman, MCA Television

Newton Minow, counsel, Sidley & Austin

Dr. Kathryn Montgomery, president, Center for Media Education

Jack Myers, chairman and CEO, Television Programming Partners

Bill Nye, host and head-writer of children's series, "Disney Presents Bill Nye the Science Guy"

Jennifer Perry, executive director, Children's Action Network (CAN)

Dr. Robert Phillips, deputy medical director, The American Psychiatric Association

Dr. Alvin Pouissant, professor of psychiatry, Judge Baker Children's Center

Nelson Price, National Council of Churches

Victoria Rideout, director, Children and the Media Program at Children Now

Ray Rodriguez, president and chief operating officer, Univision Television Network

Fred Rogers, "Mister Rogers Neighborhood"

John Sarsen, Jr., president and CEO, Association of National Advertisers

Herb Scannell, president, Nickelodean Networks

Sander Schwartz, senior vice president, Columbia Children's Programming

John Sie, CEO and chairman, Encore Media Company

James Steyer, founder and CEO, JP Kids, Inc.

Elizabeth Thoman, founder and executive director, Center for Media Literacy

Dr. Whitney Vanderweff, executive director, National Alliance for Non-Violent Programming

Jack Valenti, President and CEO of the Motion Picture Association of America

IV. PRESS PLAN

POOL PRESS

V. SEQUENCE OF PROGRAM

- You, the First Lady, the Vice President, and Mrs. Gore proceed to the Blue Room for a photo receiving line.
- You, the First Lady, the Vice President, and Mrs. Gore will then be announced into the East Room and will proceed to the head table.

NOTE: The guests will be seated around a U-shaped table. On the table there will be tent cards for each guest with their names and the organizations they represent.

- You will make remarks.
- You, the First Lady, the Vice President, and Mrs. Gore will then proceed to your seats.
- You will then introduce the First Lady who will open the first discussion. The theme of this discussion is the "Importance of Television as a Positive Force in Child Development."
- You will then conclude the first discussion and introduce Mrs. Gore.
- Mrs. Gore will open the second discussion. The theme of this discussion is "Models of Success in Children's Educational Programming."
- You will conclude the second discussion and introduce the Vice President.
- The Vice President will open the third discussion. The theme of this discussion is "Overcoming Barriers to Producing More and Better Children's Television."
- You will then conclude the third discussion and make closing remarks.
- You, the First Lady, the Vice President, and Mrs. Gore will then depart.

VI. REMARKS

Your remarks will be provided.

Brief Bios On Conference Participants

Anstrom, Decker-

Decker Anstrom is President and CEO of the National Cable Television Association. Previously, Anstrom served as senior staff member at the Office of Management and Budget and as Assistant Director of the White House Office of Presidential Personnel.

Baker, Barry-

Barry Baker was the President, CEO, and co-founder of River City Broadcasting, which recently merged with Sinclair Broadcast Group. Baker will now serve as President and CEO of Sinclair Communications. In March 1995, Baker was installed as chairman of the Television Bureau of Advertising's board of directors.

Bewkes, Jeff-

Jeff Bewkes, the Chief Executive Officer and President of HBO, was recently also named Chairman in November of 1995. In addition, he is a member of the managing committee of Comedy Central, a trustee of the Walter Kaitz Foundation, and a member of the National Cable Television Association Board of Directors and the Cable Academy Board of Governors.

HBO participated with a Canadian company in producing a series of short films entitled the "Composer's Specials," a series of short films featuring a classical composer and his friendship with a child. The series has won numerous awards, including a 1993 Primetime Emmy for Outstanding Children's Program for "Beethoven Lives Upstairs."

Britt, David-

David Britt has been the President and Chief Executive Officer of Children's Television Workshop (CTW) since 1990, after joining the company in 1971 as assistant director of a CTW project. He is also a trustee of CTW. In 1993 he was elected to serve as the first Chairman of the Board of Governors for the American Center for Children's Television, an organization promoting excellence in television programming. In 1996, he was elected to be a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Burton, LeVar-

LeVar Burton, who is best known for his role as Lt. Commander Geordi LaForge on the TV series "Star Trek: The Next Generation," is also the host and co-executive producer of the PBS series "Reading Rainbow." The show introduces children to the world of reading and books. In February, President Clinton nominated Burton to the U. S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, which advises the White House and Congress on domestic and foreign library and information services, policies, and plans.

Burton was a board member of the National Endowment for Children's Educational Television created by the Children's Television Act, which did not receive funding over the last two years by Congress.

Chapman, Gary-

Gary Chapman is President and CEO of LIN Television Corporation. LIN-TV is a partner with Disney in the widely acclaimed children's program "Bill Nye the Science Guy." Chapman is on the Board of Directors for the Broadcast Pioneers Library and the Association for Maximum Service Television.

Charren, Peggy-

Peggy Charren founded Action for Children's Television (ACT), a national advocacy organization, in 1968. The 10,000 member group works to encourage program diversity and eliminate commercial abuses in children's television. ACT promote awareness of issues relating to children's television through national conferences, publications, public education campaigns, dialogue with broadcasters, and petitions to federal regulatory agencies. Charren owns and operates Quality Book Fairs, a company that organizes children's book fairs. She also was the co-author of The TV Smart Book for Kids, and Changing Channels: Living (Sensibly) with Television, and is the author of Television, Children, and the Constitutional Bicentennial.

Cosby, Bill-

Bill Cosby is a well-known actor, TV spokesman, writer, and comedian. For eight years he starred on the TV hit, "The Cosby Show," and in 1994 he began his most recent series, "The Cosby Mysteries." His books include Fatherhood, Time Flies, Childhood, and Love and Marriage. He has released 21 comedy and musical albums. Along with partners Tom Werner and Marcy Carsey, he helped produce "A Different World," which aired on NBC for seven seasons.

Cohen, Betty-

Betty Cohen is the President of Cartoon Network Worldwide and TNT International. In addition, she oversees the educational division of Turner Broadcasting -- Turner Educational Services, Inc. -- which provides selected company resources for use in the classroom. Ms. Cohen also sits on the Board of Governors of the American Center for Children's Television.

Duggan, Ervin-

Ervin Duggan has been the President and CEO of the Public Broadcasting Service since February 1994, where he has committed himself to bringing innovation to education and technology. He was instrumental in the creation of PTV, The Ready to Learn Service of PBS, which helps parents use television to prepare children for school. Duggan was nominated to the FCC by former President George Bush and helped shape policies governing the convergence of broadcasting, cable, satellite, telephone, and computer technologies.

As President of PBS, Duggan has made on-line and other new media educational services a priority. PBS announced a full 6 hours of preschool programming last year. The average PBS station carries 6 hours of educational children's programming every day. PBS has new children's programming in the works, including "Kratts Creatures," a family wildlife adventure series, and "Arthur", a 30-episode daily series about growing up and exploring the world.

Peter Eio-

Peter Eio is President of Lego Systems.

Ellerbee, Linda-

Linda Ellerbee's production company, Lucky Duck Productions, has earned the reputation as a supplier of outstanding children's programming through the TV news and documentary series, "Nick News," which Ellerbee produces, writes, and hosts. The series has dealt with topics as diverse as the conflict in Bosnia, toy guns, domestic violence, and immigration. Ellerbee has received most of TV's highest honors, including several Emmy, Peabody, CableACE, and Columbia duPont Awards. For three years in a row she has been honored by the Television Critics Association for her outstanding achievement in children's programming. Ellerbee's book, And So It Goes, remained on the New York Times bestseller list for five months.

Engel, Peter-

Peter Engel is Chairman of Peter Engel Productions, a subsidiary of NBC which produces children's programming. He joined NBC in 1986 and is the executive producer of such NBC series as "Saved By The Bell: The New Class," "Hang Time," and "California Dreams." Engel has received the Golden Eagle Award, The Humanitas Programs Award, and The Angel Award.

Failde, Augusto-

August Failde is the co-founder and President of Tropix Media, Inc. The company pursues new media ventures targeting the fast-growing U.S. Hispanic and Latin American markets. Failde has successfully assisted several of the country's leading entertainment corporations to leverage their assets into Latino markets at home and abroad.

Frank, Rich-

Rich Frank is President of the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences and the chairman and CEO of C3, a company that he created with cable television/telecommunications giant Comcast Corporation. Frank established the Academy's "Campaign Against Substance Abuse," which dramatically changed the portrayal of drug use in television programming, and he participated in the 1988 White House Conference for a Drug Free America.

Frank made a dramatic speech at a recent National Association of Broadcasters convention calling on this fellow television industry players to make a stronger commitment to children's television. He supports the three hour minimum.

Fritts, Edward-

Eddie Fritts is the President and CEO of the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB). NAB is the largest organization of television and radio broadcasters in the U.S. Mr. Fritts holds seats on the Advertising Council and the National Commission Against Drunk Driving. In 1988 he received the first University of Mississippi Silver Mike Award for his significant contributions to the field of broadcast journalism.

Goodmon, James-

Jim Goodmon is the owner and President of Capitol Broadcasting Co. Capitol owns and operates WRAL-TV (an NBC affiliate), WRAL Mix 101.5, and a new TV station, WRAZ channel 50. Goodmon owns two local minor league sports franchises, the Raleigh Flyers soccer team, and the Durham Bulls baseball team. He is on the Board of Directors for the North Carolina Public Television Foundation and the North Carolina Partnership for Children.

Hedlund, James-

James Hedlund is President of the Association of Local Television Stations.

In many markets the independent stations are the only stations that carry any children's programming during the week. Most of it is cartoons that are purely entertaining, but they have begun to carry some educational programming as well. In 1993 the ALTS (then INTV) filed comments with the FCC advocating a minimum requirement of 2 hours per week (only one hour of core programming). They argued that it was important for broadcasters to have certainty and a level playing field. Soon after filing they have been drawn back into the NAB position of opposition.

Hoffman, Neil-

Neil Hoffman is Vice President of Programming for USA Network.

Huston, Aletha-

Aletha Huston is University Distinguished Professor of Human Development at the University of Kansas and Co-Director of the University's Center for Research on the Influence of TV on Children. Professor Huston's book, Big World, Small Screen: The Role of Television in American Society, won the award for Distinguished Contribution to Psychology and the Media from the Division of Media Psychology of the American Psychological Association. She has conducted research on television and children since 1970, when she carried out a groundbreaking field experiment investigating the effects of pro-social television and violent programs for the Surgeon General's Scientific Advisory Committee on Television and Social Behavior.

Jaffe, Karen-

Karen Jaffe is Executive Director of KidsNet, a computerized clearinghouse for children's television and radio. This information service currently serves subscribers in the U.S. and abroad including schools, libraries, public TV stations, cable access stations, hospitals, regional media centers and state agencies, as well as producers, distributors, syndicators, cable MSOs, education and industry associations, and public, commercial TV and cable networks.

Jamieson, Kathleen Hall-

Kathleen Hall Jamieson is a Professor of Communications and Dean of the Annenberg School for Communications at the University of Pennsylvania. Ms. Jamieson has also established herself as an author, writing four books. One of these, Packaging the Presidency, won the Speech Communication Association's Golden Anniversary Book Award. Her book Eloquence in an Electronic Age received the Winans-Wichelns Book Award.

Jamieson has headed up the effort at Annenberg to play a role in children's television

issues. She worked with Peggy Charren to propose an Annenberg Blue Ribbon Commission to judge the quality of children's educational programs; the Vice President attended their press conference announcing this Commission. The premise of the Commission is that with a respected independent third party involved, parents will be able to get information about program quality, and the FCC can rely on experts and independent sources to determine whether programs are truly educational.

Johnson, Lucy-

Lucy Johnson is Senior Vice President for Daytime and Children's Programs and Special Projects at CBS Entertainment.

Jones, Philip A.-

Philip Jones serves as President of the Meredith Broadcasting Group, which includes directing the day-to-day operations of Meredith's seven television stations. Jones is Joint Board Chairman of the NAB (National Association of Broadcasters). He serves on the boards of directors of Broadcast Music, Inc., the Television Operators Caucus, and Maximum Service Television, Inc.

Kellner, Jamie-

Jamie Kellner is a founder and the CEO of Warner Brothers Television Network. "Kids' WB!" has rapidly become the second most popular broadcast children's network, carrying programs like Steven Spielberg's Emmy-winning "Animaniacs." In 1985 he became President of the Fox Broadcasting Company and was instrumental in the creation of the Fox Children's Network.

Kleeman, David-

David Kleeman is the Executive Director of the American Center for Children's Television. The Center sponsors the Ollie Awards for excellence in children's programming. The Center works towards excellence in children's media by creating opportunities for skill development and experience exchange among TV, new media, education, research, and child development experts. In 1995 Kleeman was appointed by the Secretary of Commerce to the National Advisory Council on Children's Educational Television. He is the co-founder of the World Alliance of Television for Children. From 1983-1988, Kleeman worked with the Public Broadcasting Service, developing and acquiring children's and cultural programs, and later served as second-in-charge of national scheduling.

Krisel, Gary-

Gary Krisel is a principle with Dreamworks SKG and heads the studio's television animation division. The newest project for Dreamworks is Dreamworks Interactive, an effort in conjunction with Microsoft to create computer games and interactive stories to be produced within the year.

Dreamworks has deals to supply programming to CBS and ABC (now part of Disney). The studio has been seeking joint ventures with networks to produce children's television

programming. Children's programming was so important to Disney that it struck a side agreement in July -- separate from the acquisition deal with ABC -- enabling the studio to control ABC's Saturday morning children's fare as early as this fall.

Laybourne, Geraldine-

Geraldine Laybourne was named President of Disney/ABC Cable Networks in late 1995, after spending fifteen years with Nickelodeon. One of the hallmarks of her tenure at Nickelodeon was the inclusion of children in focus groups when planning new shows. In 1995 she and Nickelodeon were honored with The Spotlight Award from the Creative Coalition for "The Big Help," a national grassroots campaign designed to encourage children to volunteer in their communities. In 1995 she was inducted into the Broadcasting & Cable Hall of Fame. In April she was honored with the New York Women in Communications 1996 Matrix Award for Broadcasting.

Laybourne recently called on advertisers to set aside 10% of their ad budgets for educational shows. She has been praised for successfully introducing positive female TV characters.

ABC plans to overhaul its Saturday morning lineup with a lot of help from new owner Disney, to "be very aggressive in going after the youth market over the next few years," according to ABC President Robert Iger. ABC's fall schedule calls for 60 percent of the Saturday morning programs to be produced by Disney. The lineup includes "Flash Forward," a kids comedy about the social misadventures of 13-year-olds. Also coming from Disney is "The Mighty Ducks," a new animated series that is loosely inspired by two Disney comedy films of the same title. However, this animated series is about "crime-fighting, hockey-playing alien ducks from outer space." ABC will also add "Brand Spanking New Doug," a series based on the popular animated "Doug" series that has aired on Nickelodeon.

Loesch, Margaret-

Margaret Loesch is the founding President of Fox Children's Network. Loesch handpicked such shows as "X-Men," "Goosebumps," the Emmy-Award winning "Where in the World is Carmen San Diego," and "Mighty Morphin Power Rangers." Before going to Fox, Loesch was the President and CEO at Marvel Productions, working with the "Jim Henson's Muppet Babies," and "GI Joe." Loesch was also the Executive Vice President for Programming at Hanna-Barbera Productions and developed the Emmy-Award winning series, "The Smurfs."

Loesch was responsible for the roll-out of the Cub House children's educational programming block each weekday at 8:30 am on FOX. This was the first weekday educational programming on any network since "Captain Kangaroo" went off the air. Many FOX affiliates do not carry this network-provided programming, instead carrying local news programs during that part of the day; some carry it later in the afternoon. In the D.C. market, FOX carries "Bobby's World," which is not its strongest educational program.

MacDonald, Anne-

Anne MacDonald is Vice President for Consumer Marketing with Pizza Hut World Wide.

Mahmoud, Cindy-

Cindy Mahmoud currently serves as the Vice President of Development & Special Projects at Black Entertainment Television (BET). She is responsible for developing such programs as "Teen Summit," "StoryPorch," and "Kimboo & Kids." Ms. Mahmoud was the first African-American female program executive in the history of commercial television. She has won many awards, including Emmies, Irises, CEBA Awards, three Parent's Choice Awards, Five NEA Awards, and two San Francisco state awards.

Markell, Virginia-

Ginny Markell serves as the National PTA Vice President for Programs. She is a former Health & Welfare Commission Chairman of the National PTA. Currently Markell is also a member of the Communications/Marketing Committee, the Headquarters Committee and chairs the Screening Committee.

PTA was one of first groups to testify on the issue of children and television at hearings in the 1950s. They have been outspoken advocates ever since.

McHale, Judith-

Judith McHale is the President and COO of Discovery Communications, Inc. McHale serves on the U.S. Department of State's Advisory Committee on International Communications and Information Policy. She also serves on the Board of Directors for the Congressional Award Foundation, Cable in the Classroom, and Cabletelevision Bureau.

Discovery Communications has recently purchased 117 Nature Company and Scientific Revolution stores around the country. The Discovery Channel hopes to launch five cable networks this year, including a cable channel called Animal Planet, a 24-hour channel featuring children's programming and nature documentaries.

Meers, Robert-

Robert Meers is President and CEO of Reebok.

Meidel, Greg-

Greg Meidel was named Chairman of the MCA Television Group in October 1995. In that capacity, he is responsible for managing all aspects of MCA's television business. Prior to joining MCA, Meidel was President and Chief Operating Officer of Fox Television's Twentieth Television.

Minow, Newton-

Newt Minow served as Chairman of the FCC under President Kennedy. Among other things, he is well-known for having first referred to television as "the vast wasteland."

Montgomery, Kathryn-

Kathryn Montgomery is Co-Founder and President of the Center for Media Education, a Washington, D.C.-based public interest organization dedicated to educating the public and policymakers about critical media issues. The Center's Campaign for Kids' TV is aimed at

improving the quality of children's television and empowering parents and educators to deal more effectively with the media. Dr. Montgomery wrote a book, Target: Prime Time, which is a key work on the relationships between advocacy groups and network entertainment television.

Myers, Jack-

Jack Myers is Chairman and CEO of Television Programming Partners.

Nye, Bill-

Bill Nye is the host and head writer of the hit children's TV series "Disney Presents Bill Nye the Science Guy." In three seasons the show has been awarded two 1996 Daytime Emmy Awards, two Silver Apple Awards, three Parent's Choice Awards (1993, 1994, 1995), an Environmental Media Award, and a National Education Association Award. Nye's own science career is also off to a start, as he was just issued a patent for his collapsible, water-filled magnifying glass.

Nye's show got started with funding from the National Science Foundation and now has funding from Buena Vista Television (Disney) and the Seattle public television station. Here in DC it is carried at 6 a.m. on channel 50 (Warner Brothers) and on two public television stations. Nye can speak well about the issue of why educational programs don't get good ratings. He could explain that in those markets where the program is on regularly, is not routinely preempted (by, for example, sports broadcasts), and is promoted by the station, the ratings are substantially higher than they are in markets where these efforts are not made.

Perry, Jennifer-

Jennifer Perry is the Executive Director of the Children's Action Network (CAN). CAN serves as the entertainment industry's voice for children. It informs the public about the needs of children by mobilizing the Hollywood community and marshalling the immense power of TV and film. CAN has also been involved with a number of major campaigns to improve the welfare of children. Perry has co-produced several special programs including, "Through our Eyes," an award-winning video on the changing American family, and "Listen Up: Young Voices For Change," a KCBS television special in response to the April 1992 unrest in Los Angeles county.

Phillips, Robert-

Dr. Robert Phillips is Deputy Medical Director of the American Psychiatric Association and serves as Director of the APA Offices of Psychiatric Services and Minority and National Affairs. He has done work with the Justice Department, the National Institute of Mental Health and the Center for Mental Health Services. In May 1993 he was selected as a distinguished Psychiatric Lecturer of the American Psychiatric Association.

Poussaint, Alvin-

Alvin Poussaint is currently a Clinical Professor of Psychiatry and Faculty Associate Dean for Student Affairs at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Poussaint is also the Director of the Media Center for Children at the Judge Baker Children's Center in Boston. Poussaint is a

prominent spokesman on race relations in America. His books include Why Black Kill Blacks and Black Child Care. Poussaint was also a consultant for "The Cosby Show."

Price, Nelson-

Until recently Nelson Price was the President and CEO of Faith & Values Cable Network. He is a trustee and the founding incorporator of National Interfaith Cable Coalition, Inc. The Coalition has grown from having a dozen faith group members to over sixty. The number of cable households it reaches increased from 10 million to 26 million in March 1996. Mr. Price has served on the Communications Commission of the National Council of Churches since the early 1960's.

Rideout, Victoria-

Vicky Rideout is the Director of the Children and the Media Program at Children Now, one of the nation's leading nonpartisan children's groups. Through independent research, policy advocacy, public education, and an annual conference of media industry leaders, Children Now works to improve the quality of news and entertainment media for and about children.

Rodriguez, Ray-

Ray Rodriguez is the President and Chief Operating Officer of Univision Television Network, the nation's leading Spanish-language television broadcasting company. In 1993 Mr. Rodriguez was appointed by the Governor of Florida to serve on the Florida Entertainment Commission. He serves on the board of directors of several organizations, including the United Way, and on the board of the Television Ratings Implementation Group.

Rogers, Fred-

Fred Rogers originated and hosts PBS's longest running program, "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood." The show is produced by Rogers' Pittsburgh-based nonprofit organization, Family Communication, Inc. Select episodes of "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood" were just released as part of the CBS/Fox video series. Rogers has received numerous television awards, including a George Foster Peabody Award.

Sarsen, John Jr.-

John Sarsen, Jr. has been President and CEO of the Association of National Advertisers since May of 1994. He is a member of the Board of Directors of The Advertising Council, Advertising Educational Foundation, Advertising Research Foundation, National Advertising Review Council, and World Federation of Advertisers.

Scannell, Herb-

Herb Scannell joined Nickelodeon in 1988, beginning as a director of programming. In 1990 he was promoted to Vice President of Programming and Development. This year he was appointed President of Nickelodeon Networks, succeeding Geraldine Laybourne. This puts Mr. Scannell in charge of creative and business operations, domestically and internationally, and daytime children's programming.

Schwartz, Sander-

Sander Schwartz is Senior Vice President of Columbia Children's Programming.

Sie, John-

John Sie is the Chairman and CEO of Encore Media Corporation (EMC) and the International Channel. John Sie is also the founder of WAM!, a children's TV channel and subsidiary of EMC. In 1982 Sie was awarded the Robert H. Beisswenger Memorial Award (Vanguard Associates Award) by the National Cable Television Association (NCTA). In 1986 he was honored with the Grand Tam Award from the Cable Administration and Marketing Society. Sie is currently a member of the Board of Governors of the National Academy of Cable Programming, the NCTA's Satellite Network Committee, and Honorary Chair of Cable Positive.

Steyer, James-

James Steyer is the founder and CEO of JP Kids, a new multiple-media venture striving to serve the educational and pro-social needs of children. Currently, JP Kids is focusing its efforts on television programming and multiple media for kids.

Thomas, Elizabeth-

Elizabeth Thoman is Founder and Executive Director of the Center for Media Literacy.

Valenti, Jack-

Jack Valenti is President and Chief Executive Officer of the Motion Picture Association of America. Prior to his involvement with the MPAA, Valenti had a successful career in advertising and was a Special Assistant in the Johnson Administration. Mr. Valenti has written several books and was awarded the Legion D'Honneur by the French Government.

Vanderwerff, Whitney-

Whitney Vanderwerff joined the National Alliance for Non-Violent Programming in 1993 and currently serves as its executive director. The Alliance is a non-profit network of national women's organizations created solely to provide community options to address media violence. She not only develops and implements the Alliance's programs in broad-based community coalitions, but she delivers presentations and conducts hands-on programs focusing on media literacy as violence prevention.

DRAFT 7/26/96 6:00 P.M. VERSION A₄

PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
OPENING STATEMENT FOR CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING SUMMIT
THE WHITE HOUSE
JULY 29, 1996

We gather here with a clear purpose: To improve and expand educational television for our children.

I believe this is a positive and hopeful time...an age of enormous possibility...a chance for us to build a country and a world that is stronger and safer and more full of opportunity than any that existed before.

Our success in the next century depends on building strong families today. In the State of the Union, I challenged us to do everything in our power to strengthen our families...to help our parents raise decent, responsible, well-educated children, committed to our basic values. That is why we have worked so hard to give American families more control over one of the most influential forces in our country: Television.

Television is part of our landscape: A typical child watches 25,000 hours of television before his or her 18th birthday. Preschoolers watch 28 hours of television a week -- Presidents, nearly that much.

We have dedicated ourselves to giving parents the power to screen out the television they know their children should not see. I signed the V-Chip into law -- and now parents can stop programs with explicit sexuality and violence from coming into their homes. You in the entertainment industry did your part. Meeting in this very room 5 months ago, you volunteered to rate shows for content. You came together as responsible corporate citizens to give America's families an early-warning system; parents who use the V-Chip will now be able to block objectionable shows before it's too late. Together, these initiatives constitute an invaluable arsenal for America's parents.

But that is only half the battle. As Americans, we do not define ourselves by what we stand against -- but by what we stand for. When we tear down the bad, we have never been content to leave just emptiness behind. We have always wanted to leave something beautiful in its place.

That is what we must do today. With your help, we have made progress cleaning up the television that is harmful to our children. Now we have the opportunity to use those same airwaves for something good: Educational programming that is as great as our kids are.

Television can be a strong and positive force. It can help children learn to count, read, and think. It can reinforce, rather than undermine, the values we work so hard to teach our children -- showing kids every day what it means to share, to respect themselves and others,

to take responsibility for their actions, even to recognize that it's not easy being green.
[Kermit the Frog.]

So this morning, I would like to hear from you about what we can do to broaden the spectrum of quality educational programming for children. I hope we can focus on 3 specific issues. First, I'd like to talk about the new research that shows how kids can learn valuable lessons from TV over the course of their young lifetimes. Second, I'd like to find out more about what good shows look like. And third, I'd like us to talk about how we can break down the barriers to the development and production of quality educational programming for children.

Before we begin, I would like to make an announcement. For the past year, I have been calling on the Federal Communications Commission to require broadcasters to air a minimum of 3 hours of genuine educational programming a week. 3 hours a week -- 180 minutes a week, about 2.5% of the entire schedule.

Such a requirement would halt a steep and troubling slide. In 1984, the 3 major networks aired 11 hours a week of children's educational and informational shows. By 1990, they were down to 2 hours a week. [WHAT NOW?]. The airwaves that broadcasters use belong to us all. In exchange for their use, broadcasters are required to serve the "public interest." I cannot imagine anything that serves the public interest better than seeing to it that we give our children at least 3 hours of educational television a week.

That's why it gives me such pleasure to announce that the 4 major networks, the National Association of Broadcasters, and some of the leading advocates for educational television have joined together to support the FCC's proposal for 3 hours of quality educational programming. Now all the FCC has to do is pass the measure, and the 3-hour rule will be the law of the land. Then we will prove in living color that the powerful medium of television can be a tool to build young lives up rather than tear them down.

We have become too used to talking about television as a scourge -- it either fills our children's heads with bad values or vacuums out their best thoughts. Today, let us work to reimagine television as a force for good. Let us dare to imagine what children's television would look like if it resembled what you all probably imagined it could be when you were children or when you first got started in this business.

In the last week, as families have gathered together to watch the Olympics, we have been reminded of all the good television can bring into our homes. It can bring us together. It can inspire and educate us. This must be our standard. Let's get to work.

DRAFT 7/26/96 6:00 P.M. VERSION B

PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
OPENING STATEMENT FOR CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING SUMMIT
THE WHITE HOUSE
JULY 29, 1996

We gather here with a clear purpose: To improve and expand educational television for our children.

I believe this is a positive and hopeful time...an age of enormous possibility...a chance for us to build a country and a world that is stronger and safer and more full of opportunity than any that existed before.

Our success in the next century depends on building strong families today. In the State of the Union, I challenged us to do everything in our power to strengthen our families...to help our parents raise decent, responsible, well-educated children, committed to our basic values. That is why we have worked so hard to give American families more control over one of the most influential forces in our country: Television.

Television is part of our landscape: A typical child watches 25,000 hours of television before his or her 18th birthday. Preschoolers watch 28 hours of television a week -- Presidents, nearly that much.

We have dedicated ourselves to giving parents the power to screen out the television they know their children should not see. I signed the V-Chip into law -- and now parents can stop programs with explicit sexuality and violence from coming into their homes. You in the entertainment industry did your part. Meeting in this very room 5 months ago, you volunteered to rate shows for content. You came together as responsible corporate citizens to give America's families an early-warning system; parents who use the V-Chip will now be able to block objectionable shows before it's too late. Together, these initiatives constitute an invaluable arsenal for America's parents.

But that is only half the battle. As Americans, we do not define ourselves by what we stand against -- but by what we stand for. When we tear down the bad, we have never been content to leave just emptiness behind. We have always wanted to leave something beautiful in its place.

That is what we must do today. With your help, we have made progress cleaning up the television that is harmful to our children. Now we have the opportunity to use those same airwaves for something good: Educational programming that is as great as our kids are.

Television can be a strong and positive force. It can help children learn to count, read, and think. It can reinforce, rather than undermine, the values we work so hard to teach our children -- showing kids every day what it means to share, to respect themselves and others,

to take responsibility for their actions, even to recognize that it's not easy being green.
[Kermit the Frog.]

So this morning, I would like to hear from you about what we can do to broaden the spectrum of quality educational programming for children. I hope we can focus on 3 specific issues. First, I'd like to talk about the new research that shows how kids can learn valuable lessons from TV over the course of their young lifetimes. Second, I'd like to find out more about what good shows look like. And third, I'd like us to talk about how we can break down the barriers to the development and production of quality educational programming for children.

Before we begin, I want to mention one other issue that is of great concern to all of us in this room and to families across the country. Not only must we create better programming -- we must see to it that it gets on the air. For the past year, I have been calling on the Federal Communications Commission to require broadcasters to air a minimum of 3 hours of genuine educational programming a week. 3 hours a week -- 180 minutes a week, about 2.5% of the entire schedule.

Such a requirement would halt a steep and troubling slide. In 1984, the 3 major networks aired 11 hours a week of children's educational and informational shows. By 1990, they were down to 2 hours a week. [WHAT NOW?]. The airwaves that broadcasters use belong to us all. In exchange for their use, broadcasters are required to serve the "public interest." I cannot imagine anything that serves the public interest better than seeing to it that we give our children at least 3 hours of educational television a week.

That's why I am so disappointed that the FCC has not moved to make the 3-hour rule the law of the land. Seeing to it that our children have quality, educational TV is an urgent need that we dare not carry out in slow motion. I urge the FCC to pass the 3-hour rule. Then we will prove in living color that the powerful medium of television can be a tool to build young lives up rather than tear them down.

We have become too used to talking about television as a scourge -- it either fills our children's heads with bad values or vacuums out their best thoughts. Today, let us work to reimagine television as a force for good. Let us dare to imagine what children's television would look like if it resembled what you all probably imagined it could be when you were children or when you first got started in this business.

In the last week, as families have gathered together to watch the Olympics, we have been reminded of all the good television can bring into our homes. It can bring us together. It can inspire and educate us. This must be our standard. Let's get to work.

WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON CHILDREN'S TV SCRIPT

I. OPENING STATEMENT (standing at lectern)

THE PRESIDENT (Prepared remarks from David Shipley)

II. INFLUENCE OF TELEVISION ON CHILDREN

THE PRESIDENT INTRODUCES MRS. CLINTON.

MRS. CLINTON (Prepared remarks from Melanne Verveer)

MRS. CLINTON INTRODUCES DR. ALETHA HUSTON:

There is a growing body of information about the positive influence of television. We are fortunate this morning to have with us Dr. Aletha Huston, the co-author of the most recent of these studies. Dr. Huston and her husband, Dr. John Wright, are Directors of the Center for Research on the Influences of Television on Children at the University of Kansas.

Dr. Huston, you have been studying television and children for years, and your early studies confirmed what many of us experience in our own homes -- that educational programs help prepare preschool children for school. What findings from this most recent study do you think would be of greatest interest to parents?

Dr. Huston's presentation.

[Huston has conducted research on television and children since 1970, when she carried out a ground-breaking field experiment investigating the effects of pro-social television and violent programs for the Surgeon General's Scientific Advisory Committee on Television and Social Behavior.]

MRS. CLINTON POSES A QUESTION TO DR. PHILLIPS:

This study tells us that children do learn from television, but it might be helpful to understand why they learn. Dr. Robert Phillips from the American Psychiatric Association is with us, and at earlier discussions on this topic I have been struck by his insights into the power of television on children. Dr. Phillips, can you explain why the television can be such a powerful teaching tool?

Dr. Robert Phillips responds.

MRS. CLINTON POSES A QUESTION TO KATHLEEN HALL JAMIESON:

Another recent study that shed new light on the state of children's television was conducted by the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania under the direction of Kathleen Hall Jamieson. In addition, Dr. Jamieson recently announced the creation of a blue ribbon group to review programs designed for children and to identify those that do the best job.

Kathleen, you are immersed in this issue, what new information on the positive influence of television do you find most surprising?

Kathleen Hall Jamieson responds.

[Jamieson is a Professor of Communications and Dean of the Annenberg School for Communications at the University of Pennsylvania. She worked with Peggy Charren to propose an Annenberg Blue Ribbon Commission to judge the quality of children's educational programs; the Vice President attended their press conference announcing this Commission. The premise of the Commission is that with a respected independent third party involved, parents will be able to get information about program quality, and the FCC can rely on experts and independent sources to determine whether programs are truly educational.]

MRS. CLINTON POSES A QUESTION TO JACK VALENTI:

In February, Jack Valenti announced an industry initiative to rate television shows to help parents guide their children's viewing habits. Jack, can you give us an update on that project?

Jack Valenti responds.

MRS. CLINTON OPENS THE DISCUSSION. Suggested individuals to call on:

Margaret Loesch, President, FOX Children's Network

[Margaret Loesch is the founding President of Fox Children's Network. Loesch handpicked such shows as "X-Men," "Goosebumps," the Emmy-Award winning "Where in the World is Carmen San Diego," and "Mighty Morphin Power Rangers." Loesch was responsible for the roll-out of the Cub House children's educational programming block each weekday at 8:30 am on FOX. This was the first weekday educational programming on any network since "Captain Kangaroo" went off the air. The average FOX affiliate shows an average of 4 hours a week of educational kids programming.]

Dr. Alvin Poussaint, Professor of Psychiatry, Judge Baker Children's Center.

[Dr. Poussaint is the Director of the Media Center for Children at the Judge Baker Children's Center. He also was a consultant to the Cosby Show.]

MRS. CLINTON OPENS THE DISCUSSION TO ALL PARTICIPANTS.

THE PRESIDENT CONCLUDES THE DISCUSSION:

Talking Points:

o We have been reminded today that television can just as readily be a powerful positive force in our culture as it can be a negative force.

o As parents, and citizens, we need to act accordingly and make sure that we harness that force in ways that contribute to the development of our children.

III. WHAT MAKES A SUCCESSFUL CHILDREN'S TELEVISION PROGRAM?

THE PRESIDENT INTRODUCES MRS. GORE.

MRS. GORE (Prepared remarks from Skila Harris)

MRS. GORE POSES A QUESTION TO BILL COSBY:

There is no one who's had more success in television than Bill Cosby. So I naturally want to go directly to him and ask a simple question: How do you make us love you so much?

Bill Cosby responds

MRS. GORE OPENS THE DISCUSSION by asking others why their programs have been successful. Suggested individuals to call on:

Bill Nye the Science Guy: One of the most popular shows at our house is all about science. We don't just watch it, we get all the equipment and re-create the experiments. But everyone knows the Vice President loves science. Oh yes...the children watch it too.

[In three seasons Nye's show has been awarded two 1996 Daytime Emmy Awards, two Silver Apple Awards, three Parent's Choice Awards (1993, 1994, 1995), an Environmental Media Award, and a National Education Association Award. The show got started with funding from the National Science Foundation and now has funding from Buena Vista Television (Disney) and the Seattle public television station. Here in DC it is carried at 6 a.m. on channel 50 (Warner Brothers) and on two public television stations.]

LeVar Burton: Every parent knows the joy of reading to a child.

LeVar Burton knows the joy of reading to thousands of children in the wonderful program "Reading Rainbow." Those who know him only from "Star Trek" need to know he is not just worried about the future of the universe, he is devoted to enhancing the future of children.

[LeVar Burton, who is best known for his role as Lt.

Commander Geordi LaForge on the TV series "Star Trek: The Next Generation," is also the host and co-executive producer of the PBS series "Reading Rainbow." The show introduces children to the world of reading and books. In February, President Clinton nominated Burton to the U. S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, which advises the White House and Congress on domestic and foreign library and information services, policies, and plans. Burton was a board member of the National Endowment for Children's Educational Television created by the Children's Television Act, which did not receive funding over the last two years by Congress.]

Mr. Fred Rogers: One face every child knows and loves is their best friend in the neighborhood -- Mr. Rogers.

David Kleeman, Executive Director of the American Center for Children's Television.

[Kleeman is involved with selecting the winner of the Ollie Award for excellence in children's programming. His organization has specific criteria for what it considers to be a "successful" children's program. In 1995 Kleeman was appointed by the Secretary of Commerce to the National Advisory Council on Children's Educational Television. He is the co-founder of the World Alliance of Television for Children.]

Geraldine Laybourne: One of the most successful developers of children's educational programs is Geraldine Laybourne, who made Nickelodeon a leader in children's television. ABC/Disney had the good sense to hire her.

[Laybourne was named President of Disney/ABC Cable Networks in late 1995, after spending fifteen years with Nickelodeon. One of the hallmarks of her tenure at Nickelodeon was the inclusion of children in focus groups when planning new shows. Laybourne recently called on advertisers to set aside 10% of their ad budgets for educational shows. She has been praised for successfully introducing positive female TV characters.]

Gary Chapman - President & CEO, LIN TV. LIN TV is a partner in "Bill Nye the Science Guy." As an owner of local stations, he has a unique view of what it takes to make a successful program.

David Britt - President and Chief Executive Officer of Children's Television Workshop (CTW). CTW produces "Sesame Street."

Peggy Charren, founder of Action for Children's Television and a leading children's TV advocate. Her view of what a successful program is reflects the advocates' perspective.

THE PRESIDENT CLOSES THE DISCUSSION:

Talking Points:

- o Success is in the eye of the beholder. Success can mean a show is profitable, that it teaches children, that it is a good merchandising vehicle or that it's renewed for another season.

- o All parties need to understand each others meaning of success and work to embrace as many of the various components as possible.

IV. BARRIERS TO MORE AND BETTER CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

THE PRESIDENT INTRODUCES THE VICE PRESIDENT

THE VICE PRESIDENT:

We know from the study released here today that educational television can help children learn. And we know from the successes described here today that we all know good children's programming when we see it.

The question for this last discussion is: Why don't see more of it? What are the barriers to the development and production of more and better children's educational programming, and how do we overcome them?

Linda Ellerbee has built a career on taking on hard issues. Her show "Nick News" provides youth with a different view of the world -- but I'm sure if it were easy to do, she wouldn't be doing it.

Linda Ellerbee responds.

[Ellerbee's production company, Lucky Duck Productions, has earned the reputation as a supplier of outstanding children's programming through the TV news and documentary series, "Nick News," which Ellerbee produces, writes, and hosts. The series has dealt with topics as diverse as the conflict in Bosnia, toy guns, domestic violence, and immigration.]

THE VICE PRESIDENT CALLS ON JAMIE KELLNER:

We're pleased to have here today Jamie Kellner, the CEO of Warner Brothers Television Network. Mr. Kellner and Warner Brothers are actively pursuing the family program market -- and something tells me they're not doing it to lose money or viewers.

Jamie Kellner responds.

["Kids' WB!" has rapidly become the second most popular broadcast children's network, carrying programs like Steven Spielberg's Emmy-winning "Animaniacs."]

THE VICE PRESIDENT CALLS ON JIM STEYER:

Just in the last week, J.P. Kids announced a major deal with the National Association of Broadcasters to produce a 30-minute children's magazine show. I would like to ask James Steyer, Founder and CEO, to discuss how this came about. (Jim was a panelist at the last year's Family Conference.)

Jim Steyer responds.

THE VICE PRESIDENT OPENS THE DISCUSSION. Suggested individuals to call on:

Judith McHale, President and Chief Operating Officer of Discovery Communications.

Rich Frank, President of the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences and the chairman and CEO of C3, a company that he created with cable television/telecommunications giant Comcast Corporation.

[Frank established the Academy's "Campaign Against Substance Abuse," which dramatically changed the portrayal of drug use in television programming, and he participated in the 1988 White House Conference for a Drug Free America. Frank made a dramatic speech at a recent National Association of Broadcasters convention calling on this fellow television industry players to make a stronger commitment to children's television. He supports the three hour minimum.]

Vicky Rideout, Director of the Children and the Media Program at Children Now. They recently hosted a meeting to address the quality of children's programming that specifically addressed the role of advertisers.

THE VICE PRESIDENT ENDS THE DISCUSSION.

V. **CLOSING REMARKS** (seated)

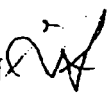
THE PRESIDENT



OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON

July 29, 1996

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT
THE VICE PRESIDENT
THE FIRST LADY
MRS. GORE

FROM: GREG SIMON 
SUBJECT: WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON CHILDREN'S TELEVISION

SUMMARY

You are meeting with key figures in children's television to promote more and better educational programming. We hope to announce that a compromise has been reached on a rule requiring three hours of educational programming per station per week. If there is no compromise, we will strongly urge action by the FCC. The conference will focus on the importance of television as a positive force in children's lives and education, the different keys to success of today's best shows, and the barriers that must be overcome to produce more and better programming.

BACKGROUND

The February Meeting

In the State of the Union, the President challenged Congress to pass the Telecommunications Act of 1996 that included the V-chip technology to empower parents to block objectionable programming from their homes. On February 29th, the President invited leaders of the entertainment industry to the White House to discuss how to provide families more and better information regarding television programming immediately and to discuss how to improve the quality and quantity of children's programming.

As a result of the meeting, the television industry initiated an effort, led by Jack Valenti, to develop a ratings system that would be compatible with the V-chip. Today's meeting addresses the second issue from the February summit -- providing more educational programming for children.

Children's Programming

The Children's Television Act of 1990 requires that broadcasters provide educational programs for children. For the first time it singled out children as a special audience that broadcasters must serve with special programming. (The Act also set a limit on the amount of commercial time during children's programming -- limiting it to 10.5 minutes per hour on weekends and 12 minutes per hour on weekdays.) In the years following passage of the Act, some broadcasters merely relabeled their existing cartoons as educational or claimed that shows like "The Jetsons" met the requirement.

For some time the FCC has been considering a rule to require broadcast stations to air three hours of children's educational programming per week pursuant to the Children's TV Act. In September 1995, the President sent a letter to the FCC supporting the rule. Representative Ed Markey has submitted to the FCC a letter signed by 260 House members supporting the three-hour rule.

The Commission has been deadlocked 2-2. A recent announcement by Commissioner Quello that he would support a three-hour rule fell through when he objected to the final proposal as too regulatory and relying on an objectionable legal analysis. The compromise now under consideration relies upon a "processing guideline" that avoids the prescriptive detail of a rule but provides clear incentives to do the three hours of regularly scheduled programming.

The processing guideline would allow broadcasters who air three hours of regularly scheduled thirty-minute programming to have the Children's Television Act portion of their license renewal application glide through at the staff level. Those who do less and rely instead on PSA's and specials could make the case to the staff that their programming package is equivalent to a three-hour package. Those who do less or who are deemed to have an insufficient package would have to go to the entire Commission for license approval at considerable cost of time and money.

CBS and FOX currently have agreed voluntarily to show three hours per week of children's TV. ABC and NBC have not. The National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) has vigorously opposed the rule. Children's advocates, Congressman Markey, Chairman Hundt and the Administration have strongly supported a rule, not a voluntary agreement, in light of the industry's creativity in avoiding airing more, truly educational fare.

Safe Harbor/Family Viewing

Senator Hollings has introduced a bill to require that no violent programming be shown at times when children are watching. This is modeled on the ban on indecent programming between 6:30 a.m. and 10 p.m. Senator Lieberman supports a voluntary code of conduct to require a family viewing hour between 8 and 9 p.m.

Previous attempts to require set family times were found to have constitutional problems. While supporting the idea of family viewing times, we have never endorsed these legislative efforts; we have focused instead on providing parents the information they need to control their children's viewing. If asked, we need to reaffirm that we don't think government should do this and that industry must take the lead.

Spectrum Auctions

There has been a considerable effort in the press to link the issue of TV ratings to the issue of digital spectrum auctions. Because we oppose such a linkage, we should oppose discussing the issue of spectrum auctions in the meeting. Our position has been to auction the returned analog spectrum after the conversion to digital television. **Whether the digital spectrum is auctioned or awarded to existing licensees, we have always supported requiring a higher standard of public service to accompany the licenses.**

Media Concentration

During the telecommunications debate, we opposed efforts to remove limits on media concentration. While we reluctantly accepted allowing one owner to own TV stations reaching 35% of the national market (up from 25%), we opposed allowing one owner to own two TV stations in the same market, to own an unlimited number of radio stations in one market, to own a TV station and a newspaper in the same market and to own a TV station and a cable company in the same market. We prevailed on those issues.

QUESTIONS ON CHILDREN'S TELEVISION

Q: When will the FCC make a decision on this issue?

A: The FCC could adopt the proposed compromise at its earliest business meeting. Those are currently scheduled for August 1st and August 8th. .

Q: If Congress, in passing the Act, did not require a specific number of hours of educational programming, why should the FCC mandate a number?

A: The Act did not require a minimum number in statute, but it did not preclude the FCC from setting a minimum number as a way to enforce the Act.

The lack of clear guidelines is leading to a lack of compliance with the act. The clear guidelines for commercial time limits has resulted in greater than 90% compliance with those limits. In addition, broadcasters, including the association of independent broadcasters (INTV) have argued that greater certainty is needed. INTV recommended a minimum of 2 hours a week.

Q: Why three hours a week?

A: The Administration is recommending a minimum of 3 hours -- and preferably more -- a week of programming specifically designed to educate. We hope that most broadcasters will air more than 3 hours a week of educational programming.

Although the NAB has testified that the average station airs 3.5 hours a week, many of these hours are filled with shows that are primarily entertainment programs rather than programs specifically designed to educate children.

We feel that 3 hours should be an absolute minimum, and hope that many broadcasters do more.

Q: Does educational programming actually make a difference? Why is it important?

A: Most parents know very well that their children learn from television. But studies over the years have found that educational programming contributes to children's success in school.

A recent study conducted at the University of Kansas found that half an hour a day of viewing educational programming had a positive impact on children's learning.

Q: What kinds of programs do you think are educational?

A: The Act states that educational programs can promote cognitive or social development. The key is whether the program was designed primarily with education in mind, or whether the program is primarily designed to entertain.

Most people are familiar with the more than 6 hours of educational programming every day on PBS. Much of that programming is definitely entertaining, but its primary purpose is to educate. Of course entertainment is required to keep kids attention, but the overall design, as in "Sesame Street" or "Cro," which used to be on ABC, is to get across an educational concept.

If you ask someone at "Sesame Street" what they are trying to teach, they can easily tell you, and it passes the laugh test. "The Jetsons" teaching about life in the 21st century does not. I think that is a good test.

Q: There are a lot of new children's programs on. Aren't broadcasters complying with this law voluntarily? Why a mandate or quota?

A: The FCC in its inquiry beginning March 1993 found that there had not been any significant change in the amount of educational children's programming. Take a look at the TV listings for today in Washington. Its almost impossible to find a single educational children's program on a commercial station during the entire day. That is not serving the public. That is a failure to meet their obligations to children under the law.

Effects of Early Childhood Media Use on Adolescent Achievement

A report by the staffs of the "Recontact" Project.

At the University of Massachusetts, Amherst:

Daniel R. Anderson, Ph.D.

Patricia A. Collins, Ph.D.

Kelly L. Schmitt, M.S.

At the University of Kansas, Lawrence:

Aletha C. Huston, Ph.D.

John C. Wright, Ph.D.

Elizabeth McElroy, M.A.

Deborah L. Linebarger, M.S.Ed.

The authors acknowledge the generous support of the Markle Foundation of New York City, and its President, Lloyd N. Morrisett. We are especially grateful to the more than 570 young people and their families in Springfield, Massachusetts, and Topeka, Kansas, who participated in this research both as preschool children, and much later as adolescents.

Executive Summary

Two groups of preschoolers were observed in separate studies during the early 1980s — one in Massachusetts and one in Kansas. In 1994, when they were 15 to 18 years old, these young people were interviewed, and their high school transcripts were obtained. One major purpose was to determine whether early viewing of educational television programs predicted later academic achievement.

The results support the hypothesis that curriculum-based child informative programs contribute to children's educational development. We call this the Early Learning model of TV effects. With statistical controls for parents' education, viewing of child informative programs during preschool was positively related to high school academic achievement, academic self concept, and the value the participants placed on academic attainment.

The results contradict the popular notion that preschool exposure to rapidly paced programming (especially *Sesame Street*) leads to reduced attention span and consequently to poor academic achievement, and disinterest in such activities as book reading. *Sesame Street* viewing was positively associated with academic achievement and book reading.

The findings also contradict the hypothesis that attractively produced children's educational television leads to an inattention to language and hence to poor language skills. *Sesame Street* viewing was positively related to preschool vocabulary and to a high school grades in English.

Viewing educational television in preschool appears to contribute to children's academic performance many years later. It is obvious that the content learned at age 5 cannot influence high school performance directly. Instead, a rich diet of educational television may help children to enter school with the academic skills required for the tasks they encounter, increasing the likelihood of early success. They may also have higher expectations for themselves and make a correspondingly greater investment of time and effort toward mastery of the knowledge and skills taught in school. Teachers may view such children as good students and offer them

Summary of *The Impact of the Children's Television Act*

This study examines the response of the television market to the Children's Television Act of 1990, in order to identify institutional, economic and attitudinal barriers to successful implementation of the law. Findings are based on interviews with producers, broadcasters, distributors and network executives involved in what the industry defines as educational programming. The interviews display definite patterns in promotion, production and scheduling for "FCC friendly" programs. Children's television often receives low budgets, inadequate promotion, and pre-dawn scheduling. This trend is particularly severe in the syndicated television market, making it impossible for high quality kids programming to really gain a foothold in the market. This study also concludes that regulation can help especially when followed by firm threat of enforcement. The Center for Media Education urges the Federal Communications Commission to adopt clearer and stronger regulations defining and protecting children's programming.

condensed from- *The Impact of the Children's Television Act on the Broadcasting Market*
by Patricia Aufderheide, Ph. D. and Kathryn Montgomery, Ph.D. (in attendance). Center for Media Education.

Summary of *Children Watching Television*

This report was a direct result of the May 1996 Children Now conference and expresses the need for advertisers and programmers to work together in favor of improved children's programming. They believe Congress should increase the amount of commercials permitted during educational programs by one minute per hour. Other suggestions include the idea that companies should use their financial weight to push positive programming into quality time slots, as well as development of a ratings system, separate from the Nielsen system, specifically for children's programming. Endorsement for a Children Now "seal of approval" on quality television was wide spread. Other opinions expressed were the fact that advertisers and networks should work together to give educational programming a complete makeover, including increased promotion for children's shows and network self-regulation for ad buying during educational programming.

condensed from- *Children Watching Television: The Role of Advertisers*. report by Children Now. supervised by Director Vicky Rideout (in attendance). July 1996.

Summary of *Making Television Ratings Work*

This report suggests rating systems designed for television, should not only apply to the age appropriateness of the program, but also to specific categories of advisories (i.e. sexual content, violence or adult language) maximizing the information available to parents. The report states that other than sports and hard news, all television programming should be rated and that those ratings must be more specifically age based than the current movie rating system; in addition, unlike the movie ratings, television ratings should be based on scientific data available from child development studies. Rating information must be published in a format easily accessible to parents in order to guarantee the success of a television rating system.

condensed from- *Making Television Ratings Work for Children and Families*. report by Children Now. supervised by Director Vicky Rideout (in attendance). June 1996.

Summary of *UCLA Television Violence Monitoring Report*

This report monitors television programming for inappropriate violent content and makes recommendations to the industry, the government, the schools, the parents and even the children about protecting kids from unnecessary exposure to violent programming. Primarily, they express the opinion that everyone is responsible for ensuring improvement in children's programming.

The study reports that violent television programming should only be aired after the eight o' clock hour or later, and promotions for this specific type of programming should not be aired during children's television shows. They also suggest that any theatrical movies containing 30- 50 scenes of violence or more and that television movies based on violent crimes should be eliminated from the programming schedule. Advisories need to be applied properly and regularly to this type of programming and networks should be responsible for creating commissions to enforce proper advisory notices for all violent programming. In conclusion, the Center calls on the government to present a unified front when attempting to regulate or deal with the television industry.

condensed from- *UCLA Television Violence Monitoring Report*. report by UCLA Center for Communications Policy. supervised by Director Jeffrey Cole. September 1995.

Summary of *Quality Time?*

The Task Force feels that public television must be re-invented to serve the public properly. Their report concludes that the mission of public television should be to enrich and strengthen American society by reinforcing our basic societal values. They believe the system of public television needs a large fundamental structural change including the elimination of federal funding for local stations. The Task Force believes federal funding should be put towards national programming and that individual stations should be supported by their communities. If federal funding was earmarked for national programming, then the Task Force would like to see the amount allotted raised and the source of the funding coming from non-taxpayer sources (i.e. spectrum auctions and spectrum usage fees). Educational programming must be expanded, while commercialization is cut back; delivery and dissemination of this quality programming must be upgraded as well. The Task Force is also of the opinion that the selection process for the Corporation Public Broadcasting board members must be improved by removing the process from political influence.

condensed from- *Quality Time?* report by The Twentieth Century Fund Task Force on Public Television. 1993.

Q: If Congress, in passing the Act, did not require a specific number of hours of educational programming, why should the FCC mandate a number?

A: The Act did not require a minimum number in statute, but it did not preclude the FCC from setting a minimum number as a way to enforce the Act.

Clearly, the lack of clear guidelines is leading to a lack of compliance with the act. The clear guidelines for commercial time limits has resulted in greater than 90% compliance with those limits. In addition, broadcasters, including the association of independent broadcasters (INTV) have argued that greater certainty is needed. INTV recommended a minimum of 2 hours a week.

Q: The NAB says that the Act specifically prohibits a minimum requirement for children's educational programming.

A: The Act makes it clear that Congress is not setting a minimum number of hours by statute. It does not preclude the FCC from setting a minimum number of hours.

Q: Why three hours a week?

The Administration is recommending a minimum of 3 hours a week, and preferably more, of programming specifically designed to educate. We hope that most broadcasters will air more than 3 hours a week of educational programming.

Although the NAB has testified that the average station airs 3.5 hours a week, many of these hours are filled with shows that are primarily entertainment programs rather than programs specifically designed to educate children.

We feel that 3 hours should be an absolute minimum, and hope that many broadcasters do more.

Q: Does educational programming actually make a difference? Why is it important?

Most parents know very well that their children learn from television. But studies over the years have found that educational programming contributes to children's success in school.

A recent study conducted at the University of Kansas found

that half an hour a day of viewing educational programming had a positive impact on children's learning.

What kinds of programs do you think are educational?

The Act states that educational programs can promote cognitive or social development. The key is whether the program was designed primarily with education in mind, or whether the program is primarily designed to entertain.

Most people are familiar with the more than 6 hours of educational programming every day on PBS. Much of that programming is definitely entertaining, but its primary purpose is to educate. Of course entertainment is required to keep kids attention, but the overall design, as in Sesame Street or Cro that used to be on ABC, is to get across an educational concept.

If you ask someone at Sesame Street what they are trying to teach, they can easily tell you, and it passes the laugh test. The Jetsons teaching about life in the 21st century does not. I think that is a good test.

There are alot of new children's programs on. Aren't broadcasters complying with this law voluntarily? Why a mandate or quota?

The FCC in its inquiry beginning March 1993 found that there had not been any significant change in the amount of educational children's programming. Take a look at the TV listings for today in Washington. Its almost impossible to find a single educational children's program on a commercial station during the entire day. That is not serving the public. That is a failure to meet their obligations to children under the law.

Doesn't FOX have a half hour a day of educational programming?

This year, for the first time since the 1970's, a network has on educational children's programming during the week. FOX has made a commitment to children with this programming. It is not on every affiliate, for example, it is not on in Washington, and that's too bad. But there daily programming, where it is on, is a great commitment to children.

How much educational programming do ABC, NBC and CBS have on for kids?

Of course the obligation is on the station license holder

not the network.

ABC used to have Cro - but they replaced it with Dumb and Dumber. NBC has Saved by the Bell and California Dreaming. CBS has the Little Mermaid and Its Your Adventure -- that's a great show. Some of these programs are stretching the definition of educational.

HISTORY

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) began regulating children's programming in 1960. In 1984, the FCC eliminated regulations governing children's programming that had been adopted over the years. Specifically, the FCC issued a broadcast deregulation order repealing many policies pertaining to both programming and advertising practices.

Television licensees were relieved of requirements to maintain program logs open to the public and to ascertain the program needs of their local community. Arguing that "marketplace forces can better determine appropriate commercial levels than our own rules," the FCC dropped long-standing commercial time guidelines, including guidelines for children's television.

In June, 1987, the U.S. Court of Appeals (D.C. Circuit) ruled that the FCC had not justified sufficiently its repeal of advertising guidelines for children's television and ordered the FCC to review its decision. (Action for Children's Television v. FCC, 821 F.2d 741, 744 (1987)).

In response to the remand, the FCC issued a Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking/Notice of Inquiry in 1987 seeking comments on the issue of commercialization guidelines for children's television. Although comments were filed by numerous parties, no FCC action was taken.

Why did the Act pass?

Congress reacted to the FCC deregulation and lack of action on children's commercial guidelines by passing a Children's Television Act in 1990. It was vetoed by President Reagan.

In 1990 Congress enacted the Children's Television Act. Noting the profound influence of television on children and the limited number of educational programs for children, Congress concluded that television broadcasters needed to do better in

providing positive informational programs for children. A report by Squire Rushnell, former vice president for children's programs at ABC-TV, found that the availability of educational programs for children had gone from approximately 11 hours per week on the average network in 1980, prior to deregulation, to approximately 1.5 hours per week in 1990.

In addition, Congress was concerned about the over-commercialization of children's television -- essentially, programs that were really half hour commercials for toys.

What were the requirements of the Act?

The Act contained the following two major provisions:

- 1) reinstatement of commercial time limits during children's programming to not more than 10.5 minutes/hour on weekends and not more than 12 minutes/hour on weekdays.

- 2) a requirement that commercial television broadcast licensees, as part of their public interest obligations, meet the educational and informational needs of the child audience through their overall programming as well as through programming specifically designed to meet the educational and informational needs of children.

What was the purpose of the Act?

The Act was designed to increase the amount of educational and informational television programming available to children and to protect children from over-commercialization of programming. In passing the Act, Congress noted that children's programming then consisted primarily of reruns of adult or family comedy, variety or dramatic programs. In addition, on average, each of the networks aired an after-school special one day a month during the school year and independent stations tended to offer programs to children during the week that consisted of animated cartoons, often with commercials for toys based on the program's characters associated with them.

The Act required licensees to demonstrate at renewal how they have served the educational and informational needs of children, including serving their cognitive/intellectual or social/emotional needs. Congress suggested that examples of educational or informational shows might include programs like "Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids" which dealt in a meaningful way for children with issues such as drugs, divorce, friendship and

child abuse.

The Act also required the FCC to complete its Rulemaking/Notice of Inquiry initiated in 1987 on program length commercials. The FCC was directed to consider the cognitive abilities of children in requiring sponsorship identification for children's broadcast material. The Act directed that commercials should be clearly separate from programs for children and that sponsorship identification must be presented in a manner reasonably designed to assist children in understanding it.

On April 12, 1991, the FCC issued a Report and Order defining a "program length commercial" as "a program associated with a product, in which commercials for that product area aired." The FCC stated that this distinction between programs and commercials in the form of programs "...directly addresses a fundamental regulatory concern, that children who have difficulty enough distinguishing program content from unrelated commercial matter, not be all the more confused by a show that interweaves program content and commercial matter." Program length commercials directed at the child audience are not permitted under the order.

How did broadcasters respond to the passage of the Act?

Broadcasters have testified that the average station now carries 3.5 hours every week of children's educational programming. Some of the network programs that are listed as educational include: Cro on ABC - recently replaced with Dumb and Dumber; NBC - Saved by the Bell, (some activists argue that this program is not designed to educate); CBS - Little Mermaid - some activists argue this is not primarily educational, CBS argues it teaches women to be independent; FOX - half hour every morning of CubHouse that most people agree is educational. Not every affiliate carries it, for example, DC affiliate does not.

What do activists say?

In September of 1992, the Center for Media Education (CME) released a study of stations' compliance with the Act. The study focused on what broadcasters submitted as programming specifically designed to meet the educational and informational needs of children. It contained three major findings:

* entertainment shows such as the Jetsons or Yo Yogi were being submitted as educational programming

* very few new programs for kids had been created since passage of the Act

* the few new programs often were aired at times inaccessible to children.

The CME study concluded that rather than add new programming designed to serve the educational and informational needs of children, many stations had simply redefined their existing children's programming as educational.

The study further concluded that those few stations that had created new educational programming generally were airing those programs at times inaccessible to the child audience. According to CME, nearly 60% of new programming developed to comply with the Act was scheduled between 5:30 and 7:00 a.m.

Finally, the CME study concluded that the FCC's reporting requirements allowed stations to combine shows that contain some elements of educational material, but that are primarily designed to entertain, with their listing of programs specifically designed to meet the educational needs of children. The reporting requirements also permitted stations to list programs designed for adults if they contained any information of interest to children, such as a Donahue program with teen-age guests that aired at 10:00 a.m. when kids were in school.

The CME suggested that FCC reporting requirements be revised to require that programs "specifically designed to meet the educational and informational needs of children" are listed separately from those programs that may contain educational information, but are designed primarily to entertain. CME further suggested that adult programs of interest to children should be listed separately from programming specifically targeted at the child audience.

Did the FCC in its inquiry find that broadcasters were complying with the Act?

On March 2, 1993, the FCC released a Notice of Inquiry (Notice) to examine whether stations were complying with the Act and whether reporting requirements should be changed to increase compliance with the law. That notice was followed by an NPRM which is pending.

In the Notice, the Commission reported that broadcasters are in substantial compliance with the commercial time limits

required under the Act. Specifically, the Commission noted that a January, 1992 field audit reviewing broadcaster and cable advertising practices found compliance rates exceeding 90 percent.

On the other hand, the Commission found that there had been virtually no response to the Act's requirements that stations provide educational programming, and that recent renewal applications show little change in available programming that addresses the needs of the child audience. The Commission noted:

- * The number of hours and the time slots devoted to children's programming do not appear to have substantially changed. Further, with few exceptions, the educational and informational programming broadcast appears to be those same few programs set forth in the legislative history for illustrative purposes.

- * Moreover, while practically all licensees filing renewal applications in the current renewal cycle have identified some regularly scheduled, standard-length children's programming aired during their license term, the amount of such programming is, in some cases, very limited. Many of these licensees place substantial reliance on short-segment vignettes and public service announcements to satisfy their [Children's Television Act] obligations.

In this review, the FCC found that while stations were nominally complying with regulations governing children's programming, there had been virtually no change in the amount or type of children's programming since passage of the Children's Television Act. The FCC stated that the level of performance of broadcasters was not, in the long term, consistent with the objectives of the Act. The Commission stated, however, that it did not attribute broadcaster performance to an unwillingness to comply or any intentional disregard for their responsibilities. Rather, the Commission suggested, broadcasters may remain uncertain as to the scope of their programming obligations.

The Commission stated its belief that broadcasters should place their primary reliance in establishing compliance with the Act on standard length programming that is specifically designed to serve the educational and informational needs of children. The Commission further stated that broadcasters should "focus on programming that has as its explicit purpose service to the educational and informational needs of children, with the implicit purpose of entertainment, rather than the converse."

The Commission sought comment on whether, to provide clearer guidance to licensees, it may be appropriate to adopt staff processing guidelines specifying an amount and type of children's programming that would facilitate the review of license renewal applications.

Excerpted Statements regarding Children's Television

President Clinton

July 18, 1996 (Remarks By The President At Ceremony For Boys And Girls Nation)

This month we're challenging members of the entertainment industry who have done a great job on this rating to come to the White House to talk about improving the quality and quantity of children's programming. So the industry is doing its part.

The truth is that what we need now is for the government to do its part. The Federal Communications Commission has had before it for a long time now a measure that would require broadcasters to put a minimum of three hours a week of quality educational children's programming on . . . It's less than two percent of the nation's air time.

The initiative is stalled, and some people have opposed it. But the airwaves clearly, under our law, are designed to promote the public interest. I can't imagine anything we could do that would better promote it than to put more quality educational programming for children on television. So I'd like to ask all of you to support that. And I hope very much that the Federal Communications Commission will finally act on it.

June 11, 1996 (Remarks By The President To The Community Of Glendale)

"And today, I want to formally reissue an invitation to the people from the entertainment industry involved in television to come back to the White House before the end of July to discuss that. If we can control, by ratings, give parents the power to deal with what their children are watching on television, surely, surely, we can agree to increase the content of children's television that goes to education."

Saturday, March 2, 1996 (Radio Address By The President To The Nation)

Like the movie ratings have done for 27 years, the ratings for television will help parents to guide their children's entertainment choices. The system will provide families with a standard they can rely on from show to show, from channel to channel. Parents are the best judges of what their children should and shouldn't see, and this new rating system will help them to make those critical judgments. The best programming director for our children is a parent.

At my meeting with the entertainment industry, we also discussed the need for more programming that is suitable for children, and that is educational and attractive to them. I want to preserve public broadcasting and the innovation it has brought in educational shows for children . . . We take the Children's Television Act seriously. We want to continue to work with the industry to do the very best we can for our children in both quantity and quality of children's programming.

January 23, 1996 (State of the Union Remarks)

"To the Media, I say you should create movies and CDs and television shows you'd want you own Children and grandchildren to enjoy."

Vice President Gore

June 11, 1996 (Joint Statement by Vice President Gore and Mrs. Gore)

We join in strong support of President Clinton's call today to bring together leaders of the major broadcast networks and leading developers of children's programming to discuss ways to improve the quality and quantity of children's television . . . We firmly believe that the industry also will meet the challenge put forward by President Clinton today. Families across America overwhelmingly support responsible, regular, and positive children's programming. We are confident that the leaders of the broadcast industry will respond to President Clinton's challenge and hear the demands of the American people for this type of programming, and we look forward to meeting with them to address this vital issue.

Mrs. Clinton

June 22, 1996 (National Parent Teachers Association 100th Convention)

"We simply must demand more of the people who are producing and profiting from the shows that young people watch . . . From my point of view, the very popular Mighty Morphin Power Rangers show, for example, has no place in any line up described as children's programming. "

"We must stop showing violent, harmful programs to our kids during their prime viewing hours; it is time for our media executives to show some greater responsibility for the children of America."

"As parents, we cannot wait for others to act. We are on the front lines and we have to take responsibility. We have to start in our own homes by making clear what is and is not acceptable television watching . . . We have to be willing to work with our schools as you have done to help families learn how to watch television critically and to raise questions so children know the difference between fantasy and reality."

March 4, 1996 (White House Meeting with Children's Television Advocates)

"What our children see on TV, as you know so well, colors their perception of the real world they live in and television can either warp or enrich our children's emotional and moral growth, and when parents, the entertainment industry and our political leaders

CHRONOLOGY

1987

Tipper Gore publishes Raising PG Kids in an X-Rated Society

1993

June

President sends letters to leaders of broadcast networks applauding their announcement of parental advisories for violence.

1994

March 25

TV Guide interview with President. About the V-chip: "Philosophically, I don't have a problem with it, because that's a matter of a parent controlling access to programming in the home and I think that's OK." About legislation to reduce TV violence: "I would prefer that we do it voluntarily, as a national cause, without legislation. Just work to channel the brilliance and the power of the entertainment industry to try to deal with these things."

1995

January

President in State of the Union calls on media industry to be more responsible in programming.

April 4-May 25

Vice President and Mrs. Gore host a series of dinners in preparation for Family Conference with academics; technology community; media industry leaders; entertainment industry leaders; television executives; and advertisers

June 15

President's statement on S.652 supports Senate's inclusion of V-chip in telecommunications reform legislation.

June 26

The First Lady hosts a White House event on children's television and public broadcasting.

July 9-10

President attends Family Conference hosted by Vice President and Tipper Gore in Nashville, Tennessee on "Family and the Media." He repeats support for V-chip legislation.

August 1

President's statement on H.R. 1555 threatens veto and criticizes House Commerce Committee for not including V-chip provision in telecommunications reform bill.

August 3

Vice President's statement on H.R. 1555 criticizes House Commerce Committee bill for not including V-chip.

September 18

President sends letter to FCC Commissioners supporting at least three hours per week per station of educational children's television.

work together and act responsibly ~~we can all~~ make sure that television becomes the enriching experience for children that it should be."

Mrs. Gore

March 4, 1996 (White House Meeting with Children's Television Advocates)

"We now have a new opening and a new opportunity. . . to use the group that you represent to join together at a new level of cooperation with your coalition that will work in behalf of children. We want there to be more and better programming for children."

October 20

President's letter to Sen. Hollings supports inclusion of V-chip in Conference report on telecommunications legislation.

December 20

Vice President issues statement congratulating Conference for including V-chip in telecommunications legislation conference report.

1996

The First Lady publishes It Takes a Village.

January 23

In State of the Union address, President calls upon Congress to pass the telecommunications bill with the V-chip provision, asks the industry to improve programming for children and invites industry to meet with him in the White House by end of February.

February 1

President's statement on passage of telecommunications reform legislation lauds inclusion of V-chip in final bill.

February 2

Vice President's statement on passage of telecommunications legislation applauds inclusion of V-chip.

February 8

President signs Telecommunications Act of 1996 and invites industry to meet at White House on February 29th to discuss TV ratings and children's programming.

February 8

Vice President meets with industry leaders to discuss next steps after telecommunications reform and White House meeting on TV ratings and children's television.

February 13

Ad hoc industry group informs White House that they were prepared to abandon litigation in favor of developing a V-chip-compatible ratings system.

February 15

White House representative meets with television writers to discuss children's television and television ratings, meets with Screen Actor's Guild to discuss same.

February 16

White House representative meets with Writer's Guild representatives to discuss President's call for TV ratings system.

Implementation Group for Television Ratings

Background

At the meeting between President Clinton and a delegation of media executives on Feb. 29, Jack Valenti announced that he would lead the effort to devise a rating system for television. Other members of the panel include PBS President Ervin Duggan, Rick Taylor from Media Productions Association of America.

The group, ranging from 15-25 people depending on the issue, has met twice a month. Subgroups deal with issues such as audience research, rating dissemination, defining 'newscast' etc (NYT 3/18).

Purpose

To design and implement a rating system for TV programs (not including newscasts or sports) that will provide parents with four kinds of information about television programs: Sexual content, violence, adult language, and age-appropriateness.

Also, Duggan suggests adding a positive rating icon to designate shows with educational value. This icon would distinguish mindless cartoons from shows like CNN Newsroom, Nickelodeon's Launch Box, Court TV's 'Class Action' and CBS 'Schoolbreak Specials.' Duggan said the rating would be based on agreed-upon educational standards determined by the implementation group.

Target deadline

The group aims to develop the rating system by January of 1997 (4/4/96 NYT).

Challenges

Opponents brought up a number of questions and challenges for the implementation group. Here are some examples and the groups responses.

- o How can such a vast quantity of material--1640 hours per day-- be rated?

The group plans to assign a categorical rating for each program series as opposed to rating individual shows.

- o How can such a comprehensive rating system be structured?

The group will use movie association's ratings as a template but will be more specific about age suitability--PG-8, PG-10 for example (NYT 3/18)--and less specific about actual content.

- o How should the ratings be publicized in an objective and understandable format?

The group hopes to display the ratings, once created, in TV guide, on the air during broadcast time as well as during program promotions (Christian Science Monitor 6/27).

Influences

In addition to working within the industry to create the rating system, Valenti says the group wants to hear from people outside the industry. Outside influences include Canadian TV representatives, who are currently conducting V-chip experiments and refining its rating system; church groups; Children Now, a California-based advocacy organization; advertisers and public interest groups.

Central Underlying Issue

How can the rating system actually make television better for children? The group continues to work with this issue in mind. One idea is that Valenti's group should focus on daytime hours, the time that children usually watch TV (NYT 3/17). Also, shows carrying violent warnings will draw a limited audience, sponsors will stop advertising, and the broadcasters will either improve the program quality or be forced off the air.

FORWARDED: MAILING
FROM: DISTRICT OFFICES

COMMERCE COMMITTEE
RANKING MEMBER
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND
FINANCE
RESOURCES COMMITTEE
COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND
COOPERATION IN EUROPE

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Washington, DC 20515-2107

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188 CONCORD STREET, SUITE 102
FRAMINGHAM, MA 01701
(508) 876-2900

May 1996

The Honorable Reed Hundt, Chairman
The Honorable James Quello
The Honorable Susan Ness
The Honorable Rachelle Chong
The Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Commissioners:

We are writing in response to recent press reports that the FCC may, at the request of certain broadcasters, abandon its effort to increase the quantity of programming designed to educate our nation's children. This would be a very unfortunate outcome of your children's television rulemaking and open to further question what remains of the public interest in broadcasting licenses. We want the Commission to know how strongly we feel about this rulemaking. We are concerned that the passion and resources devoted to this issue by those with a commercial stake in the outcome is causing the Commission to lose its focus on the mission of effectively implementing the Children's Television Act (CTA) of 1990.

We are particularly concerned that the Commission may succumb to the pleas of some that "quality", not "quantity", be the only test of compliance with the CTA. It is unquestionably important to eliminate definitional ambiguity. Moreover, the Commission is correct to suggest that programming aired before 7 am should not qualify. But if the Commission gives up its attempt to specify a minimum amount necessary to guarantee renewal of a broadcast license, unscrupulous broadcasters will rush in to undercut those who have worked to increase their commitment to children's educational programming. The result will be even less quality programming than we now have.

And what we now have is clearly unacceptable. The Commission recognized this reality when it originally proposed a minimum of 3 hours per week of qualifying programming be used as a guide to compliance with the CTA. This is an extremely low standard, particularly when compared to the roughly 140 hours that a typical station airs during the week. Indeed, the National Association of Broadcasters believes that the average broadcaster already exceeds this minimum, and Westinghouse has pledged to meet or exceed this minimum on CBS. Sadly, the 3-hour standard is still several hours more than many broadcasters are currently airing despite the law.

We urge you to defend the rights of children in this rulemaking, and to reject arguments against setting a clear, unambiguous 3-hour threshold for all broadcasters to meet in return for renewal of a license to use the public airwaves. Most broadcasters will gladly meet this standard, and the public will be grateful that a minimum standard has finally been set.

Sincerely,

END

Signers of letter to FCC
urging "Three 4 Kids"
(as of May 29, 1996)

AL Browder
Bevill
Cramer
Hilliard
AK
AZ Pastor
AR Lambert Lincoln
Hutchinson
Thornton
Dickey
CA Fazio
Matsui
Woolsey
Miller
Pelosi
Dellums
Lantos
Stark
Eshoo
Lofgren
Farr
Condit
Beilenson
Berman
Waxman
Becerra
Martinez
Dixon
Roybal-Allard
Torres
Waters
Harman
Horn
Millender-
McDonald

Brown
Filner
CO Schroeder
Skaggs
CT Kennelly
Gejdenson
DeLauro
Shays
DE Castle
FL Peterson

GA

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IN

IO

KS

KY

LA

ME

MD

MA

MI

Thurman
Mica
Gibbons
Meek
Johnston
Deutsch
Hastings
Bishop
Lewis
McKinney
Abercrombie
Mink

Rush
Jackson
Lipinski
Gutierrez
Collins
Yates
Porter
Costello
Evans
Poshard
Durbin
Viscloskey
Roemer
Hamilton
Jacobs
Leach

Ward
Baesler
Jefferson
Fields
Longley
Baldacci
Cardin
Wynn
Hoyer
Cummings
Morella
Olver
Neal
Meehan
Markey
Kennedy
Moakley
Studds
Stupak

MN

MS

MO

MT

NB

NC

ND

NJ

NM

NY

Kildee
Bonior
Levin
Rivers
Conyers
Collins
Minge
Vento
Sabo
Luther
Peterson
Oberstar
Thompson
Taylor
Clay
Gephardt
Skelton
McCarthy
Danner
Volkmer
Williams
Bereuter
Clayton
Rose
Hefner
Watt
Pomeroy
Andrews
LoBiondo
Smith
Roukema
Pallone
Franks
Martini
Torricelli
Payne
Menendez
Richardson
Lazio
King
Ackerman
Flake
Nadler
Schumer
Townsend
Owens
Velazquez
Maloney
Rangel

	Engel		Stenholm
	Lowey		Jackson Lee
	Gilman		Gonzalez
	McNulty		Frost
	Boehlert		Bentsen
	Hinchey		Ortiz
	Slaughter		Tejeda
	LaFalce		Green
	Quinn		Johnson
	Houghton	UT	Orton
NV		VT	Sanders
OH	Hall	VA	Pickett
	Kaptur		Scott
	Stokes		Sisisky
	Brown		L. Payne
	Sawyer		Moran
	Traficant		Wolf
OK	Brewster		Davis
OR	Furse	WA	Dicks
	DeFazio		McDermott
PA	Foglietta	WV	Mollohan
	Fattah		Wise
	Borski	WI	Kleccka
	Klink		Barrett
	Clinger		Obey
	Holden	WY	
	McDade	DC	Norton
	Kanjorski	AS	Faleomavaega
	Murtha	GU	Underwood
	Coyne	PR	Romero-Barcelo
	McHale	VI	
	Doyle		
	Mascara		
RI	Kennedy		
	Reed		
SC	Spratt		
	Clyburn		
SD	Johnson		
TN	Clement		
	Gordon		
	Tanner		
	Ford		
TX	Chapman		
	Wilson		
	Bryant		
	Doggett		
	Edwards		
	Geren		
	de la Garza		
	Coleman		

STATEMENT OF
REP. EDWARD J. MARKEY
PRESS CONFERENCE ON CHILDREN'S TV
"Three 4 Kids"
May 29, 1996

Today we take a hop, skip and a jump closer to the goal of setting a minimum standard for broadcasters, giving teeth to the Children's Television Act of 1990. Broadcasters who are seeking renewal of their public license from the FCC deserve to know what the public interest requires when it comes to serving the educational and informational needs of children. What we're fighting for is *at least* 3 hours of educational TV for kids *per week* on every station holding a license from the public. There is clear momentum in favor of a "Three 4 Kids" rule, as we will demonstrate in just a moment.

In the past we did not have to specify rules for such things. Serving children used to be an obligation which every broadcaster shouldered gladly, without complaint, in return for being granted the exceptional, protected status as "public trustee" of a slice of the spectrum.

But somewhere in the 1980's, about the time a former chairman of the FCC declared that a television was just another appliance -- "a toaster with pictures" -- to be bought and sold as a commodity, service to children began to suffer and all too many broadcasters lost any shared notion of what constituted the public interest.

That is why, in 1990, I asked Congress to step in and pass the Children's Television Act. This was a proud moment for Congress. In that Act, we required, for the first time, that the broadcaster must serve the educational and informational needs of children as a condition of license renewal.

Unfortunately, cynical attempts by some broadcasters to submit cartoons such as *The Flintstones* and *Mighty Morphin Power Rangers* as educational programming have persisted. In the only independent analysis of this subject, researchers at the University of California, Santa Barbara found no increase in the number of hours claimed by broadcasters in 1994 compared to 1992, and some broadcasters were still making educational claims for *Yogi Bear* and *Biker Mice From Mars*.

Clearly, the FCC needed to strengthen its rules. Reed Hundt, chairman of the FCC, deserves credit for stepping in at this point and crafting a proposed rule that would help everyone. Families would get quality programming for kids, and broadcasters would be given clear standards and definitions which they could rely upon when seeking renewal of their license. Although many in this room, myself included, considered the proposed standard of 3 hours *per week* to be disappointingly low, it was still a clear standard for kids.

That was April 1995. It is now almost June 1996, and the FCC has still not adopted the "Three 4 Kids" rule. This is not for lack of trying. Chairman Hundt has fought for this rule relentlessly. Commissioner Ness has also battled for children and taken a firm stand on the side of "Three 4 Kids." President Clinton, in his only written comment on any FCC rule, sent a letter in October urging that "at least" 3 hours per week be adopted by the FCC for kids. Peggy Charren, founder of Action for Children's Television and one of our guests today, will tell you in a moment how hard she has fought to see this rule adopted.

In fact, we have with us today representatives of organizations that have knocked on more doors and sent more letters on behalf of the "Three 4 Kids" rule than practically any issue in Washington today. Many of these people participated with me last fall when we declared last October 11 to be Children's TV Day in Washington.

meetings with Commissioners and the White House urging action. I'm talking about these people standing behind me. I'm talking about [names of groups and participants]

the 7 million member National PTA;
the 26,000 member National Association of Elementary School Principals;
The American Academy of Pediatrics
The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
The Center for Media Education
Children Now
Children's Television Workshop
American Psychiatric Association
The National Association for Family and Community Education

And I'm talking about many others who have helped along the way, like Shari Lewis, creator of *Lamb Chop*, and Bob McGrath, host of *Sesame Street*. Bob recently sent to me a petition signed by over 600 teachers, parents and child caregivers that he had gathered at the University of Wisconsin Early Childhood Conference, urging support for the Three for Kids rule. "I was overwhelmed," Bob wrote, "by the dissatisfaction these people—who spend the majority of their time working with young children—felt about commercial television. The enclosed petition...is evidence that the public is eager to see commercial broadcasters make an honest investment in our nation's children."

So, here we are again, back for more. But this time, we have something extra, something that took a little work, but something which should make a difference to those who are still part of the problem, but would like to be part of the solution. I am about to unroll, literally, ten feet of signatures that I and my colleagues have gathered in the House of Representatives demanding that the FCC adopt a "Three 4 Kids" rule, plain and simple. No more excuses. At last count, we had 220 Members of Congress signing this letter, and the number of Members that ask to join keeps growing.

This is a MAJORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

It is not easy to gather so many signatures, no matter how compelling the cause. In fact, it is a logistical nightmare, as my staff will tell you. One of my interns, Elizabeth Malaspina, actually broke a shoe and nearly sprained an ankle in her dedication to amassing this unequivocal statement on behalf of "Three 4 Kids." I personally gathered more than half of these signatures, which means that "Three 4 Kids" has been a major topic of conversation on the House floor for the last two months. Congresswoman Blanche Lambert Lincoln, 8 months pregnant with twins, personally expended her precious energy in this cause at crucial moments. Congresswoman Morella was an early signatory on this petition and is here today to emphasize that this is a joint effort involving both sides of the aisle, Republican and Democrat.

So we would like to unroll this document now, and make it official, that the House of Representatives has come together around the issue of Children's TV and is sending this message to the FCC, that a majority of this body is not interested in vague, unenforceable guidelines on children's TV.

MAKE IT CLEAR, MAKE IT SIMPLE, MAKE IT "THREE 4 KIDS."

**SUPPORTERS OF ADOPTING AT LEAST 3 HOURS OF CHILDREN'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING
AS THE STANDARD FOR RENEWAL OF BROADCAST LICENSES---**

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry - represents 5,200 child and adolescent psychiatrists

American Association of School Administrators - represents 16,000 school superintendents, central administrators, principals, and other school leaders

American Psychiatric Association - represents 41,000 psychiatrists worldwide

Center for Media Literacy - has 2,000 active members and provides service to 10,000 individuals and institutions

Consumer Federation of America - coalition of 240 consumer groups with combined membership of 50 million

National Association of Child Advocates - represents 32 state-based child advocacy organizations

National Association for the Education of Young Children - has 90,000 members and a network of 450 local, state, and regional affiliated childhood organizations

National Association of Elementary School Principals - represents 26,000 elementary and middle school educators

National Association for Family and Community Education - 43,000 members

National Black Child Development Institute - affiliate network of 42 cities

National Council of La Raza - represents 200 community-based organizations

National Education Association - 2.2 million members

National PTA - 7 million members

Office of Communication of the United Church of Christ - union of churches with 1.5 million members

Children Now

Children's Television Workshop

U. S. Catholic Conference

OVERVIEW

I. OPENING STATEMENT

THE PRESIDENT

II. INFLUENCE OF TELEVISION ON CHILDREN

THE FIRST LADY

Researchers:

Aletha Huston, Distinguished Professor, University of Kansas
Robert Phillips, Deputy Medical Director, American Psychiatric Association
Kathleen Hall Jamieson, Dean, Annenberg School of Communications

Television Ratings Implementation Group:

Jack Valenti, President and CEO, Motion Picture Association of America

Additional Comments:

Margaret Loesch, President, Fox Children's Network
Alvin Pouissant, Professor of Psychiatry, Judge Baker Children's Center

III. WHAT MAKES A SUCCESSFUL CHILDREN'S TELEVISION PROGRAM?

MRS. GORE

Television Personality:

Bill Cosby

Additional Comments:

Bill Nye, "the Science Guy"
Levar Burton, "Reading Rainbow," "Star Trek: The Next Generation"
Fred Rogers, "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood"
David Kleeman, Executive Director, American Center for Children's Television
Geraldine Laybourne, President, Disney/ABC Cable Network
Gary Chapman, President and CEO, LIN Television Corporation
David Britt, President, Children's Television Workshop
Peggy Charren, Founder, Action for Children's Television

Brief Bios On Conference Participants

Anstrom, Decker-

Decker Anstrom is President and CEO of the National Cable Television Association. Previously, Anstrom served as senior staff member at the Office of Management and Budget and as Assistant Director of the White House Office of Presidential Personnel.

Baker, Barry-

Barry Baker was the President, CEO, and co-founder of River City Broadcasting, which recently merged with Sinclair Broadcast Group. Baker will now serve as President and CEO of Sinclair Communications. In March 1995, Baker was installed as chairman of the Television Bureau of Advertising's board of directors.

Bewkes, Jeff-

Jeff Bewkes, the Chief Executive Officer and President of HBO, was recently also named Chairman in November of 1995. In addition, he is a member of the managing committee of Comedy Central, a trustee of the Walter Kaitz Foundation, and a member of the National Cable Television Association Board of Directors and the Cable Academy Board of Governors.

HBO participated with a Canadian company in producing a series of short films entitled the "Composer's Specials," a series of short films featuring a classical composer and his friendship with a child. The series has won numerous awards, including a 1993 Primetime Emmy for Outstanding Children's Program for "Beethoven Lives Upstairs."

Britt, David-

David Britt has been the President and Chief Executive Officer of Children's Television Workshop (CTW) since 1990, after joining the company in 1971 as assistant director of a CTW project. He is also a trustee of CTW. In 1993 he was elected to serve as the first Chairman of the Board of Governors for the American Center for Children's Television, an organization promoting excellence in television programming. In 1996, he was elected to be a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Burton, LeVar-

LeVar Burton, who is best known for his role as Lt. Commander Geordi LaForge on the TV series "Star Trek: The Next Generation," is also the host and co-executive producer of the PBS series "Reading Rainbow." The show introduces children to the world of reading and books. In February, President Clinton nominated Burton to the U. S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, which advises the White House and Congress on domestic and foreign library and information services, policies, and plans.

Burton was a board member of the National Endowment for Children's Educational Television created by the Children's Television Act, which did not receive funding over the last two years by Congress.

IV. BARRIERS TO MORE AND BETTER CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

THE VICE PRESIDENT

Children's Programmer:

Linda Ellerbee, President, Lucky Duck Productions

Independent Network:

Jamie Kellner, CEO, Warner Brothers Television Network

Children's Programmer:

Jim Steyer, CEO, J.P. Kids, Inc.

Additional Comments:

Judith McHale, President and Chief Operating Officer, Discovery Communications

Rich Frank, President, Academy of Television Arts and Sciences and Chairman and CEO, C-3

Vicky Rideout, Director of Children and Media Programs, Children Now

V. CLOSING REMARKS

THE PRESIDENT

LEVEL 1 - 3 OF 3 STORIES

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Federal News Service

MARCH 1, 1996, 9:53 A.M. EST FRIDAY

SECTION: WHITE HOUSE BRIEFING

LENGTH: 10472 words

HEADLINE: PRESIDENTIAL ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION
REGARDING TELEVISION VIOLENCE
WITH PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON
FIRST LADY HILLARY CLINTON
VICE PRESIDENT AND MRS. GORE
AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS
THE OLD EXECUTIVE OFFICE BUILDING

BODY:

VICE PRESIDENT GORE: Well, ladies and gentlemen, the president and the first lady and my wife, Tipper, and I would like to welcome you here to this office. And traditionally this has been the office of the vice president since way back, since this became the Executive Office Building. And these families with their children have been invited here this morning for a discussion with the president and us here about the historic turning point in the relationship between families and the mass media.

As you know, President Clinton fought for, got passed in the Congress and then signed into law a real breakthrough measure called the V-chip, which makes it possible for parents to exercise more control over what their young children see on the television set.

Then yesterday, in response to President Clinton's invitation, the leaders of the entire entertainment industry came to the White House, and after a two-hour discussion with the president, announced their unanimous agreement to put in place a voluntary rating system for every program that appears on television, whether it's broadcast or cable, and to electronically encode that program with a signal that will interact with this electronic device called the V-chip, which will enable parents to say this particular kind of programming is not appropriate for my children in my judgment, and so when I'm not there, they're not going to be able to watch that.

Some of the parents who are gathered here today, and some of the children, too, have been thinking about this issue and this particular solution, in some cases for quite some time. Some of them participated in the family conference that Tipper and I host each year, and that the president spoke at last summer. Some of them have been featured in the first lady's book about what families can do, "It Takes a Village." And this discussion this morning we hope will shed some more light on the importance of the turning point yesterday.

And, of course, to lead the discussion and to explain why this is so important for our country, the president of our country, President Clinton.

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Thank you very much, Mr. Vice President. And I might say, aren't we all glad to be in this big, beautiful office here? (Laughter.) I love to come over here.

I want to thank all of you for coming, and to say to you and to the members of

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the media who are here, yesterday we heard for two hours from a remarkable assemblage of people who are involved in the television industry, and of people who broadcast the programs.

We heard from cable people; we heard from the people who write the programs, people who represent the actors, the producers. It was an amazing assemblage of people who got together and came to Washington to announce that they had decided to develop a rating system for television programs like the movie rating systems, and that, as the vice president, that that would be able to be used then when the V-chip becomes available in television.

Now the V-chip, of course, will -- will start coming in, in televisions, in a couple of years. And we replace about 25 million televisions a year, I think, in America, so it will quickly be a fixture in a significant percentage of America's televisions. But the rating system, presumably, will still be helpful for parents even before they have the V-chip.

I -- we wanted to have you in here today because we want to get a feel and we want the country to get a feel for what kinds of things parents and -- feel about this rating system and the V-chip, what the young people feel about it, what you expect out of it, what you think it will do, what won't it do, what would you like to see, how would you like to see it work. And of course, we have some advocates and professionals here who can talk about the impact of this on -- on child-rearing in America and on childhood.

I -- I must tell you, this is going to be a very complicated and difficult thing for these people in television to do, in the sense that they have -- there are many, many thousands of -- tens of thousands of programs on all these television stations, and as we get more cable channels, they will multiply exponentially, so the -- the job of rating them is very different from the job of rating a couple thousand movies a year.

So as they undertake this task, I think it's important for -- for the people in the entertainment industry and the public at large to get just a feel for how parents and -- and -- feel about it, how young people feel about it, and kind of how it should proceed, because -- because they've committed to have this done by the first of next year -- no later than the first of next year, and perhaps sooner.

So we really just felt we ought to have this conversation today, and we thank you for joining us. And maybe we ought to start with you, Mrs. Sompton (sp). If you could tell the press -- everybody, if you could tell the press your name when you speak and then we'll -- and how you happen to be here.

BARBARA SOMPTON (sp): My name is Barbara Sompton (sp). I've got two kids, Michael Eisenbray (sp) 11, and Rebecca Eisenbray, 8. And I'm here because I've been active with the PTA and I was asked to come here today.

I think it is fabulous that the industry has agreed to put in this rating system. I was growing up on Long Island. There were, I think, seven TV channels. And now, as the president said, it's impossible to probably count how many there are. It's impossible for a parent to hope to screen what's on television today. And it would be so helpful to be able to have the rating system that I now use for the movies, because -- especially with younger children, and I know it changes as your children get to be teenagers. But I can say to my children, "You don't watch movies that are PG-13." We don't have to talk about it. You know, those are off of the screen, off of the table. We don't have to talk about those, okay. So maybe we'll talk about what we do see, but we don't have to talk about those.

I think it's fabulous that they're going to start rating even before the V-chip is available because parents can use that rating as a tool and the V-chip as a

tool as the children especially get older. Just Michael's age now, I'll leave him alone for a couple of hours and it's wonderful to be able to have that technology to enforce what I would be enforcing if I were home. And I, by the way, am home more than most parents because I don't work full-time. But I can't be with my children by their side at every moment guarding what they watch on TV, and nor would I want to. I think it's terrific and I really applaud the industry for doing a big turnaround.

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Latonya (sp)?

LATONYA JONES (sp): I'm Latonya Jones (sp) and I am the mother of a three-year-old and a soon-to-be. And I work with a group in Maryland called Advocates for Children and Youth. We have something called the Maryland Campaign For Kids TV, so I know firsthand that there are a lot of parents who are very concerned about the issue of television. And I applaud not only the industry but this administration for the support that you've given for the Children's Television Act, for Public Broadcasting, and also for the V-chip. I see the V-chip, though, as really just the first step, because I think that parents not only need negative control over blocking the things that are coming into their homes that they think aren't good, but we need to continue to encourage the industry to produce good programming and to produce the kind of programming that we can become involved in helping our kids make good choices. One of the things that we always talk about is that television is such a wonderful educational tool.

And unfortunately, the V-chip and the recent developments are really because a lot of what's being produced is not really using the potential that television has to educate and enlighten. So I'd like to see the V-chip and this industry coming together as the first step, to taking it to where they can talk about pooling resources to produce better children's programming. And we're hopeful that the V-chip will be the beginning of that.

PRESIDENT CLINTON: I want to talk about the better programming in a minute, but -- and -- because I think that's a big part of (that announcement?), especially when I asked the young people about it. But I want to give the parents who are here a chance to say anything they'd like to say about the V-chip and the ratings issue. And then I want to come back and talk about the V-chip with you. I want you to tell your story. (Laughter.)

Q I'm Jim Murphy (sp). I'm here with my family today. I've been involved for a number of years through the Virginia PTA of the national PTA advocating for children and children's issues.

And I've long seen the impact that television has on our families and how we raise our children, and the environment that our children are living in today. The V-chip in our home is going to be an aid, a tool. Particularly when you look at diversity of ages of my children, ranging from 10 to 17, their viewing habits and what they should be viewing is vastly different.

I applaud the industry for the fact that -- and I applaud you -- for the fact that you have brought the industry to the rating scheme. I believe that the technology of what we're going to be doing with the V-chip is actually going to assist and aid the industry in refining and defining that ratings system.

I don't want to -- I want to make the judgment, along with my wife, as to what is good quality programming for my children. But I do not want to take that same standard to say that that has to be the industry standards. Those are the professionals. Let them worry about that. I'm worried about what's in my home. I do think that that V-chip is going to define for us now what has previously been defined by the industry, and that's the family hour or the family time, because I think people will actually vote -- since most of our airways are

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commercial, they'll vote with that V-chip. And advertisers will understand that, and programmers will understand that. And maybe we will see more family programming of the type that we would like to see, as a result. So I see it as the critic's choice, and I tend to view it that way.

PRESIDENT CLINTON: I'm so glad to hear you say that because there were -- you made two comments, I just want to say, that kind of resonated with the discussion we had with the people from the industry yesterday. Ted Turner said -- and he went out and said in public, so I'm not saying anything in private he didn't say in public -- that he strongly supported the rating system and what we were doing -- what they were doing, but he did think it would be very costly. And I think it will obviously cost a lot of money to figure out how to do this and then review all these programs to set up a system, but I think he meant he thought it would be costly over the long run because programs would not have the same viewership and their advertisers would drop. I think I see it more like you do; it's a voting system. It would be another -- it's like the Nielsen ratings, except you won't have -- this won't be a sample; you'll be able to actually know. You know, you'll be able to at least sample all the V-chip homes. You take a representative sample. And it might actually change the content of programming so that the market, the market forces actually produce more positive programming.

The other thing you said I think is important -- a couple of the folks who were skeptical yesterday talked about how this wouldn't be a panacea, it wouldn't solve all the problems. One of the men in the broadcasting meeting said, "I'm going to take off my" -- I mean in the industry meeting, he said, "I'm going to take off my industry hat now and tell you that I'm a parent of three small children. I'm not looking for panaceas; I'm looking for a little help." And he was -- I think that's the way all of us who are parents look at this: There is no such thing as a panacea; we're looking for a little help. So you made that point, and I thought it was very good.

(The president calls on a participant. Name inaudible.)

MS. : Along that same line, I think that with the V-chip it will be possible to address the issue of whether a particular program is acceptable or not once and not have to keep revisiting it every time you come down to the family room and you find the children have conveniently forgotten that this is one of the programs that you deemed not acceptable, and you have to go back through the explanation over and over again, "No, remember, I told you you can't watch this because this is where it does not meet our family's standards." And I think it will probably reduce some of the tension that goes back and forth as you keep reiterating the same issue over and over again of the same programming. Once it's explained -- (inaudible) -- with the V-chip it's blocked out and it's done. So I think that's going to be another benefit of it. And again, the push for setting some standards and letting the standards be -- (inaudible) -- reflects the total reshaping of programming -- (inaudible).

JACQUELINE CALDWELL: My name is Jacqueline Caldwell, and this is my husband, (name inaudible) -- Caldwell, and we are the parents of toddlers. They are two and four. And we are delighted with the strides that the administration and the industry have made with respect to the V-chip and the voluntary rating system. We have a system right now where, if we happen to be watching television, I will notice that there may be something that we don't want the children to see, and my husband, who is the keeper of the remote, will -- (laughter) -- you know, change the channel. So we have to be sort of actively involved in what they see and don't see. And anything, as you say, that will assist -- is that something -- ?

PRESIDENT CLINTON: (Short remark, inaudible because of the laughter.)

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(Laughter, cross talk.)

MS. : Without a doubt.

MS. CALDWELL: (Laughing.) So we're really delighted with both of the V-chip and (this rating bill ?).

MR. CALDWELL (?): It is important. I mean, one of the first things that I noticed, as parents of toddlers, is that one of the first things our children learned is how to turn on the TV. And they were 2 -- (scattered laughter) -- and they could figure out --

MS. : Yeah.

MR. CALDWELL (?): -- how to hit the remote, what it channel it had to be on to actually get the screen on. So something like this is a vital first step for working parents like us, who, you know, can't be there every single minute that the baby's looking at TV.

VICE PRESIDENT GORE: Mr. President, you will remember that Dr. Robert Phillip (sp) with the American Psychiatric Association was one of the experts who met with us in Nashville last summer and the expert that pointed out that there have been about 1,000 studies about the relationship between televised violence and actual violence, and about six of them have said there's no connection. About 994 have said there is a very strong connection. And you were telling us in Nashville about why the expert community has felt strongly about this. Why don't you share some of that?

DR. ROBERT PHILLIP (SP): Well, I am a psychiatrist by training, although I remind my colleagues that I did a sub-internship in obstetrics, so I am ready to -- (laughter) -- (respond ?), if necessary.

MS. : I don't think I'll need you again. (Laughter.)

DR. PHILLIP: I spend most of my time evaluating persons who've committed crimes, and then testifying in court. And I -- what's becoming shocking to me (is ?) that the persons that I was called to evaluate were becoming younger and younger, and the crimes that they were committing were becoming more and more heinous. And it began to focus my attention on what some of the root causes were and what are the things that are (coming ?) to influence children to behave in ways that most of us, when we were children, perhaps would not even think of doing.

The research information is overwhelming and it's clear. Mrs. Gore called our attention to the way in which violence within demeaning musical lyrics can potentially affect the way in which children behave. Mrs. Clinton, in her book, talks about the way in which young brains form and the way the hard-wiring of that brain is so easily influenced because, by design, children are great imitators. That's how they learn. And in my own clinical experience and the research work that I've been doing, there's no question that both those things are true.

We are a society that has become infatuated with violence, and we feed our addiction to violence in every way conceivable, including at the news trailers at 5:00, 6:00, 10:00, and 11:00, on every show that you can think of. "The National Television Violence Study," which the American Psychiatric Association and other professional groups have participated in, has shown that violence is free and gratuitous on television, and its effect on children is powerful. Children are like little VCRs. They see something once and then they repeat it, and they repeat it over and over and over again.

I share the enthusiasm that my colleagues share today in thanking you, Mr. President, and you, Mr. Vice President, for taking the leadership in an area where parents -- and while I am trained clinically, my primary job is to be the

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father of a 16 and 14-year-old daughters and 7 and 5-year-old sons. And in that broad spectrum, I have seen some remarkable differences in attitude and behaviors towards what they see on television and what they listen to, only within that generational gap in my own family.

These are powerful influences. Television is an extraordinary media, one that we should be very, very pleased that we have access to that technology, because children have learned enormous things and have benefitted greatly. But with the good side of technology there is the potential risk, and it is that risk that I and the scientific community have become particularly concerned about because we know without balancing that risk, without paying attention to the ways in which children learn, the kinds of violent images that sometimes are seen on television in which violent acts go unpunished, in which violence may be masked in humor in which there is no pain -- you know I evaluated someone in a hospital down south not too long ago who looked at me from his bedside, having been involved in a homicide in which he was shot, and he said to me, "Doc, I never realized it was going to hurt to be shot."

These are powerful statements coming from our children. And these are the kinds of images that we, as parents, at the very least need some help in making determinations as to what children are exposed to, at what age, and what frequency. What my 16 and 14-year-old watch may be quite different from what I think my 7 and 5-year-old ought to watch.

And I think what the two of you have done has really helped facilitate the industry and parents to work together on creating a stronger and more healthy environment in which children can use television in a productive and useful way. PRESIDENT CLINTON: Hillary, do you want to comment on that based on what you said --

MRS. CLINTON: No, that was incredible. I mean, I think that if we could get every parent to hear that and understand it, then the rating system and the V-chip would be even more effective because, of course, one of our challenges is to convince parents to use the rating system and to take the time and energy that will be required to implement it in their own homes, and then when the V-chip comes along, to be ready to use that as well.

And the information they can get, such as the doctor is explaining, about what we know is the linkage between what they see on television and how they behave, I think the more willing parents will be to act.

PRESIDENT CLINTON: I want to get to this -- to the young people here. But let me tell you it's okay if you disagree with us about this. (Laughter.) We want to hear what you really think. But I want to ask the doctor one more question. Before I had this job -- as I used to say, back when I had a life -- (laughter) -- I -- I used to -- I was a governor of my state, when I ran a big prison system and a big criminal justice system, obviously. And then I was attorney general. And before that, I taught criminal law. So I've been following issues of crime and violence closely, from that perspective, for more than 20 years now.

For most of my time, it was an article of (faith ?) that 75 percent of all the violence crimes in America were created by people between the ages of 17 and 26, and that there was almost a hormonal problem. If you could, literally, just get violent people and put them somewhere until they were 27, you could let them out -- (chuckling) -- and they would not do that again; that there really almost seemed to be sea changes.

Now we see an astonishing thing, with the crime rate going down among people 18 and over -- and I might add, with drug use going down among people over 18 -- and violence going up among people under 18 and -- (well ?) as well as casual

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drug use. And I think there are plainly other reasons for increasing violent behavior among young people, including the lives that many of them have to live, virtually raising themselves on some of the meanest streets in America.

But I gather from what you said, that you really believe that the sort of cumulative, almost deadening, impact of all this media-generated violence is, at least partly, the explanation for rising rates of violence among juveniles.

DR. PHILLIP: I don't think there's any question, Mr. President.

And you're right. If you look at the recent data that was released by the Justice Department, you see this rather unusual trend; a very positive trend that crime rates, overall, in this country are going down, except there has been an extraordinary explosion of crime among juvenile offenders, those individuals who are under the age of 18. MORE

The use of handguns by juveniles in this country has increased in the last six years by 144 percent, so that in the last year there were close to 2,000 murders committed by children under the age of 18, and whom the victims were other children under the age of 18.

Now, it would be foolish to suggest that the television set and the broadcast industry is responsible for that. It is a multi-factorial problem. But what is true, that something has radically changed from when you and I grew up on Long Island to the way in which people are growing up on Long Island and other places in this country now. And one of the things that I think scientifically helps explain the phenomenon is what we talked about in Nashville, and I think that is one of the powerful, negative effects of repeated exposure to gratuitous violence, whether it is through the ear or whether it is through the eyes and the ears combined, and that is the concept of desensitization. And I gave an example in Nashville, and if I can have a moment, I'll give it again.

Most of us probably remember the rather horrific image, that was captured quite accidentally by video cameras, of Rodney King being beaten in the streets of Los Angeles. And the first time you saw that image you probably were repelled by it. But quite honestly, by the 5th, 10th, 12th or 20th time, you did what most of my male colleagues in this room do, since we do have the remote controls, and that is to reach over -- there's a little joke that we've had in the room for the last few minutes that it was a male thing -- you reach for that remote control and you change the channel. And it's at the point that you change that channel that I think you demonstrated your desensitization to the cumulative effects of violent exposure.

In fact, if you think about the ways in which we have used desensitization scientifically, the more you show someone an image, the less impacted they are by that image, and they are then able to move on to the next step. This is part of what's happening in our society with our young. Because of the way young brains are hard-wired, because if you use misogynistic and violent language in musical lyrics and you listen to that, it becomes easier then to use that language and convey those attitudes when you interact with others.

I think these are the kinds of things that substantively contribute to some of the data that you referenced, Mr. President. But we've got to be very careful not to presume that the answer is in the television or that the blame lays with the broadcast industry, because that's summarily incorrect, and we have to remember that it is this very same industry that is responsible for substantively increasing the literacy rate in this country, and by reaching out and capturing the minds of children who are visual learners and learn better by visual and auditory images than print images. And so we have to accept both the good with the bad, but recognize that we have a responsibility when we identify something that could be problematic to try and deal with or create a safety net

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for those children for which this may be problematic.

VICE PRESIDENT GORE: Let me point out that next week, toward the end of next week, I believe it's on March the 7th, the president's going to be hosting a White House Conference on Youth Violence, looking at a lot of the other factors involved.

But the fact that children, on average, before graduating from high school, witness 20,000 simulated murders on a little box in their home, has to have some effect, as all the studies indicate. And while there are many other causes of the problem also, this is one, and it's one that, thanks to the president, is finally going to be susceptible to a solution, and thanks to the industry for taking the steps that they agreed to yesterday.

So we have to take each of the causes one by one.

And as the president was saying, these children here may have a different perspective and certainly have something to -- something to add to this.

You were -- you were going to --

PRESIDENT CLINTON: I thought maybe we ought to start with Catherine (sp), next to me, because Catherine Murphy (sp) actually passed the first V-chip bill -- (laughter) -- in the United States of America. I think you all need to know that. It wasn't us; it was her. And so I think you ought to hear her story. And I'd like to know how you came to propose this legislation and what you think of it.

MS. CATHERINE MURPHY (SP): Well, I first discovered the project actually with the aid of my father, who was working on the project with with -- (within the PTA ?). And it interested me, so I contacted Jim Moran's office and asked for a copy of the legislation that was in committee at the time, and he sent me the -- House Bill 1807, (I think it was ?). And I took a look at that.

And going to this seminar at Girls Nation -- 96 girls from around the country came and set up a mock Senate, and we were all responsible for proposing our own piece of legislation, be it a resolution or a bill, on something that we thought was important. And since I discovered this project and it caught my eye and -- I decided that I would write my own version of the V-chip and submit at the Girls Nation Senate. And so the first day we were there, you know, it went into committee, and we had to defend it there, and it got through committee and got onto the floor, and I had to defend it there. And you know, it got through the entire Senate, and I had a lot of support behind it and sent it to our president, who didn't believe in government regulation of private industry whatsoever, and she vetoed it. (Laughter.)

PRESIDENT CLINTON: They'll do that sometimes. (Laughter.) The -- but let -- let me ask you, do you believe -- I want to -- I want to ask, and then I want to sort of go around to the students here. How do you think the V-chip should be used? And how much difference do you think there is in what -- in the age of the children, in terms of the regulation of the programming?

MS. MURPHY: Well, particularly in my home, we find that -- I'm 17 and a senior in high school, and my brother is 10 and a fifth-grader in elementary school -- there's a vast difference between the (four of us ?) -- between our TV-watching habits. I am so involved in so many (different ?) school activities that television is just not a high priority for me, and I don't find myself watching a lot of television. I watch the news, and I watch -- (inaudible) -- and (it's ?) probably a little odd, (but it's not in ?) my age group. But you know, it's not a very high priority for me, whereas the elementary schoolers will spend a lot of time, I've noticed, I mean, a lot of time.

And when I baby-sit, I'd go over and baby-sit, and the parents would say, "Don't

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worry about them; they'll get ready for bed," and turn on the TV. And (then ?) it's 9:00; send them to bed. And I'd go over there at 5:00 in the evening, they'd literally turn on the television at 6:00 and just sit there for three hours. And you know, I think, "It's a baby-sitting job, okay?" But you know, when it finally got to me and (really ?) thinking about it, these kinds could be reading in books or, you know -- (laughing) -- doing their homework possibly, you know. Something has got to be -- there's got to be a line between where television is useful and informative, and where it's just mindless activity.

PRESIDENT CLINTON: (To another participant.) Do you watch television a lot?

YOUNG BOY: I don't watch it as much as most of my peers because I'm somewhat busy, considering my age, because I play two sports. I do street hockey with my friends, and I fence, and I spend a lot of time in a creek near our house. But I do watch some news. I watch the news, one or two cartoons, and sometimes I watch "ER."

But I know a lot of my friends basically base their lives on TV. (Scattered chuckles.)

PRESIDENT CLINTON: They do?

YOUNG BOY: That's all it is. They go home, turn on the tube, and at 10:00 they go to bed. That's it.

And then, during school, that's all they talk about, and they base their lives on it. And they think everything they see on TV is perfectly fine and it's how they should act, and a lot of it isn't. A lot of it is the exact opposite of how they should be acting, yet they base --

PRESIDENT CLINTON: But you've actually seen that in your friends who believe that --

YOUNG BOY: Yeah.

PRESIDENT CLINTON: -- that they -- (they're active ?); they model what they do based on what they see on television? YOUNG BOY: Yeah, they model themselves after Will Smith or Bart Simpson, and they act just like them. And they end up getting in a lot of trouble, too. And they never realize it, because they figure, "Oh, well, it's okay because I see it on TV every night."

And I like the V-chip because it doesn't automatically do anything, but it gives you the power, it gives the parents the power to control it so that kids won't do that. And what I'm hoping is that they can block out the bad programming, and if nobody's watching it, then they're liable to put good programming in there because they have to get their income somehow. So --

PRESIDENT CLINTON: (To another participant.) What about you? (Laughter, cross talk.) (Inaudible) -- you're 11, right?

YOUNG BOY: Yeah.

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Okay.

YOUNG BOY: And I -- my sister watches TV sort of like -- she'll sneak away when she's done with her homework and watch TV, but I hardly ever watch TV.

I like the computer much better than the TV. I play on the computer for hours and hours. I like --

MS. : Is there going to be a V-chip for a computer? (Laughter.)

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Well, (many have ?) thought about that because that's going to be a big issue.

VICE PRESIDENT GORE: Yeah, let me interject -- (inaudible) -- on that. The industry group and the computer industry that has put together this system for rating computer games just made an announcement yesterday that they're coming up with their own industry-based approach to give parents the ability to screen the Internet to prevent material that's inappropriate for young children to come into home computers on the Internet. Now, some of the online providers, like America On Line, already do that, but there needs to be this industry-wide

system to do it for the Internet generally in case that legal provision doesn't work out. It's real controversial. But that's good news. But I didn't want to interrupt you. Go ahead with what you were saying about TV.

YOUNG BOY: Well, I don't have -- I have a couple friends who watch TV a lot. They are brothers. One of them is in fourth grade, the other is in fifth grade. And they are sort of -- they spend most of their time playing with Leggo, playing on the computer, or watching TV, but they're not -- they don't watch many violent programs. They watch the "Simpsons," they watch cartoons, but they don't watch violent programs, and TV doesn't really affect them much.

VICE PRESIDENT GORE: Have you ever had a friend, either of you, who watches the "Mighty Morphin Power Rangers"?

YOUNG CHILD: No.

YOUNG BOY: Yes.

VICE PRESIDENT GORE: You have?

YOUNG BOY: I have a friend who watches them, actually -- (inaudible).
(Laughter.)

VICE PRESIDENT GORE: Well, does he act out the moves?

YOUNG BOY: Sometimes him and his friends, like during recess, will go away from playing kickball and they'll just pretend they are the Mighty Morphin Power Rangers, or the (X-Men ?) or whichever show they saw, what they think was the most interesting episode the day before. And they'll just act them out, and then they'll just go around pretending they have such power and just pretend they're killing each other or such things, and think nothing of it.

VICE PRESIDENT GORE: And they do the kicks and the --

YOUNG BOY: Yeah.

VICE PRESIDENT GORE: Teachers say that there are lots of little Mighty Morphin Power Rangers and many of them have gotten hurt.

YOUNG BOY: Yeah.

MS. : (Off mike.)

YOUNG BOY: Yeah, everyone.

PRESIDENT CLINTON: What do you think?

YOUNG GIRL: (Off mike.)

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Do you think your mother should have some influence over what you watch on television, or should you decide?

YOUNG GIRL: It would be good if my mom did because -- (inaudible) -- I watch. There are some things like especially shows that aren't really very (interesting ?), and I just don't think that -- (inaudible) -- should be able -- kids should be able to watch that.

Because kids in the second grade, kids in my class, well they're -- there are these two kids -- (inaudible), and they're always pretending to be the X-men. And they're like scraping me, and they're -- (inaudible) -- and stuff, and they take like three pencils and go like that and pretend that that they're like all these different people. And this gets really annoying. (Laughter.)

They go to -- they go to the principal's office (word inaudible), and they just don't really tell that because they're -- because --

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Playing out what they saw on TV.

Q Right.

PRESIDENT CLINTON: What about you all?

Q I'm 13. I see -- I baby-sit. And I see these kids playing games. And you know, they're just acting out what they've seen on television. But they hurt each other. And they don't -- and when you tell them "You can't do that, and you can't rough-house like this," they don't realize what's wrong with it.

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I also see myself -- I watch less and less television, as I get more active in clubs and sports and groups at my school and going out with my friends. And there are better things to do than watch television.

And the kids could be playing -- like my little brother prefers to go out and play in the woods, or build forts with his friends than to watch television. Kids need to expand their imaginations. And they could be doing so many other things that would benefit them, instead of watching cartoons and violence, et cetera, et cetera, on television.

MS. : Recent studies have shown that kids in the inner city watch up to 11 hours of television a day. And it's important for us to acknowledge that for some parents, they'd much rather have their kids in the house, watching TV, than out in the neighborhood that might not be safe, or in activities or with friends that they don't particularly approve of what the friends are doing. So I'd much rather have my son at home watching "X-Men" and "Mighty Morphin Power Rangers" than out there with someone who's actually -- has got a real gun, playing pretend. And when I talk to parents' groups about the fact that the average American household watches seven hours a day, people are usually shocked. They hear seven hours: "How could you do it?"

But when you really think of it, many of us use the television as an alarm clock in the morning. So it's very, very common for households to have the TV on for two hours in the morning, while you find out what's the weather, what are the school lunches.

And then kids who come home from school, they watch a couple of hours in the afternoon. And as we know, many parents watch the news with their kids over -- while they're cooking dinner and then at dinner. By the time you've added two or three hours of prime time, you're not even talking David Letterman or "The Tonight Show." It really is not hard to add those hours up a day.

And the kids who are watching 11 hours a day are going to school, but they're also watching cartoons in the morning or watching cartoons in the afternoon. They're watching in the evenings.

And this young man mentioned to me that he's got the sense that a lot of the kids here don't watch a lot of TV. And I said I think it's because your parents are really aware. And even though there are parents that are also concerned, they don't quite know what to do and how to offer alternatives, or the alternative of watching the show and having this fantasy makes them safer. So, I think that the V-chip will be helpful to a lot of the parents. But I also think that encouraging parents to help kids be critical viewers and choose what they're watching carefully is also really important, too.

PRESIDENT CLINTON: What do you think?

YOUNG GIRL: Well, I think it's kind of like sad what's being put on TV now. And it's really good because the V-chip is going to be able to get rid of those things. Because there are things like "Tales from the Crypt" and "X Files" and those things freak me out, and I'm -- (inaudible). And it's really sad because little kids are watching them and they get the wrong sense of reality. And they shouldn't be watching these things because that leaves them in their rooms hugging their teddy bears saying, "I'm not afraid of the dark, I'm not afraid of the dark," practicing for when they're supposed to go to bed, instead of going outside and like playing with their friends, riding their bikes and all that stuff. And they should be, you know, having fun and not being scared, and it's really awful that they get addicted to it and everything. They should spend more time outside, have fun with their friends because you only get to be a child once.

VICE PRESIDENT GORE: Have you or any of your friends ever had nightmares and trouble sleeping because of images you've seen on television?

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YOUNG GIRL: Yeah. We were spending the night at one of my friend's house once. It was her birthday. And we were talking about the last time she had rented a movie, one of the Chuckie movies, and they had seen it, they stayed up all night because they were terrified, they thought he was in the other room and they couldn't go to sleep. And it's just -- it's sad what -- like the things that go on TV.

VICE PRESIDENT GORE: Well one of the reasons I ask that question is that many children that watch the television, you know, eight, 10 hours a day, will at a young age now often be exposed to decapitation or some very gruesome, violent scene that they're not in any way prepared to deal with. And many parents tell us that they have to spend a lot of time comforting children when they have these nightmares and have trouble going to sleep. And the V-chip gives those parents a tool with which they can instruct their television set, don't put those images on in front of my child anymore. And it's a major advance.

YOUNG WOMAN: I think that's what makes this really important. A lot of people are talking about the V-chip will do this, the V-chip will do that. It's not the V-chip that's going to do it, it's the parents. And that's got to be the biggest point people have to understand. New technology isn't -- it's not just this micro-chip, it's not just the broadcasting industry, it's got to start with the parents, and it's got to start at home, the parents educating their children about what's right and wrong on television, and then to be able to back that up with the technology, to be able to enforce the values that they're teaching at home with that technology they have access to.

MRS. GORE (?): I would just like to say a word for children. I think you're exactly right. It is power to the parent; the V-chip is power to the parent. But I think what you're saying is often something we've seen in our house. And as you get older, what we as parents want for our children is to make good critical decisions about what they view, to know what freaks you out; and you, yourself, can use the V-chip to block out programs that you decide that you don't want to see. And as kids get older, they can use it as a way to protect themselves from those kinds of (images ?).

And I think that's another value of it that we don't want to overlook. We want to focus on parents, and parents having the power, but older children also are going to be able to use the V-chip to help themselves have critical viewing skills and know themselves and what they want to see. And so kids, too, are to be given credit for having sense about this.

YOUNG MAN: I was thinking about -- we've heard a younger person's perspective on how violence in TV has affected them and their peers. We've heard Catherine (sp) talk about how her -- the activities she's involved with in school, it really doesn't -- it makes television go down on her list of priorities. And I think that when you look at the age groups, I think that there's kind of a transitional age between the children that are young enough to have adult supervision for the majority of the time that they're going to be spending watching TV or doing other activities, and there's a difference between that and the older kids who have soccer practice after school or who are independent enough to spend the afternoon at the library by themselves.

And I think it's the age 12, 13, 14, where kids are becoming more independent, they don't require constant attention from their parents or a babysitter, and I think that's the age where a lot of education and a lot of instruction and guidance as to what kind of shows are appropriate and what kind of shows are indicative of acceptable behavior, I think that's the age where that needs to be stressed.

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MR. : I think that's a really key point because more and more of the studies are showing in that middle school period of time, where we go into the prepubescent period and early adolescence, that is probably the most critical time in a child's life, and it is also, I think all of us as parents know, is probably the most difficult time that we have raising our children. We're not only dumber than dirt -- (laughter), but they seem to have gone into a meltdown and just kind of tuned us out for a while. And that's where the influence of the television, and it really does seem to be -- that's there the mindset is, that they sort of vegetate there for a couple of years. And it's at that critical point where we're shaping those values that they're going to carry with them. And this goes back into what we were talking about earlier in the crime statistics.

DR. PHILLIP: You know, it's really interesting, because -- well, I think it's true with parents we always think about the most critical time as being what we're trying to deal with at the moment, and if you've got adolescents in the house, that's pretty preoccupying. But I vacillate back and forth with my sons and daughters because of the gap. And really, if you look critically at the research, you begin to recognize that it's all important.

While the value constructs that you talk about, I think, are extraordinarily critical because that's the time when normally, in fact, long before there was television, we were struggling at that age to try and figure out what's right, what's wrong, how we should behave, but, you know, between the ages of one and six, there's a lot that's going on that we tend to forget about. If you put children in a room with a monitor and you feed violent and aggressive images into that room through the monitor, and leave some toys on the floor and then shut the monitor off, guess what happens? Within minutes, those behaviors will be reenacted.

So that we've got to recognize that it's all important. And I think the most positive thing, as has been said by many of the young folks in this room and their parents, is that the technology is marvelous. When I was a kid growing up in New York there were three television stations, and programming was so sophisticated that the Million Dollar Movie ran the same movie four times a day, seven days a week. (Laughter.) Things have changed, and they've changed in such a way that you simply don't know what's on and you don't have a handle of what the information is that's available -- good and bad.

This small piece of technology really helps us create a reasonable environment for the broad range of children that may be in your home and in your community and in our nation. I predict -- and I hope I'm right with this prediction -- that this is the first in a series of technologies that will be helpful. This one happens to be viewed negatively because it's been cast as an instrument that will block-out signals. But I suspect that there's going to be technology that's going to help us facilitate identifying things that are of value. I think we're going to see (frame ?) shifts in the industry.

But most importantly, we have to make sure that this technology does not force parents to reach over to that television set and turn it off. Because if we turn off the television set, we are really denying our children probably one of the greatest inventions of this century that has really, I think, served an enormously useful purpose in providing strong and important influences.

PRESIDENT CLINTON: I'm so glad to hear you say that as well. But that -- I don't know how much time we have left. But I think we ought to hear from the young people especially on the flip side of this. Because we believe it's important -- we applaud the industry for developing the rating system and making it compatible with the V-chip.

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But the Children's Television Act, which was passed a couple of years ago, also calls upon producers of television programs to develop more and better programs that will be appealing to children in a positive way.

And I just want to make two points and then ask anybody who wants to comment to comment.

There were two interesting ideas which came out yesterday. One is the people who were there -- not us; the vice president and I just watched -- but in the room there, in the industry, there was a genuine argument about whether particularly younger people would be as likely to watch any kind of educational program as they would sort of a violent cartoon or something. And there was a woman there from the Discovery Channel who was a very powerful advocate said, "That is not true. If you make education entertaining, it will be watched." And she gave some examples. That's the first thing, shouldn't -- would you like to have more positive programming on television?

The second thing I think's important to point out, one of you kind of inched up to it when you were talking about the Internet, young people on the computer. All these technologies -- the vice president knows a hundred times more about this than I do -- but it looks to me like they're all merging. I mean, it won't be very long before you can call up any movie you want on your computer, and before a lot of the things you see on your television screen are interactive. So that I think that basically we're watching -- we're seeing a process -- and that, by the way, will engage more young people, because as they become more computer literate, if they have interactive programs on television, it will bring them up, or if they can call movies up on the computer it will -- so we really need to also focus on the positive things that they we ought to be doing for our children.

And so -- so what do you think? Do you think if there were -- would -- would young people be just as likely to watch more constructive programs if they were genuinely entertaining? Or do you believe there's just an inherent predisposition to watch the violence?

YOUNG MAN: I think that most definitely fun, educational television is -- it has been and will continue to be widely accepted by young children because young children are so fascinated by basically everything, and if you fascinate them with something that's going to benefit them and something that's going to make them more aware of what's going on, it opens so many more new doors and windows of opportunity for them.

Watching an educational show about animals, for instance, can spark a child's interest in biology or some kind of science related to animals. And just -- I mean that's such a fascinating field. And it can give a child like sort of a boost into a lifetime of educational fulfillment in terms of TV and their studies, and just basically their lives.

MRS. CLINTON: One of the things that was said yesterday that I did find interesting is -- the teenagers, I'd like to respond to this -- is that, you know, the movie industry, with few exceptions, mostly the Disney animated features, finds that a G rating is a kiss of death for most movies because teenagers won't go to see a G-rated movie.

And in fact, most teen-agers won't go to see a PG-rated movie. And they go to PG-13, and that's one of the reasons that the category was split, apparently. But one of the -- one of the people at the meeting yesterday said that they're -- you know, that they are concerned that when they get to older kids, who are a big market for consumer goods, that the older kids will have more control over the V-chip, because their parents will think they have more authority and right

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to do that on their own, and that they just won't choose programming once they get to be 12, 13 and above, that is educational. Younger kids, yes, you can encode it. And you can say, "I think you'll love watching this animal show." But, you know, when you get to be your ages, how do -- how do we send a message to the industry that older kids, also, will be interested in programs that aren't filled with a lot of -- you know, a lot of violence and cheap thrills all the time?

TEENAGE GIRL: Well, I date -- I'm 14, and I'm starting to date. And you know, when I go to a movie with some friends or that -- you know, we went and saw "Toy Story." We went out to the mall and saw "Toy Story," ate dinner there. So it's not necessarily that all teen-agers are picking the violent movies or the PG-13 and the "R" movies.

And I find more of my friends go see the new Disney movie or the -- you know, the movie that is marketed towards the (children ?) because it's cute, it's funny, you know. And so, it's not always -- I -- I mean, I mean, I can't speak for everyone, but we prefer to go see, you know, the new Disney thing, instead of the -- the rated-R movie with who knows who.

MRS. CLINTON: And you are an exception --

TEENAGE GIRL: (Laughs.)

MRS. CLINTON: -- (compared ?) numbers that are out there.

TEENAGE GIRL: I think also it has to do with where I live and the family upbringing that I've had --

MRS. CLINTON: That's exactly right.

TEENAGE GIRL: -- (chuckling) -- (of the ?) -- that I don't -- I watch a television show and, you know, someone dies in it, and I cry. And I'm just like, "Oh, my God" -- and -- because I'm not numb to it. But I notice that some of my peers are numb to it. They can watch, you know, really violent television and go, "Oh, okay, you know. Great." But I can't do that, and I sit there going, "Oh, my God," you know.

ANOTHER TEENAGE GIRL (?): I think -- (off mike) -- and I noticed in "Aladdin" -- and I haven't seen "Toy Story," so I don't know about that one -- but when I watched "Aladdin" with my peers, there were enough jokes that are on the higher level and that are almost bordering political satire that it catches the attention of the older crowd, and I think that's something that's very smart. What they've got to do is understand the same thing that apparently the advertising industry is a master at understanding: You have to have your target audience. If you're trying to target teenagers, there's going to be certain ways you're going to have to do it, and it's not -- you don't have to do it with the violent programming.

But educational programming for younger children is drastically different than -- (because what educational cries for is what would catch their eye. And I think probably one of the keys for the industry to start to create educational programming for kids aged like 14, 17, high school -- I mean freshmen through senior in high school -- is to use freshmen and seniors in high schools. They've got to, because, I mean, teenagers want to relate to other teenagers. And I mean, that's what I can say. And to use other teenagers -- you know, the news, kind of -- in the kids' news stories, I think you were pointing out, when they have other teenagers that come on and share, like, experiences or neat adventures, or a teenager who got to go do this or got to go do that -- I think that kind of stuff -- sharing each other's experiences -- that's the kind of thing that educational programming cries for.

DR. PHILLIP: There's a dearth of quality children and young adult programming. The industry, by default, has left it to the cable industry that's done, really, a remarkable job of providing quality children's television. But the open

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airwaves -- and I think this is the important issue of the telecommunications act -- there really has to be an aggressive looking-at the kinds of programming which, even as late as the early '70s, was available. I can remember the information rock series, and when a bill becomes -- how a bill becomes a law, and those little five-minute vignettes that used to be on the broadcast networks, which have summarily disappeared.

Kids are information sponges, in answer to your original question, and they will draw up anything that you put in front of them. The problem is that we have tended not to put in front of them the kinds of things that will be beneficial to them as persons, but, more importantly, the kinds of things that are going to be beneficial to them as young citizens in this nation.

MS. : And that's why we feel that television, as the -- (inaudible) -- I'd be remiss, representing the advocacy community, to not talk about the opportunities with the FCC, with the fact that there are two openings, and now that the Telecommunications Act has been passed, it changes the license renewal period for stations and when communities actually will have a chance. So, who is the commissioners who are on the FCC and the strengthening of the Children's Television Act is really crucial because that is really impacting on the kids and the quality of the programming.

VICE PRESIDENT GORE: You know --

MS. : I did just want to talk a little bit about an effort in Maryland, only because I think what we're all talking about is sort of the theoretical, but how do parents who are at home get involved in activities and in groups that are actually trying to do something. And in Maryland we have something called the Maryland Campaign for Kids' TV, which is the only statewide group that we have, teams that are assigned to each of the stations, that talk to station management and work in partnership with them to talk about what's on television.

And we did put out a book -- you talked about how important it is not to see turning the TV off as the only alternative. You hear people in the industry always say, "There is already a V-chip; it's the 'on' and 'off' button." But we think pulling the plug isn't the only option, and what we've done is we've organized this parents' guide by age group, because it's very true that toddlers are dealing with something very different. And then for three years we have evaluated the programming that's on Maryland stations to take a look at the educational programming to see is it getting better, is it getting worse. And we have kids involved in that, too.

I think that you're very right to say that the children are so savvy these days from a very early age. My daughter at three knew -- the fact that "VCR" was part of her vocabulary when she could start to talk. And I think that we're really remiss if we don't get the kids involved and realize, as you just said, that teenagers want to see other teens; they don't want to see old people telling them what to do. So get the teens involved. And the industry has the ability to use all those creative resources to do good, positive shows. It doesn't all just have to be the violent stuff.

VICE PRESIDENT GORE: I wanted to say before we close, Mr. President, I -- and I've been getting the signal that we've gone way overtime because this conversation has been so interesting, and I know the president has expressed the hope that conversations like this will take place in communities all across the country. And just as Tipper's campaign with music provoked conversation about this issue, this new law and the industry move yesterday will have the extra-added benefit of provoking conversation about the wide range of issues that television raises for families that often go undiscussed.

You were talking about children "vegging out" on television, that's a problem.

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You were saying they're little VCRs. Well sometimes they just blink "12:00, 12:00, 12:00" and that's a problem. (Laughter.) The nightmares, the -- but the studies -- the studies, while pointing out some of the problems, also demonstrate, as we learned in Nashville, that children who see a few hours of television each week, with the programming chosen thoughtfully with their parents involved in making the choice, actually do better in school and learn faster.

And so it really does not make sense for most families to just pull the plug and throw the television out of the house, although we've probably all been tempted to do that at times. It's not practical. Nor is it practical, as you said, for a parent to be told, you have to stand there every minute of every hour and monitor every single program your child is watching. That is impossible.

What the V-chip provides is a third option, for parents to make categorical choices and say this is the kind of programming that I think is good for my child, and I want it available in my living room, as you said. But this other kind of programming, which has images or language or scenes that my child is not prepared to deal with yet, keep that out of my house. And the choice is made by the parent. But this conversation today, as I said, is one that's taking place all across America. And this new program, the V-chip and the rating system, is going to make it possible for parents to act on those choices.

Mr. President?

PRESIDENT CLINTON: First of all, I would like to thank all of you for being here, especially the young people.

Thank you, Doctor, it's good to see you again.

DR. PHILLIP: Thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT CLINTON: I want to thank Tipper Gore. When she first proposed the ratings system for records, they -- it was considered heresy, and now that she's lived and worked hard at this -- long enough to make it just a matter of American conventional wisdom in television.

And let me say that -- that for Hillary and for me, based on our experience over the last 15 or 20 years, maybe the most important reason to have this conversation today was the point that Catherine (sp) made, when she first talked about her work for the V-chip, and that is that technology is intrinsically action-oriented, but neither intrinsically good nor bad. It depends upon the values and the action of the people in control of the technology. And while this gives more -- the V-chip and the ratings information -- will give more power to parents, it's utterly useless unless they use it.

And so, what I'm hoping that this did today is to convince other people, in other community settings in every community in our country, to begin to discuss these matters and to begin now, if they -- if their community does not have an advocacy group like the one (that I'm ?) involved in, perhaps to form one, or at least figure out how friends and neighbors can get together and figure out how they're going to use this ratings information and figure out how they're going to use the V-chip, as the V-chip comes in.

But I was glad to hear Mrs. Thompson (sp) say -- Ms. Thompsons (sp) say -- what she did about this "You don't have to wait for the V-chip to make use of the ratings information." You know, most parents -- (chuckling) -- are still influenced by what their -- I mean, most children still have some influence about what their parents say, and parents are influenced by their children. So I just want to encourage that. We need that every place in America. This law that was passed, and this remarkable effort by the industry, will not amount to a hill of beans if the parents do not take action in their homes and if, in each community, the community activists who know how to make the most of this,

Federal News Service, MARCH 1, 1996

don't work with the parents to do it.

MS. : Thank you. PRESIDENT CLINTON: Thanks a lot. It's great to see you.

MR. : Thank you.

END

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: March 2, 1996

TALKING IT OVER

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

RELEASE: WEEKEND, AUGUST 12-13, 1995

Have you seen what's on daytime television lately? During a recent workout, I started channel surfing, and the first show I saw was about wild teen-agers and their mothers. Another network featured women who use men for money. And on a third were people who believe their thoughts are controlled by aliens.

I cringed.

Then, I found refuge in Big Bird.

For many parents across our country, there is great comfort in knowing that however prurient, violent or sensational daytime programming has become, there is still an oasis for children called public television.

The truth is, my daughter is a Sesame Street kid. When she was younger, we would tune in together and read the books that went along with the shows. Over the years, my husband and I could see that Big Bird, Ernie, Bert and Cookie Monster had helped her learn to spell, count and, perhaps just as important, appreciate the cultural richness of our country.

But my daughter's experience is not the only reason I am disturbed by recent attacks on public television. There is no escaping that television is a pervasive influence in the lives of all of our children -- one that can have a significant impact, positive or negative, on their social and intellectual development.

A friend told me recently about the time her daughter came home from the first day of school and was so excited that she couldn't stop talking about it. After telling her parents about everything that had happened, she went to the television set and told Mr. Rogers too. Can you imagine that child having the same conversation with the Power Rangers?

The little girl's story gives us a window on the latest research. Studies show that children who watch programs like "Sesame Street," "Barney" and "Mister Rogers Neighborhood" are better prepared to learn by the time they begin kindergarten than children who watch only commercial television. Early on, reading becomes a part of their lives. So do numbers, ideas and a rich imagination.

In fact, just at that wonderful stage when young children seem to absorb every new word and concept they come across, educational television provides a unique learning tool. Even watching as little as 25 minutes a day can help.

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON 8/12-13/95**Page 2**

Researchers have found that low-income children between the ages of 2 and 5 who watch a small amount of educational programming do significantly better on tests of reading potential, vocabulary, mathematical reasoning and overall readiness for school.

By contrast, kids who spend the same amount of time watching non-educational cartoons and adult programs are not as well prepared for learning in school.

Recently, Sonia Manzano, known to millions of children as "Maria" on "Sesame Street," came to the White House to talk about educational television. She described what it was like to grow up in the Bronx as a Hispanic child who never saw anyone who looked or talked like her on television.

"I know that if a child spends his life not seeing himself reflected in society, which mostly means on television, it will wear him down," she said.

Children's programs like "Sesame Street," she said, offer a feeling of belonging and positive role models to all children in our society.

They are particularly beneficial to low-income children whose families often lack other opportunities for intellectual stimulation.

The public broadcasting channel is the only source available for educational children's programming for about one-third of American families that cannot afford or do not have access to cable television. And I bet most Americans would be surprised to know that the majority of public television viewers come from families with annual incomes of less than \$40,000. It is the children in these families who gain the most from public broadcasting.

I do not mean to suggest that public television is a panacea. Clearly, we parents must take responsibility for turning off the television more often and monitoring the shows our children do watch. And we can do more as a society to help our families meet that challenge. A rating system and the proposed v-chip to block out violent programs from individual homes could make a difference.

But let's not kid ourselves. In a culture like ours, which is so dominated by television, children's programming is not a luxury enjoyed by a privileged few. It is a necessity for tens of millions of American families.

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CREATORS SYNDICATE, INC.**

**TALKING IT OVER
BY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

As one of the few mothers in the room when the President met with leading entertainment executives at the White House Thursday, I can tell you how encouraging the discussion was.

The heads of companies that produce our movies and television shows were all there. Cap Cities/ABC, CBS, NBC, Fox, PBS, Disney, Turner Broadcasting, DreamWorks, Warner Bros., Sony and Viacom, along with other major media companies, cable stations and the creative guilds, joined together to launch plans for a television rating system.

They pledged to develop a system by early next year that will help parents gauge the amount of violence, sex and profane language used on shows. Also discussed were ways to improve the quality of children's programming.

During the meeting, I had a strong sense that these executives are listening to America's parents.

They are the people who run the networks, operate the cable stations and produce the shows -- the men and women who are, as one executive put it, "setting the cultural agenda for the world."

Just getting these entertainment executives to sit down at a table together was remarkable. After all, the entertainment industry is highly competitive, and many of these professionals have conflicting interests. A few weeks ago, there were doubts that such a meeting could ever take place, let alone at the White House.

This is an impressive step forward. Information is power. And right now, parents don't have enough information or power when it comes to the programs their children watch on television.

I know this from experience. As hard as I tried to be vigilant about my own daughter's viewing habits when she was younger, I couldn't monitor the television screen 24 hours a day.

Today, the majority of American children live in houses with three television sets. The typical family watches 51 hours of television a week. They can get shows on up to 70 channels, making it even harder for parents to control the messages and images their children absorb.

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON 2/29/96

Page 2

A rating system may not be the perfect solution, but it certainly will help. Ratings will be encoded so that parents can use the new v-chip to block out programs that are inappropriate for their children. As part of the telecommunications bill the President signed into law last month, v-chips will be required in all new television sets starting in 1998.

As the President said at Thursday's meeting, "We are handing the TV remote control back to America's parents -- so that they can pass on their values and protect their children."

The industry leaders know it will be a daunting task to give ratings to hundreds of thousands of television shows. Yet, to a person, they seemed ready and willing to rise to the challenge.

At the same time, nobody in the room was under any illusion that a rating system or the v-chip will end violence in America or get rid of all the guns on our streets.

Even with ratings and a v-chip, parents have to take more responsibility by turning the television off sometimes. They have to work harder to engage their children in other activities. They have to take the time to talk to their kids instead of parking them in front of the tube at every opportunity.

Vice President Gore told the broadcast executives that parents have to take primary responsibility "for raising their children in an era of information overload."

Better programming is also part of the solution. One of the legitimate concerns of the industry representatives is that educational and quality programming on commercial television is not always watched as much as the alternative. Parents must not just screen out bad programs but tune in good ones.

One executive emphasized that education and entertainment are not mutually exclusive and that quality programming can be profitable. The Discovery Channel, for example, has started a 24-hour children's educational channel with no commercials.

Nickelodeon, Disney and A&E are staples of our household, and I'm sure that's true for many other parents and children who want a steady diet of family-friendly programming.

This is all happening because millions of parents across the country have let the entertainment industry know that there is an audience out there for quality programming. Violence, sex and profanity are not the only things that sell.

Now, with a rating system in the works, the industry has taken its biggest step ever on behalf of parents and children. For the commitment they made to the President and the American public Thursday, the leaders of our media and entertainment industry deserve our thanks and praise.

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February 29, 1996

COLLECTED QUOTES BY FIRST LADY
HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

EXCERPTS FROM REMARKS BY THE FIRST LADY TO THE AMERICAN
NEWSWOMEN'S CLUB
(June 26, 1995)

"...Children who watch about 25 minutes of public broadcasting...every day have, after two to five years of exposure, more success and better readiness for school than children who watch 25 minutes of commercial television.

"We add that information to the more general knowledge we have about the impact of television on our children, and it underscores how important it is that we as adults recognize the differences between children and adults. And those differences are particularly marked in the way children respond to and from television.

"There is no getting around the fact that television is a pervasive influence. And it can either be an influence for the good or for the ill. That is up to us to determine. It is not out of our control...

"...Educational television plays (a positive role) in the lives of children, but particularly in the lives of those children in 40 percent of our families that do not receive cable, who are solely dependent upon the three major networks and public broadcasting, and who, in larger numbers than the rest of the population, often do not have the resources with books and videocassettes and renting movies every week so that their children can have the same kind of opportunities that we try to provide to our own."

EXCERPTS FROM REMARKS AT THE CASEY JOURNALISM CENTER FOR CHILDREN
AND FAMILIES
(June 13, 1995)

"...Issues affecting children are not marginal issues, they are the issues that really are at the core of what kind of country we have, what kind of investments we should make, what our priorities ought to be...Children's issues are not soft issues, but rather the very essence of who we are as a people; how we treat our children and what kinds of support we give them will, I hope, continue to make the case for including concerns about children in everything else that we do...

"...Looking at the business world is as important as looking at government policy. Looking at individual and family responsibility is as important as looking at the cultural norms

as played out in movies or television. They are all part of the culture in which children are being raised...

"...Children are the result of the values of both their families and the broader society in which they are raised, and to pretend that the family is some kind of little fortress immune from the effects of what goes on beyond its walls is as equally irresponsible as pretending that government policy or business policy can substitute for a family's love, concern and attention to children."

EXCERPTS FROM REMARKS BY THE FIRST LADY TO THE NATIONAL
CONFERENCE ON YOUTH VIOLENCE
(August 15, 1994)

"...Think of what it is like today for the young people in this room and the millions of others like them who are immersed in a culture of violence. A culture that in so many ways glorifies violence. We see it every day on television, we see it in our movies, but worst of all we see it every single day on the streets and neighborhoods where children are trying to grow up. Where many, too many, are in effect raising themselves. In too many neighborhoods, gunfire is a daily ritual of life, and an uzi is a badge of honor, instead of a mark of cowardice, which it truly is. A bullet wound is an emblem of adulthood."

EXCERPTS FROM THE FIRST LADY'S APPEARANCE ON THE OPRAH WINFREY
SHOW
(May 16, 1995)

"...Adults need to be careful about what they say around children and what they portray to children...The kind of dysfunctional behavior that we are subjecting our children to gives them no role models, gives them the feeling that anything goes, that they can do anything with no consequences and get on television...I think that talk shows, combined with the violence, is, in effect, changing the way children feel about themselves in very damaging ways to themselves and our country."

EXCERPTS FROM INTERVIEW WITH THE FIRST LADY BY NEWSWEEK MAGAZINE
(January 4, 1996)

"...I was looking at some research that a political scientist has done showing that young people are by far, in her words, more misanthropic than people our age and older. They don't trust anybody. They have more emotional stress in their lives.

"And the explanation for that has to do with everything from the breakdown of the family and divorce, to the steady diet of what they see on television, to the way they're treated by the

adults in their lives. And I just think we've got to take a step back here and say, "What are we creating? What are we doing to our children?" There aren't any simple answers. You can't say, it's just the government's fault. Or you can't say, it's just those irresponsible parents living in the inner city. The responsibility is spread all the way across society."

EXCERPTS FROM MIAMI HERALD COLUMN, "PUBLIC TELEVISION: AN OASIS FOR CHILDREN"

(August 13, 1995)

"...just at that wonderful stage when young children seem to absorb every new word and concept that they come across, educational television provides a unique learning tool. Even watching as little as 25 minutes a day can help. Researchers have found that low-income children between the ages of 2 and 5 who watch a small amount of educational programming do significantly better on tests of reading potential, vocabulary, mathematical reasoning, and overall readiness for school.

"By contrast, kids who spend the same amount of time watching noneducational cartoons and adult programs are not as well prepared for learning in school."

"...I do not mean to suggest that public television is a panacea. Clearly we parents must take responsibility for turning off the television more often and monitoring the shows that our children watch. And we can do more as a society to help our families meet that challenge. A rating system and the proposed V-chip to block our violent programs from individual homes could make a difference.

"But let's not kid ourselves. In a culture such as ours, which is so dominated by television, children's programming is not a luxury enjoyed by a privileged few; it is a necessity for tens of millions of American families."

EXCERPTS FROM REMARKS TO CHILDREN NOW CONFERENCE VIA SATELLITE

(March 4, 1994)

"Over the past few years, a lot of attention has been paid to violence in movies and in television programming, and in the records that young people listen to. And on that score, things are beginning to improve. As the President said earlier this week, the entertainment industry has -- as a result of public concerns -- become much more involved in efforts to reduce violence in network programming. Their willingness to set up a voluntary monitoring system is a step in the right direction."

"...One of the biggest dangers of excessive coverage of violence is that, in a child's eye, the stories validate, sometimes even glamorize, dysfunctional behavior. Violence becomes normal -- and, in an odd way, even painless. It becomes harder for a child to distinguish between fact and fiction...

"The second danger of excessive coverage is that children become numbed -- or, as social scientists say, "desensitized" -- to violence. Children become so habituated to seeing and hearing about violence that shootings, beatings -- even death -- come to seem normal to them.

"They develop an ironic detachment from life, a fatalism that prevents them from trusting anyone or anything. Recently I read a story about young children planning their own funerals. These children were so sure they were going to die violently that they had told their families what clothes they wanted to wear at their funerals, what music they wanted played, all with a casual detachment about what living and dying really means."

2ND STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

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May 31, 1996, Friday, BC cycle

LENGTH: 455 words

HEADLINE: Hillary Clinton urges boycott against TV violence

DATELINE: SAN FRANCISCO

BODY:

First lady Hillary Rodham Clinton encouraged parents Thursday to refuse to buy the products of advertisers who sponsor violent television programs watched by children.

Clinton, speaking during the taping Thursday evening of a television program on the impact of television violence on children, said she hoped advertisers and programmers would hear from parents and citizens about what they expect.

She expressed hope "that we're not just going to be passive watchers any longer and that we now have enough evidence about the impact of television, particularly violence, on the desensitization of our children, and that we will say...we're not going to buy the product of advertisers who continue to push this kind of programming."

"We're not going to listen to it any more. We're going to turn off the television set," Clinton said. "That's the best way of getting the attention of the people who make the programming decisions."

"We have to send two messages: One, that we are not going to watch programming that we believe as parents is not good for our children, and that we will reward those programmers and advertisers who do put on quality programming by watching it," she continued.

Mrs. Clinton and several other speakers took part in "The Smart Parent's Guide to TV Violence", produced by KQED, a public television station in San Francisco. The one-hour program will be shown on public broadcasting stations in September.

Clinton said she believed there should be more quality programming "that you want your children to watch."

"I'm hoping that we're going to see broadcasters required to offer three hours a week of quality educational programming for children," she said. She said she hoped the Federal Communications Commission would require broadcasters to agree to such a requirement to have their licenses renewed.

Clinton said the "V" chip that a new U.S. law requires to be installed in new television sets within the next two years would be "a tremendous tool for parents." The chips will enable parents to exclude violent programs from their homes.

For Release,

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS TO THE NATIONAL PTA 100TH ANNUAL CONVENTION
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JUNE 22, 1996**

Thank you. Thank you so very much. Don't you feel like you were at the Olympics when that music started? You know I'm so excited about the Olympics coming, we had the torch arrival and departure at the White House yesterday, and the night before. And when the music started, I thought of all those times as a little girl when I would sit in front of our television set and watch the Olympics. My brothers and I would go out and race each other around, and my mother one time went to the dime store, you see how old I am, the dime store, and bought ribbons for us.

It is such, a pleasure for me to be with people who care so much about the values that make our country what it is, and who know how important it is to support our children. I want to thank Joan for that introduction, but more than that, for the leadership she has given on behalf on the PTA. She has been a strong, strong voice. And I know she is going to be succeeded by a strong, strong successor. So the leadership of the PTA is in good hands.

And how fortunate we are to be celebrating the 100th anniversary of this important group. I wasn't able to see the slides but I heard some of the laughter and I know that Joan did a quick change from the clothes she was wearing to the clothes she is wearing now. We are celebrating a centennial commitment to the children of this country. And there are lots of parallels between the times when the PTA got started and our times today. I was thinking as I stood backstage that a hundred years ago, we were changing from a society that was primarily agricultural and rural to one that was industrial, where people were leaving the farms and crossing the oceans to come to our cities. Where we faced new challenges about how to educate young people of different backgrounds to be prepared for a new century.

And here we are again, as we move from the industrial age, from the cold war, from the hot wars of this century, to a time when the global economy and technology have changed our world so much, and once again you are ready. You are ready to help us meet our challenges and protect our values. And for that as a mother and citizen, I say thank you -- thank you to the PTA and all of you who are among its leaders.

And during your conference here, I hope you will continue to celebrate your achievements. Since the turn of the century, the national PTA has been at the forefront of our country's efforts to create a better world for all children. Child labor laws, compulsory public education, the national health service, special education, juvenile justice issues, all that we have addressed as a nation in the past hundred years -- in these and many issues, we have seen the strong role that the PTA has played, both at the national level and in countless communities across our country.

And I know that as we prepare for a new century, and for a new millennium, all of us can count on your being there again. On behalf of the President, I want to thank you for helping to put the well-being of our children first in the recent budget negotiations. The PTA was one of the first organizations that realized that threats to programs like school lunches were threats to the well-being of all our children. Your rallies on the Hill and your participation in an active education coalition were key to our efforts to honor America's historic commitment to education, and to providing all children in this country with the knowledge and skills they will need to fulfill their own god-given potential.

And I am so pleased that your priorities and initiatives for the next years will also address these important issues -- protecting children from violence, AIDS education, reaching out to preschool parents, working with schools of education at colleges and universities to make it possible for more parents to be encouraged to participate in their children's education. Parental involvement is the key to how well our children will do.

Some of you know that I do think it takes a village to raise a child, but it takes strong parents who are committed to being their children's first teachers, to make sure those children get a good start in life, and to make sure the village lives up to our responsibilities as well. But despite all of the work you have done and the stands you have taken, we cannot let down our guard. We must stand very firmly on the side of public education and we need an even louder chorus of parental voices in the upcoming fights over the budgets to come. Because, even as teachers and schools prepare to welcome record numbers of students, some fifty-two million this September, and we know that our classrooms will be filled with more children than there were even in the baby-boom generation. And these children will need the time and attention of more teachers. They will need text books, they will need school buildings that are not falling down around their ears.

And yet there are some in congress who are proposing to freeze the education budget in the face of this new generation of students who need the same support that I could expect when I was

going to school. This is a time to invest in education, not a time to retreat from our historic investment.

You know that as our global economy becomes even more competitive and demanding, that all of us -- children and adults -- must sharpen and raise our skills -- we cannot walk away from the higher national educational standards set by Goals 2000. The national PTA helped turn Goals 2000 into law. And it is working well in 46 states. I ask you to help us defend these standards from those who would wish to reverse this progress.

I also want to congratulate American public education; too many people for too long have only accented the negative, and I for one am tired of that. America is filled with good news and positive stories about how people are solving problems. And just recently we saw a report that American students are second to only students in Finland when it comes to reading ability. Let's make sure Americans know that, because we've sure gotten all the bad news about educational achievement in the past.

So we know we can make progress and our students can live up to high expectations, but we have to keep working. And I urge the National PTA to become an active partner in Secretary Riley's "Read Write Now" effort. He is attempting to link one million disadvantaged kids with three hundred thousand reading mentors this summer. It is the one-on-one personal connection that nobody, nobody can argue against. It is what lights the eyes of a youngster who all of a sudden recognizes a word, and it is what warms the heart of the adult who takes the time to work with that child. Just think of what they could do to turn around the lives and school success of young people, if three hundred thousand of us mentor a young boy or girl this summer.

We also know that computer skills are important and the President is attempting to make sure that every school is hooked up in America to the Internet. We do need to make sure that there are technology literacy funds available, but even more so we have to make sure that our teachers are trained to use those computers in the classrooms.

So there is much, as you gather here in Washington, you have every reason to be proud of. I was thinking to myself how in the last few years the National PTA is again at the forefront of our debates about education, and about our children. And we know that parents today need to help. Every one of us has some area where we rely on someone else. Whether it's the teachers or schools, the doctors and nurses or hospitals, the police on our streets, the people we will never meet, who make sure our air and water are clean and that our food is fit to eat -- we are all interconnected. But I want to spend a few minutes today talking about specially the challenges we parents face in today's world. Particularly because we are living in a media dominated age.

It is a topic I feel very strongly about, and I want to expand on the thoughts I shared with some of you at the National PTA Legislative Conference earlier this year.

Specifically, I want to talk about television. Like it or not, and some days I do and some days I don't, TV is a fact of life. Hundreds of channels with everything from up-to-the-date-news to 24-hour-a-day weather channels to talk shows, to violent movies, to what everyone finds as we use our remote control devices. And for many of our children, those television images are disturbing, they are what some call "junk food for the eyes." And we have in every home in America children who are being influenced by the images and ideas that come into those homes through our television sets.

Now for those of us who are parents, trying to raise healthy, well-adjusted, compassionate children, it is easy sometimes to feel helpless against such a barrage of images and negative influences. But, in no small part due to the National PTA's advocacy and leadership on this issue, we are finally on the road to changing this situation. Let me thank you for working with the National Cable Television Association in the Family and Community Critical Viewing Project, which is helping parents to control the effects of television violence and commercialism on their children.

The President and the Vice President have long supported efforts to give parents the tools to make television a positive influence in their children's lives. And I believe that these past few months have marked a hopeful turning point for families and their relationships to those TV sets in their homes.

Earlier this year, the President successfully advocated for what is called a v-chip in TV sets. It is a device that parents can use to block out programming that they consider objectionable. It is totally within the authority of the parents. In February, at a White House meeting, The President helped persuade the nation's television broadcasters and producers to establish a voluntary ratings system that will inform parents about the content of shows they plan to air. That means that when the v-chip is operational, in just a few years, and the ratings system is going, parents will be able to make judgments by looking at this rating system and then programming the TV set to decide whether or not a program will be permitted to be viewed in their homes.

But parents don't just want to tune out bad shows, they also want to tune in good ones for their children. American families need more and better programming for children. This is especially true for elementary school-age children. A study released by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg Public Policy Center showed that while 75 percent of programming aimed

at pre-schoolers could be called "high-quality," just 26 percent of programs targeted toward children ages six to eleven could be called good. Nearly half of the programming was rated "low quality."

Now the President, with your help, has been working hard to establish a minimum requirement for television broadcasters: all that we are taking is for three hours a week of educational, child-friendly programming. I don't think that is too much to ask. And the good news is that it's on the verge of happening. A majority of the FCC Commissioners will soon, I believe, take positive action on this issue.

The three-hour requirement is simple, and it is fair. As Vice President Gore noted a few days ago, "It leaves 98 percent of broadcasting time for other programs."

Next month, the President, the Vice-President, Tipper Gore, and I will meet with media executives and children's programmers to discuss ways to strengthen children's television.

We simply must demand more of the people who are producing - and profiting -- from the shows that young people watch. From my point of view, the very popular "Mighty Morphin Power Rangers" show, for example, has no place on any lineup described as "children's programming."

Experts have said that the show is "devoid of any enriching value." "Mighty Morphin Power Rangers" show for the example has no place in any line-up described as children's programming. Experts have said that show is devoid of any enriching value. "Mighty Morphin Power Rangers" is one of the most violent television programs, on television today. Hundreds of acts of violence, from kicking to missile launches, are depicted in each episode. The show's teach children that heroes always resolve any conflict through violence. They convey to children the sinister message that the more powerful your weapon, the more powerful you are. And even though they are zapped, kicked and fired upon countless times, the Power Rangers never feel any pain or suffer any injury.

As a result of the show's popularity, young children on playgrounds across America are imitating these so-called "superheroes," they kick, they punch, they fight each other, as well as the imaginary archvillains Rita Repulsa and Lord Zedd.

Now you and I know that kind of playground activity has been a hallmark of playgrounds for generations. Long before television, and long before specific shows like the "Power Rangers". But the repetition, the intensity of this message that children see over and over again on television is different.

As Dr. Robert Phillips of the American Psychiatric Association explained, "Children are like little VCRs, they see something once and then they repeat it over and over again."

I know this not just from experts and news accounts, but from children themselves. At a roundtable discussion about the V-chip and TV violence with children and their parents, some of whom were PTA members, I met a 10-year old boy who told me that his playmates "just pretend they are Mighty Morphin Power Rangers or the X-Men and then they'll just go around pretending they're killing each other or such things and think nothing of it."

Producers and broadcasters of shows like the "Mighty Morphin Power Rangers" say that they are simply giving children what they want to watch. In truth, they are appealing to the worst in our kids at the very times they are most likely to be watching TV. And, broadcasters are hiding the best children's programming in the least-watched "throw-away" hours.

We must stop showing violent, harmful programs to our kids during prime viewing hours. It is time for our media executives to show some greater responsibility for the children of America.

And as adults and as parents it is time for us to stand up and be counted. Decency and civility are values that are critical to the functioning of our society. Otherwise, in the absence of efforts to reach out to one other to teach each other good and positive lessons about how we work together and about how children grow up together, we will find ourselves and our children so inured to violence and sensationalism that we will not be able to help themselves.

We have enough evidence now from psychological and educational studies which shows that children, particularly from less stable homes, without the kind of structure that many of us have tried to impose, despite the media in our own houses, these children are particularly vulnerable to such messages. And they take those messages to heart. Like those little VCR's and they play back what they have learned.

As parents we cannot wait to act. We are on the front lines. We have to take responsibility, we have to start in our own homes by making clear what is and what is not acceptable television watching. We have to be willing to work with our schools as you have done to help families learn how to watch television critically, and to raise questions so that children know the difference between fantasy and reality. We have to give children something else to do besides watch television hour after hour after hour.

In many neighborhoods we should be working to keep schools open from three to six so that children are not on their own and unsupervised. We should be enlisting ourselves once again in programs, not only to mentor young people but to play with them, more recreational activities. We should take a stand against the

policies making it more difficult for young people to find extracurricular opportunities.

I was recently in Denver and a young man told me that he had been a wrestler for his first two years in high school, but next year because of budget cutbacks his family was being asked to pay \$150 for him to participate in that extracurricular activity. Many of us saw the Richard Dreyfuss movie, "Mr. Holland's Opus" and we could chart the decline in the drama, music, and art that was available that I took for granted in the 1950's and 1960's in my schools, where children now are not being given those opportunities. Television is being used to fill a void that parents, teachers, schools and communities used to fill with positive, productive activities for young people supervised by adults.

So while we take a stand against what we see on television, we should take a stand as you have done on behalf of providing more opportunities for children to say yes to, to give them something that is positive for them to learn from and be part of. There is wonderful opportunity in our country now, because I feel it as I travel around from place to place. Americans are tired of just wringing our hands at our problems -- we want to roll up our sleeves and get about the business of solving them.

And every where I go I find people who are doing just that. And it doesn't matter if I'm in an inner city school in Philadelphia, or in a school outside of Duluth, or in Corpus Christie, or in the San Frenado valley of California, everywhere I go it is so heartening to me, because every parent I talk with, every teacher, every young person is saying the same thing -- they are saying to me, as a young boy in Philadelphia, in a very tough neighborhood, in an inner city school that was attempting to be a haven against gangs, and graphti, and violence, he looked at me and he said, "You know Mrs. Clinton, most of us are good kids, but the only kids who get the attention are the bad kids, you know they are the only kids who get on television, they are the only kids who people really worry about sometimes, and most of us are really doing the best we can."

And I believe that, I know, I've looked into the faces of thousands and thousands of preschooler, and elementary kids, and middle schoolers, and high school students, and they are good kids. And even the ones who are teetering on the brink of gang pressures and family disruptions, and all of the problems children should not have to contend with, but do in today's world, they are desperate to be pulled back. They want some adult to say to them, 'You are a good young person, don't waste your life, learn to read, get out and do something positive for somebody else. Don't feel sorry for yourself, don't let yourself be turned into a victim.'

That is what the PTA has done for a hundred years. Because you have brought together parents and teachers in a partnership. You have presented a united front to our children that reminds ne

of my late father who used to say "You get in trouble in school, you get in trouble at home." And you know, that's the way it needs to be again.

And that is the crusade you are leading. Our children need to know that the adults in their lives care about them and we care about them so much that we not only love them, we discipline them. And we not only teach them, we guide them. And we're not only trying to do our best at home we are trying to make sure they get their best at school. That is what we owe to our children.

That is what you have done for a hundred years. And I believe that, just as at the time the PTA was formed, you have never been more necessary. You have never been more important to parents, struggling to make sense of a world that is sometimes very difficult to understand. You have never been more important to stand up against the forces of commercialism that would use our children, that would try to sell them products, like tobacco at an early age, that is not good for them.

You have stood against those kinds of pressures, and what we now must do, is with the same level of confidence and optimism that created the PTA, go forth into this next century, just as committed, just as concerned and just as ready to take on the challenges of this century, as were those who came before you.

I am very optimistic, I see positive signs everywhere I go of people taking back whether it's the authority in their own homes over the television set, or parental involvement in the schools. And what I hope each of us will do as we meet our challenges and protect our values, is to make it clear to every American, that commitment to children, to their education, their health and to their well-being is not a luxury. It is central to what of nation and people we will be.

Lady Bird Johnson once said that children are likely to live up to what you believe of them. I want every child in America to have at least one adult in their lives who believes that child has God given potential that will enable that child to be a good productive citizen, a good worker, a good family-member. And if we could just commit ourselves to reaching out to all those children, then I believe our future is in very good hands.

Thank you for what you have done for one hundred years, but do not grow weary doing this work -- we need the PTA now more than ever. Thank you all very much.

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EXCERPTS FROM *IT TAKES A VILLAGE*

Personal stories

(p. 277 - 278) "My parents did not worry so much about the content of the television shows my brothers and I watched as they did about the amount of time we should spend at it, if they let us. They wanted us reading, doing chores, or playing outside, so they regulated our viewing hours strictly. Bill and I restricted both the amount and the kind of television Chelsea watched as a child, and even now we check up from time to time on her TV and movie watching."

The V-chip and other technology

(p. 278) "Parents are beginning to come up with ways of defending themselves and their children from the excessive influence of television. They may eventually get some help from technology, such as the V-chip included in proposed telecommunications legislation. The V-chip is a computer chip with which parents could block television programs designated as containing material unsuitable for children. Making the technology available is only half the battle; putting it to good use will require a strong, clear rating system like the one we now have for movies."

What parents can do

(page 278) **Know what their children are watching:** "In the meantime, parents are on their own in making sure children are not watching inappropriate shows or too much television, period. They can continue to trade their own "ratings" informally. They can encourage the newspapers and magazines that are beginning to gear reviews of movies and music toward parents to cover television in this way as well. They can also teach their children *how* to watch television, the same way they teach them to cross the street: carefully."

(page 279) **Use television as a learning tool:** "We can ask children why characters act as they do and help them to distinguish between responsible and irresponsible acts. We can get them to talk about how the families on television are different from theirs and from other families they know. We can relate television to real-life situations. When Roseanne and Dan fret over bills because Dan's business is going under, for example, we can explain to our children that sometimes parents need to figure out ways to make sure they can meet all their responsibilities."

"Used wisely, television can help children to distinguish between fantasy and reality -- precisely because the fantasy it projects feels so real to them. Identify aspects peculiar to "TV land" that may seem obvious to an adult but aren't necessarily clear to a child. For instance, when watching a thirty-minute drama or sitcom, point out that it's not realistic to solve a problem in the span of a half hour. Explain that this is how writers and directors adapt to scheduling needs and discuss how the situation might have played out in real life."

(page 279) **Turn the television off:** "There is another option parents might consider: Just turn the televisions, video games, and VCRs off -- for an evening, a week, a regular day each week. When I made this suggestion in an interview with *Woman's Day*, readers responded enthusiastically. Some parents, fed up with not only depictions of violence but the excessive influence of television in general, wrote to say they had already tried out the idea."

Positive examples

(page 278) **The Cable Industry and the PTA:** "A publication entitled "Taking Charge of Your TV: A Guide to Critical Viewing for Parents and Children" is available from the Family and Community Critical Viewing Project, an initiative sponsored by the National PTA and the cable industry to teach television viewing skills to parents, teachers and children. It suggests ways parents can talk to kids about what they are watching, which not only makes television a less passive pastime but transforms it into a learning tool."

(page 279 - 280) **Parents:** "Here and there, parents are banding together and discovering their collective strength. The South Florida Preschool PTA monitors children's programming on the Miami television stations, with members volunteering to watch programming for one- or two-week blocks to determine whether the stations are complying with the law."

(pages 283) **The Media:** "When he was a news director at WCCO-TV in Minneapolis, John Lansing realized that the more his station's news coverage resembled an entertainment program, the weaker its connections to its community were becoming. He decided to convene town meetings to allow the station to reacquaint itself with the expectations of its viewers. As a result, the news operation dropped its tabloid-style coverage, and WCCO became a pioneer in "family-sensitive viewing," reducing or eliminating descriptions and images of violence during designated early evening hours. Even so, WCCO has managed to maintain its first-place market share."

(page 284) "Television could take a cue from the several newspapers that have developed children's beats and long-term reporting projects focusing on family issues. The Cleveland Plain Dealer, for instance, has added a new "family section" that runs every Saturday. So far, it has run stories on children's television viewing habits (along with tips on how to make TV watching a more constructive activity), on ways grandparents and grandchildren can spend more time together, and on building stronger families (accompanied by personal stories about people in the region.) The section also includes a regular family finance column, with information on everything from the cost of buying a family pet to how to take a family vacation without breaking the bank."

The Children's Television Act and the Federal Communications Commission

(page 280) "The Children's Television Act of 1990 limits the amount of time the networks can devote to commercials during children's programming. It also directs the FCC more broadly to review, as part of the licensing procedures, whether stations air shows that "serve the educational and informational needs of children."

(page 280) "Many parent and consumer groups (are) urging the FCC to enforce its regulations and to strengthen them, by requiring the networks to air more educational programming. In 1951, twenty-seven hours of quality children's programming aired each week. The President and FCC Chairman Reed Hundt would like to see the FCC require each network to broadcast at least three hours a week. As of this writing, the FCC has not taken action on this proposal. In response to public petitions, however, Westinghouse, which has recently purchased CBS, has voluntarily made such a commitment. The FCC's decision will not affect cable stations, since they are considered exempt from government regulations because they do not use the public airwaves."

Research

(page 281) "In May 1995, John Wright and Aletha Huston, professors of human development at the University of Kansas, released the results of a four-year study on how television influences the academic skills, school readiness, and school adjustment of low-income children. They found that preschoolers who watched as little as twenty-five minutes per day of educational children's programs like Sesame Street did significantly better on standardized verbal and math tests when they started school and consistently spent more time on reading and other educational activities than did children who watched primarily noneducational cartoons and adult programming."

Note: For more research, see attached report on violence and youth by the American Psychological Association.

Consumerism

(pages 288 - 292) See attached.



Seeing Is Believing

As television has ravenously consumed our attention, it has weakened the formative institutions of church, family and schools, thoroughly eroding the sense of individual obedience to the unenforceable on which manners and morals and ultimately the law depend. Obviously, we need to rebuild our families, our schools and our churches. But we cannot complete these reforms until something is done about television, for in both its advertising and its programming it has created demands that appeal, not to the best in our natures, but to the worst.

JOHN SILBER

A FRIEND OF mine told me about a visit she made to a family with five children. Down in the basement, she could hear the two teenage boys and their buddies singing along to the latest "gangsta"-rap CD. On the first floor, the six-year-old and the eight-year-old were slouched at either end of the couch, motionless in front of the screen, "surfing" the channels. *Click.* A futuristic battle scene. *Click.* Graphic images of a recent murder in the city. *Click.* Two men fighting. *Click.* What appeared to be a "docudrama" about rape. In an upstairs bedroom, their twelve-year-old sister was watching an "R"-rated video with a friend. It was a clear case of media assault.

When my friend gently raised the issue of the poison that was pouring into those children's minds, her harried hostess could only say, "Look, I'm doing my best." Clearly, this mother, like nearly every parent I talk with, could use some assistance from the village.

Some of that assistance has come from Tipper Gore,

whose 1987 book, *Raising PG Kids in an X-Rated Society*, sums up the challenge parents face. Long before I met her, I admired Tipper for having the courage to stand up and say what millions of other fathers and mothers were thinking: that some of the media our kids are exposed to is doing them harm.

Tipper and her watchdog group, the Parents' Music Resource Center, were leading forces behind the effort to get record companies to put warning labels on music recordings with violent, degrading, and sexually explicit messages that are inappropriate for children. Yet Tipper was attacked and ridiculed for her outspokenness, and accused of supporting censorship for advocating voluntary warning labels.

Finally, other public figures have taken up her call for action. C. DeLores Tucker, head of the National Political Congress of Black Women, teamed up with William Bennett against "gangsta" rap. They confronted media giant Time Warner, which has since decided to sell its stake in Interscope Records, the company that produced some of the music with the most offensive lyrics. Although it has taken a long time, public opinion seems to be mobilizing to force the entertainment and news industries as well as the government to address concerns about the effects of the media on our children and our society.

The recent attention that has been brought to bear on the content of movies is also overdue, given their powerful influence on the culture. At least we have a movie ratings system, although there is much we can do to refine it and to improve the content of films in the first place. For example, we can look to countries such as Great Britain and Australia, which have stricter codes for violent content. But in this chapter the focus is primarily on

what happens all day on our television screens, both because that is where most people see the movies Hollywood makes and because its presence and influence so pervade our society.

Former Federal Communications Commission chairman Newton N. Minow sounded the alarm long ago. In 1961, Minow decried television as a "vast wasteland" and urged that the networks be held to a high standard of public interest. Since then, Minow has devoted himself to this vitally important issue in a variety of communications and public service positions. Most recently, in *Abandoned in the Wasteland: Children, Television, and the First Amendment*, he and Craig L. LaMay catalogued the overwhelming evidence of television's negative effects that has accumulated over the past three decades and took broadcasters to task for evading the consequences of their decisions by hiding behind the First Amendment.

Minow's portrayal of how deeply televised violence has embedded itself in our national psyche is as shocking as the violence itself:

So routinely do Americans accept television's version of their lives, that on January 18, 1993, when seventeen-year-old Gary Scott Pennington walked into his high-school English class in Grayson, Kentucky, and fired a .38 caliber bullet into his teacher's forehead, killing her, one of the students who witnessed the murder remembered thinking, "This isn't supposed to happen. This must be MTV." Must be. The average student in Gary's senior class had already seen 18,000 murders on television. The average student in the class had spent between

15,000 and 20,000 hours watching television, compared with 11,000 in school; every year the average American child watches more than a thousand stylized and explicit rapes, murders, armed robberies, and assaults on television.

Since the 1950s, a steady stream of articles, books, and studies have documented the harm television does to children. The American Psychological Association's Commission on Violence and Youth points to three major reports, each a decade apart—by a surgeon general's commission in 1972, by the National Institute of Mental Health in 1982, and by the American Psychological Association's Committee on Media in Society in 1992—which reviewed hundreds of studies to arrive at the same unshakable conclusion: that "viewing violence increases violence" and "prolonged viewing of media violence can lead to emotional desensitization toward violence."

Ninety-eight percent of American homes have at least one television set, which is watched each week for an average of twenty-eight hours by children between the ages of two and eleven, and twenty-three hours by teenagers. Children who grow up in lower-income families, with fewer organized activities or places to play, watch even more TV than their more affluent peers.

Children themselves report that certain television shows encourage them to engage in sexual activity before they are ready, to behave aggressively, and to be disrespectful to their parents. Eighty percent of Americans responding to a 1993 Times-Mirror poll said that they believe TV is harmful to society and especially to children. And we know that saturating young minds with increasingly graphic and sensational depictions of vio-

lence prevents them from developing the emotional and psychological tools they need to deal with the threat and the reality of violence. Shootings, beatings, even killings, begin to seem normal and, in an odd way, painless. Children become numbed—"desensitized"—to violence.

Whether, and under what circumstances, the violence people see on television and at the movies actually incites violent acts is a question researchers have debated for years, ever since the surgeon general's 1972 report. As with smoking and lung cancer, however, we know that there is a connection. Yet just as somebody—most often somebody well paid by the tobacco companies—is sure to stand up each time a new finding confirms the linkage between smoking and lung cancer and shout, "That's not definitive," every time a new report draws a connection between the violence on our television screens and the violence on our streets, some in the entertainment industry try to refute, or at least to dilute, the claim.

You don't have to conduct research worthy of a Nobel Prize to grasp that what most children are seeing on television can't be good for them. Just turn on your television, any time of the day, any day of the week, and see what is competing for their attention. I'll bet that if a stranger came into your home and began telling your kids stories about the same kinds of characters and events, using the same kinds of words and pictures, you'd throw him out. You wouldn't wait for a surgeon general's report to validate what your instincts as a parent told you was a hazard to your children's mental and emotional health.

Defenders of television argue that children are subjected to images of violence in all sorts of media—including fairy tales and other literary classics—and complain that

it is not fair to hold television to a higher standard. But as Minow points out:

The tradition of oral and written storytelling embodied in both fairy tales and modern children's literature developed in the service of children's moral education, and its lessons helped to define the boundaries between childhood and adulthood. In traditional settings, violence was but *one* possible outcome of conflict, not the only one or even the primary one. Moreover, stories that included violence surrounded it with meanings created by adults for instructing children, not by adults for entertaining adults.

Television executives are also quick to say that they are a major provider of information as well as entertainment. They stress that it is the duty of journalists to report what goes on in the world. It's true that children now get most of their information about events at home and around the world directly from the media instead of filtered through their parents, teachers, or other adults. And it's also true that we need to be made aware of crime and violence so that we can take actions to protect ourselves, such as supporting measures to impose sensible gun control. But why, when we turn on the evening news these days, do we find ourselves awash in depictions of sensationalized violence that are increasingly difficult to distinguish from the gore that permeates the latest "action" series?

In 1992, the Center for Media and Public Affairs counted the acts of violence on ten television channels in the course of a single eighteen-hour broadcast day. When

the study was repeated just two years later, the center found that the incidence of television violence had increased by 41 percent, with the greatest rise occurring in news shows. Another recent study found that local news coverage of murders tripled last year, even though there was no corresponding rise in the recorded murder rate. The explanation is obvious. News executives are acting more single-mindedly from the same motive that drives their colleagues in the entertainment business: violence sells. Ellen Hume, a senior fellow at the Annenberg Washington Program in Communication Studies, points out in her recent report, "Tabloids, Talk Radio, and the Future of News," "News about crime and violence is cheap and easy to cover."

The exhaustive coverage of violence and bad news in general contributes to young people's increasing sense of alienation and to the dysfunctional, antisocial behavior that accompanies it. Many kids become depressed or have nightmares because of the barrage of bloodshed they see on TV. It numbs them to the pain and destructiveness of actual violence, encouraging a stance of ironic detachment. At worst, it contributes to what social scientist George Gerbner has identified as "the mean world syndrome," where children internalize the negative attributes of the world as they see it portrayed in the media.

Children also learn from television that we prize celebrity above all else, regardless of how it is achieved. At the same time, television may leave them with the impression that people hardly ever do anything good or right and that few, if any, adults are worthy of respect. We are saturated with stories about priests who molest children, gangs of young thugs who vandalize and victimize indiscriminately, and families that are nightmares of abuse

and neglect. The lurid accounts tend to eclipse positive stories about priests and other clergy who help people come to terms with loss and find meaning in their lives, teenagers who feed the homeless, clean up our parks, and help the elderly, and families who pull together in times of stress.

Small wonder, then, that many children grow up skeptical that organized religion can offer guidance and sustenance, that they or their peers can be a force for good, that families can be a lasting source of strength and stability. The merciless, minute scrutiny of crimes and victims emphasizes and exaggerates the powerlessness of individuals, especially in the minds of children, whose own lack of power in the world is all too plain to them. More insidiously, it undermines their faith in institutions, their belief that individuals can band together for good as well as for evil.

Leonard Eron, a psychology professor at the University of Michigan and a leading expert on the effects of television, warns: "In the same way television teaches violence, it now teaches youngsters that . . . dysfunctional families are par for the course." Professor Froma Walsh of the University of Chicago echoes him. Consistently seeing the sensational way families are portrayed on most talk shows and many prime-time programs encourages people to "view their own families through a glass darkly and look for pathologies," even when families are "just trying to cope as well as they can." Such research suggests that whatever is provided as a steady diet on television becomes reality in the minds of frequent viewers. That's not good news for any family, given what's currently on the menu.

And the menu is expanding. Video games have trans-

formed millions of television sets into scenes of blood and violence that children not only watch but participate in. Agile fingers race across the controls of best-sellers like *Mortal Kombat* and *Killer Instinct*, directing characters on the screen to execute the most desired outcome—a brutal murder. There are also moves like the Neck Breaker, the Skeleton Grab, the Skull Rip, and the Death Scream. In *Mortal Kombat*, a computer-generated voice urges "Finish him!" as blood continues to spray.

Recently, a fourteen-year-old boy from a Maryland suburb where actual violence rarely intrudes described his fascination with electronic violence to *Washington Post Magazine* staff writer David Finkel. "I like violence," he said. "I like seeing violence. I just really like watching violence." This boy's parents are involved in their son's life—they go to the movies with him and try to interest him in reading—but they also believe he is old enough to watch what he wants to see, listen to what he wants to hear, and play the games that amuse him. This boy assures Finkel that his life would be very different without this connection to violence. "I'd be scared to be with anyone else," he explains. "I wouldn't be able to relate to anybody else because *they've* all seen it."

It is too early to evaluate the effects of video games fully. But already some psychologists have pointed out that children's direct control of the violence in video games could be more harmful than what they only observe passively. Dr. Carole Lieberman, a UCLA psychiatrist and former chair of the National Coalition on Television Violence, refers to video games as a "new drug." "I think it's worse than television violence because children are pushing the buttons themselves," Dr. Lieber-

man says. "They are getting rewarded for destroying people in a game."

We already know that television doesn't just affect what we think; it also affects *how* we think. The medium, as Marshall McLuhan pointed out, is itself the message. The episodic, reactive, almost frantic pace of what is broadcast makes children feel and act frantic and shortens their attention spans and their patience for activities that take time and problems that don't yield immediate solutions.

Children—and teenagers—need stimulation, but there is a limit to how much they need, and what kind. Consider for a moment what it means to put the remote control in the hands of a preschooler. She does not have to work hard to be entertained, to use her imagination as she would if she were listening to a story or playing make-believe. She does not have the ability to screen out what she sees and hears, let alone to evaluate it. And least of all, faced with the dancing images and bright colors and exciting sound effects, is she equipped to walk away.

The pull of television is irresistible to children, riveting their attention the way traffic accidents draw rubberneckers. The homes in America where television sets blare night and day are like highways clogged with accidents. Only, in this case, the children gawking mindlessly, overstimulated and underchallenged, are the victims.

MY PARENTS did not worry so much about the content of the television shows my brothers and I watched as they did about the amount of time we would spend at it, if they let us. They wanted us reading, doing chores, or

playing outside, so they regulated our viewing hours strictly. Bill and I restricted both the amount and the kind of television Chelsea watched as a child, and even now we check up from time to time on her TV and movie watching. Parents are beginning to come up with other ways of defending themselves and their children from the excessive influence of television. They may eventually get some help from technology, such as the V-chip included in proposed telecommunications legislation. The V-chip is a computer chip with which parents could block television programs designated as containing material unsuitable for children. Making the technology available is only half the battle; putting it to good use will require a strong, clear rating system like the one we now have for movies.

In the meantime, parents are on their own in making sure children are not watching inappropriate shows or too much television, period. They can continue to trade their own "ratings" informally. They can encourage the newspapers and magazines that are beginning to gear reviews of movies and music toward parents to cover television in this way as well. They can also teach their children *how* to watch television, the same way they teach them to cross the street: carefully.

A publication entitled "Taking Charge of Your TV: A Guide to Critical Viewing for Parents and Children" is available from the Family and Community Critical Viewing Project, an initiative sponsored by the National PTA and the cable industry to teach television viewing skills to parents, teachers, and children. It suggests ways parents can talk to kids about what they are watching, which not only makes television a less passive pastime

but transforms it into a learning tool. We can ask children why characters act as they do and help them to distinguish between responsible and irresponsible acts. We can get them to talk about how the families on television are different from theirs and from other families they know. We can relate television to real-life situations. When Roseanne and Dan fret over bills because Dan's business is going under, for example, we can explain to our children that sometimes parents need to figure out ways to make sure they can meet all their responsibilities.

Used wisely, television can help children to distinguish between fantasy and reality—precisely because the fantasy it projects feels so real to them. Identify aspects peculiar to "TV land" that may seem obvious to an adult but aren't necessarily clear to a child. For instance, when watching a thirty-minute drama or sitcom, point out that it's not realistic to solve a problem in the span of a half hour. Explain that this is how writers and directors adapt to scheduling needs and discuss how the situation might have played out in real life.

There is another option parents might consider: Just turn the televisions, video games, and VCRs off—for an evening, a week, a regular day each week. When I made this suggestion in an interview with *Woman's Day*, readers responded enthusiastically. Some parents, fed up with not only depictions of violence but the excessive influence of television in general, wrote to say they had already tried out the idea.

Imagine what might happen if we all turned off our televisions for an entire week. The quiet—and the other activities we could take up—might be habit-forming.

Here and there, parents are banding together and dis-

covering their collective strength. The South Florida Preschool PTA monitors children's programming on the Miami television stations, with members volunteering to watch programming for one- or two-week blocks to determine whether the stations are complying with the law.

The Children's Television Act of 1990 limits the amount of time the networks can devote to commercials during children's programming. It also directs the FCC more broadly to review, as part of the licensing procedures, whether stations air shows that "serve the educational and informational needs of children." In three years, the Florida group found, the networks failed to meet the law's requirements. In their 1995 report, they noted that Miami commercial television stations were devoting only 1 percent of total programming time to educational programs for children.

The Miami group is among the many parent and consumer groups urging the FCC to enforce its regulations and to strengthen them, by requiring the networks to air more educational programming. In 1951, twenty-seven hours of quality children's programming aired each week. The President and FCC Chairman Reed Hundt would like to see the FCC require each network to broadcast at least three hours a week. As of this writing, the FCC has not yet taken action on this proposal. In response to public petitions, however, Westinghouse, which has recently purchased CBS, has voluntarily made such a commitment. The FCC's decision will not affect cable stations, since they are considered exempt from government regulations because they do not use the public airwaves.

The advent of cable television has dramatically expanded offerings available to children, for better and worse. Channels like Disney, Discovery, Nickelodeon,

and A&E are staples of Clinton family viewing. But only 65 percent of American households now have access to cable, and the demographics of the remaining 35 percent includes a disproportionate share of the nation's children. As with many other social changes of the past fifty years, the children hardest hit by the negative impact of the media, television in particular, are those in low-income families.

That's why public television, which has consistently provided educational programming for children, deserves our tax dollars and charitable contributions. Shows like *Sesame Street* entertain while they teach math and reading. *Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego?* makes learning geography fun and exciting. With the help of music videos and special effects, *Bill Nye, the Science Guy* transports science out of the classroom and into the world. Many "hit" educational shows are creations of the Children's Television Workshop, which was founded in 1968 to explore television's potential as an educational medium.

In May 1995, John Wright and Aletha Huston, professors of human development at the University of Kansas, released the results of a four-year study on how television influences the academic skills, school readiness, and school adjustment of low-income children. They found that preschoolers who watched as little as twenty-five minutes per day of educational children's programs like *Sesame Street* did significantly better on standardized verbal and math tests when they started school and consistently spent more time on reading and other educational activities than did children who watched primarily noneducational cartoons and adult programming.

Educators, community leaders, church groups, and others can join in the effort to demand support for pub-

lic television and better commercial programming. They can also organize boycotts of gratuitously violent, sexually explicit, or otherwise offensive programming. One household won't have much of an impact, but a village or two can make or break a Nielsen rating percentage point, and ratings are TV's most critical barometer for making programming decisions.

Teachers can play a part, both directly and indirectly. First and most important, they can do their best to make reading fun. They can also assist parents in helping to educate children about how television manipulates them and undermines values like compassion and kindness that they are learning at home, in their place of worship, and at school.

Journalists and news executives have responsibilities too. When violence is newsworthy they should report it, but they should balance it with stories that provide children and adults with positive images of themselves and those around them, taking care not to exacerbate negative stereotypes. To report the truth in a thoughtful manner, mindful of the potency of the written word and the televised image, is to be not only a good journalist but a responsible citizen.

Acknowledging that commercial television is driven by the need to make a profit does not let executives and programmers off the hook. As Newton Minow said in a 1995 keynote address to a conference of Children Now, a leading nonpartisan, nonprofit organization for children: "In an ideal world, the people who work in television would have to take an oath like the Hippocratic oath: 'Do no harm.'" How could they uphold it? They could begin by asking themselves if they would allow their own children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and neighbors

to watch the shows for which they are responsible. They could form their own advisory panels—preferably of parents—who could be counted on to put children's interests ahead of financial ones.

Journalists and broadcasters tell me they have been talking among themselves about these issues and looking for ways to fulfill both their professional and public responsibilities. At their annual Family Conference, held this year in Nashville, Al and Tipper Gore brought together broadcasters, children's advocates, advertisers, researchers, and parents to discuss the media's impact on children and families. Oprah Winfrey has decided to steer her show in a more positive direction. One television station decided not to carry the more lurid talk shows, and another is considering dropping them. A few local TV stations have decided to abandon the tabloid approach and get back into the news business.

There may be monetary as well as moral rewards for such choices. When he was a news director at WCCO-TV in Minneapolis, John Lansing realized that the more his station's local news coverage resembled an entertainment program, the weaker its connections to its community were becoming. He decided to convene town meetings to allow the station to reacquaint itself with the expectations of its viewers. As a result, the news operation dropped its tabloid-style coverage, and WCCO became a pioneer in "family-sensitive viewing," reducing or eliminating descriptions and images of violence during designated early evening hours. Even so, WCCO has managed to maintain its first-place market share.

Numerous journalism associations and programs encourage balanced and open-minded reportage. One such organization is the Casey Journalism Center at the Uni-

versity of Maryland, which awards fellowships to reporters, editors, producers, and news directors. The recipients get the chance to participate in conferences and meet with experts on these issues. The intent is to encourage thoughtful, in-depth, well-documented reporting.

Television could take a cue from the several newspapers that have developed children's beats and long-term reporting projects focusing on family issues. The *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, for instance, has added a new "family section" that runs every Saturday. So far, it has run stories on children's television viewing habits (along with tips on how to make TV watching a more constructive activity), on ways grandparents and grandchildren can spend time together, and on building stronger families (accompanied by personal stories about people in the region). The section also includes a regular family finance column, with information on everything from the cost of buying a family pet to how to take a family vacation without breaking the bank.

Television, movies, video games, and music are here to stay and will continue to be influential in shaping opinions and behaviors in the years to come. As parents, we must be willing to reassert our authority over what enters our households. As creators and consumers of the media, and as citizens of the village, we must be willing to join with one another to press for improvements in what our children see and hear. A single act has little impact, but millions of decisions—to turn off television sets or to reject certain movies or CDs or video games—give us the voltage to send a message to advertisers and programmers that will reach them loud and clear.



Every Business Is a Family Business

The Golden Rule does not mean that gold shall rule.

BARBARA REYNOLDS

MY FATHER distrusted both big business and big government. When I was growing up, he never tired of quoting President Eisenhower's warning against the military-industrial complex and the dangers of concentrated, unaccountable power in anyone's hands. I thought of him during a trip I made to South America in October 1995, when I happened to hear a reference to the words of an earlier President, Theodore Roosevelt. I was to give a speech to students and faculty at the University of Chile in Santiago. When the rector of the university introduced me, he referred to remarks that Roosevelt had made in the same hall eighty-two years before. The former President, he said, had warned against the excesses of unchecked corporate power.

Intrigued, I tracked down a copy of Roosevelt's speech and was struck by how relevant his message remains today:

By allowing, with no control, this concentration of enormous enterprises in the hands of a few . . . many evils have arisen. . . . We must

values. If either is undermined, the consequences will end up costing us all more in the long term, materially and otherwise, than we can possibly gain in the short term.

In this book I have talked about the responsibilities of individuals and institutions for the future of our children and the village they will inherit. No segment of society has a more significant influence on the nature of that legacy than business. We live in an era of what political scientist Edward Luttwak calls "turbo-charged" capitalism, which is characterized by intense competition; breathtaking technological changes; global financial, information, and entertainment markets; constant corporate restructuring; and relatively less public control and influence over the private economy.

This combination of changed circumstances poses new problems for families and communities, and for the children who grow up in them. Business affects us powerfully as consumers, as workers, as investors, and, more broadly, as citizens of the society it helps to create and as inhabitants of the environment it has a strong hand in shaping. Our circumstances therefore require new and thoughtful responses from every segment of society, particularly from business.

→ OUR economy grows as it gives consumers more and better products to choose from, at competitive prices. On the whole, this system has been a boon to us, not only allowing us to live comfortably but providing more Americans with jobs. But one of the conditions of the consumer culture is that it relies upon human insecurities

to create aspirations that can be satisfied only by the purchase of some product or service. If all of us said today, "Okay, I have enough stuff. From now on I will buy only the bare necessities," that would be a disaster for our economy. But spurred on by cultural messages that encourage us to feel dissatisfied with what we have and that equate success with consumption—messages fueled by the advertisements that constantly bombard us—we face the far more likely danger of allowing greed to overshadow moderation, restraint, and the stability that comes from saving and investing for the future rather than satisfying short-term desires.

The threat is greatest to our children, who will inherit that future and the values that shape it. "As a society," writes David Walsh in *Selling Out America's Children*, "we Americans of the late twentieth century are sacrificing our children at the altar of financial gain," and, in Walsh's phrase, to the lure of "adver-teasing." Those of us who believe in the free market system should worry about what we are in danger of becoming: a throwaway society sustained on a diet of unrealizable fantasies, a society in which people—especially children—define self-worth in terms of what they have today and can buy tomorrow.

Walsh documents the careful calculation—and hundreds of millions of dollars—that go into advertising campaigns directed at children, whose desire for instant gratification and lack of sophistication make them easy targets. Children parked in front of the television for hours on end are particularly susceptible, and advertisers know it. After the Federal Communications Commission repealed regulations that limited the amount of time that could be devoted to commercials during children's television shows in 1984, the number of commercials

again increased, and program-length commercials—shows that revolve around toy-based characters—exploded.

The Children's Television Act passed by Congress in 1990 again set limits on commercial time during children's programming, but compliance has not always been strictly enforced, although the FCC is trying. "Kids today," observes FCC chairman Reed Hundt, "can identify more cereals than Presidents." Nor is the drumbeat to buy, buy, buy confined to commercials; advertising permeates children's lives. Even their sports heroes have become walking (and slam-dunking) advertisements for everything from Nikes to Pepsis to Big Macs.

Mass consumerism and "adver-teasing" have parents competing with multinational corporations not only for their children's values and beliefs but for their health. According to one study, Joe Camel, the cartoon mascot of Camel cigarettes, is now as recognizable to six-year-olds as Mickey Mouse. Cigarette brand names have become affixed to virtually every professional sport, from soccer to skiing to sailing. If you doubt that tobacco companies target children as prospective consumers, ask yourself what gets three thousand American children to start smoking on any given day, or talk to Dave Goerlitz, an actor who appeared in commercials for Winston cigarettes for seven years, until he became so disgusted by the company's blatant attempts to lure children that he left the business and joined an antismoking crusade. Or take a look at the previously secret documents from Philip Morris, which produces two out of every three cigarettes American children smoke, that U.S. Representative Henry Waxman of California read into the *Con-*

gressional Record in July 1995. Among the revelations was that the company, as Waxman put it, "studies third-graders to determine if hyperactive children are a potential market for cigarettes."

In cases where children are directly and seriously endangered by products, the government can and should step in, as the President has done in his proposal to have the Food and Drug Administration restrict children's access to cigarettes and smokeless tobacco, curtail cigarette advertising that appeals to them, and require tobacco



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companies to fund an educational campaign designed to counter the message that smoking is "cool." (Predictably, the tobacco companies are spending millions of dollars to fight the proposal through legal action in the courts and through an advertising campaign against "government bureaucrats.")

But government is a partner to, not a substitute for, adult leadership and good citizenship. Parents must become more willing to stand up to consumer pressures from advertisers and from their own children. They can resist the impulse to "prove" their love by showering children with things they do not need and give them precious time and attention instead. They can make a moral statement to their children and to manufacturers by refusing to buy products that promote gratuitous violence, sexual degradation, or plain bad taste. In the summer of 1995, clothing designer Calvin Klein withdrew an advertising campaign targeted at teenagers that featured young models in sexually suggestive poses after consumers objected.

If parents do not take a stand, how can we expect children to resist the consumer culture's message that style is more important than substance? We can measure its potential for destruction in the young lives already lost to murder over a ski jacket or a set of fancy new hubcaps. Parents need help from the village to counteract and to curtail the force of this message. The broadcasters and publishers who provide time and space to advertisers must exercise greater restraint and better judgment. Business must work with government and families to find ways of balancing the interests of industry with the interests of children.

. . .

THE consumer culture's assault on values adds to the pressures families are under in today's fast-changing economy. Most of us remember a time when business was an anchor in our communities. After World War II, when America had about 40 percent of the world's wealth and only 6 percent of its population, our nation enjoyed an economic boom in which businesses were expected to produce goods and services of high quality, not only for the purpose of bringing in profits for stockholders but also to create the jobs and higher incomes that would build the middle class. After all, if no one had jobs or incomes, who would buy the goods and services that businesses were producing?

In recent years, however, long-established expectations about doing business have given way under the pressures of the modern economy. Too many companies, especially large ones, are driven more and more narrowly by the need to ensure that investors get good quarterly returns and to justify executives' high salaries. Too often, this means that they view most employees as costs, not investments, and that they expend less and less concern on job training, employee profit sharing, family-friendly policies, shared decision making, or even fair pay raises that share with workers—not to mention their families and communities—gains from productivity and profits. Even workers' jobs may be sacrificed as executives seek short-term profits by "downsizing" or "outsourcing" (farming out to independent contractors work previously done in-house) or moving production to countries where wages are lower and environmental and other regulations less stringent. Instead of "We're all in this together," the message from the top is frequently "You're on your own."

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS FOR WHITE HOUSE MEDIA CONFERENCE
JULY 29, 1996**

TALKING POINTS

- We all know television is a fact of life. It is also tremendously powerful medium that touches all of our lives - and has a particularly profound influence on our children. This segment of our discussion is about that influence.
- As the President has pointed out, the technology of television is not intrinsically good or bad. Television has the potential to be a powerful force for good in our children's lives. But it depends so much on this: Do the decisions made by the people in control of that technology value children?
- Now more than ever, American families are seeking more and better programming for their children. Parents don't just want to tune out bad shows, they want to be able to tune in good ones -- shows that stimulate, inform, and challenge our children.
- And thanks to research done by people such as Professors John Wright and Aletha Huston, co-directors of the Center for Research on the Influences of Television on Children at the University of Kansas -- who have been at the White House before to talk about their compelling work -- we know what a positive effect educational programming can have on children's intellectual stimulation and academic preparation.
- Today we will hear from Professor Huston just how powerful - and positive -- television's influence can be.

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Effects of Early Childhood Media Use on Adolescent Achievement

A report by the staffs of the "Recontact" Project:

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The authors acknowledge the generous support of the Markle Foundation of New York City, and its President, Lloyd N. Morrisett. We are especially grateful to the more than 570 young people and their families in Springfield, Massachusetts, and Topeka, Kansas, who participated in this research both as preschool children, and much later as adolescents.

Executive Summary

Two groups of preschoolers were observed in separate studies during the early 1980s -- one in Massachusetts and one in Kansas. In 1994, when they were 15 to 18 years old, these young people were interviewed, and their high school transcripts were obtained. One major purpose was to determine whether early viewing of educational television programs predicted later academic achievement.

The results support the hypothesis that curriculum-based child informative programs contribute to children's educational development. We call this the Early Learning model of TV effects. With statistical controls for parents' education, viewing of child informative programs during preschool was positively related to high school academic achievement, academic self concept, and the value the participants placed on academic attainment.

The results contradict the popular notion that preschool exposure to rapidly paced programming (especially *Sesame Street*) leads to reduced attention span and consequently to poor academic achievement, and disinterest in such activities as book reading. *Sesame Street* viewing was positively associated with academic achievement and book reading.

The findings also contradict the hypothesis that attractively produced children's educational television leads to an inattention to language and hence to poor language skills. *Sesame Street* viewing was positively related to preschool vocabulary and to a high school grades in English.

Viewing educational television in preschool appears to contribute to children's academic performance many years later. It is obvious that the content learned at age 5 cannot influence high school performance directly. Instead, a rich diet of educational television may help children to enter school with the academic skills required for the tasks they encounter, increasing the likelihood of early success. They may also have higher expectations for themselves and make a correspondingly greater investment of time and effort toward mastery of the knowledge and skills taught in school. Teachers may view such children as good students and offer them

challenging and stimulating activities. This early positive experience in school may set a child on a trajectory of success, self-confidence, and positive reputation among teachers that has long-term consequences for later academic achievement.

INTRODUCTION

In the early 1980s we conducted two major investigations of preschool television viewing. One investigation was led by Professors John Wright and Aletha Huston of the University of Kansas, and the other by Professor Daniel Anderson of the University of Massachusetts (Anderson, Field, Collins, Lorch & Nathan, 1985; Huston, Wright, Rice, Kerkman, & St. Peters, 1990). In 1994 we collaborated to locate and interview the adolescents whom we had studied in those investigations. One major purpose was to determine the relationships between preschool educational TV viewing and adolescent academic achievement.

Background

The potential of television for positive effects on the growth and development of children has been debated for almost 50 years. Evidence for effects of positive programming, however, has been limited primarily to laboratory investigations of immediate impact, or to field studies that estimate impact over a few years' duration at most. These studies provide persuasive evidence that carefully crafted educational programs for young children can teach academic skills and positive social behavior (see Comstock & Paik, 1991 for a review). What has been missing are demonstrations of the impact of positive programming over much longer periods of time.

A summative evaluation of *Sesame Street's* first two years (Bogatz & Ball, 1971) reported that viewers showed greater gains than non-viewers on a number of basic academic skills (e.g. letter and number knowledge, classification skills). A follow-up report also noted that at least at the beginning of formal schooling, viewers were rated higher by their teachers on an index of school readiness (Bogatz & Ball, 1972).

In the Kansas preschool study (one of the studies in this follow-up), children who viewed *Sesame Street* often when they were 3 years old showed greater gains in vocabulary by age 5 than did less frequent viewers (Rice, et al., 1990). More recently, the television viewing, cognitive and social development of preschool children from lower income homes was extensively studied for a period of three years. Even after controlling for initial language skill and home background characteristics, children who viewed more educational programming

between ages 2 and 4 scored higher than infrequent viewers on standardized tests of math skill, vocabulary, letter and word recognition, and school readiness (Wright & Huston, 1995).

In sum, the research to date suggests that viewing child-informative programming during the preschool years has benefits for academically relevant skills and school readiness. Although school readiness has undeniable importance for its own sake, the value of educational viewing would be even greater if these early gains were maintained throughout the elementary and secondary school years. By what processes could such an optimistic chain of causality occur?

One model, the "Early Learning Model," predicts that the cognitive and attitudinal benefits of viewing educational programming as a preschooler lead to success when the child enters school. Children who begin school with basic preacademic skills (e.g., knowing the alphabet, how to write their names, how to count) are apt to succeed in the tasks presented, and are likely to be viewed by teachers as competent students. These initial advantages snowball into a cycle of high expectations for oneself. Early success and teachers' positive perceptions lead children to develop positive attitudes about school, high levels of motivation, and high levels of achievement. These build upon themselves over time, and are reflected in academic achievement and achievement motivation in the high school years. Because low-income families have children at risk for entering school with few preacademic skills more often than high-income families, and because teachers sometimes hold negative stereotypes about the ability of low-income students, the advantages conferred by educational viewing may be especially important for children from low income families.

Not all child development specialists and educators agree that educational television will have positive effects on children's academic skills. Jane Healy (1990) argued that television, in general, and *Sesame Street*, in particular, retards children's language development and reduces reading ability. Because television is so visually attractive, she claims, it teaches an inattention to spoken language which, in turn, slows language acquisition and ultimately reading achievement.

Jerome Singer (1980) proposed that viewing such rapidly paced programming as *Sesame Street* leads to a reduced attention span. Short content units, frequent cuts, and frequent

movement induce the orienting reflex and block reflective and sustained thought. These combine to reduce a child's ability to inhibit movement and sustain a line of thinking. Ultimately, of course, such a shortened "attention span" should have negative consequences for cognitive development and academic achievement.

Singer proposed that *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* would not have these negative consequences due to the series' relatively long content units and slow pacing of formal features (with little movement).

The Recontact Study

The adolescents interviewed were participants in one of two investigations of preschool children in the early 1980s. The Massachusetts research group intensively studied children near their fifth birthday and included concurrent videotape measures of home TV viewing behavior. The Kansas research group provided the first longitudinal investigation of detailed patterns of TV viewing in the age range 3 to 7 years. Because the two research groups were in communication at the time the studies were designed, many of the measures used in the original studies were identical or quite similar.

Both groups collected week-long viewing diaries on two occasions within 6 months of the children's fifth birthdays. Those diaries were validated by the concurrent video observations (Anderson et al., 1985; Anderson & Field, 1991). The measures of TV viewing during the preschool years are among the most accurate and extensive of any field studies of TV impact. Because the names of all programs viewed were recorded, exposure to particular categories of television programs was calculated as well as total viewing.

Children in both samples were given the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised (PPVT-R) during preschool. It is a standardized instrument measuring receptive vocabulary and predicts the development of communication skills (Dunn, 1981).

The Massachusetts sample was given a measure of task persistence, the Banta Replacement Puzzle (Banta, 1970), which consists of a deceptively difficult jigsaw puzzle. An

average length of sustained persistence was used in the analyses. The Massachusetts sample was also rated by parents on a scale of temperament developed by Thomas et al. (1963). The activity subscale was analyzed in some analyses reported here. This subscale assesses behaviors analogous to attention deficit with hyperactivity.

Adolescent Survey

Preschool viewing diaries were available for 655 children. Of these, 570 or 87.0% were interviewed by telephone. Thirty-five refused an interview and 50 could not be located or had unlisted telephone numbers. The average age was 17.46, and ranged from 15.02 to 19.34 years. The individuals interviewed did not differ from those not interviewed on most demographic characteristics, but the adolescents not interviewed were slightly more likely to have had no father living at home in preschool (making them difficult to trace using the mother's and child's last known surname).

A brief parent interview was followed by a 30-40-minute interview with the adolescent participant. They were asked about:

Media Use

- Television Viewing -- Total weekly television viewing time and viewing of different categories of programs.
- Reading -- Time spent reading books, newspapers, magazines, comic books.

Academic Motivation

- Academic self-concept -- Perceived ability and expectancy of success in English, math, and science.
- Attainment value -- Perceived value or utility of English, math, and science courses.

Academic Achievement

- Reported Grades — Students' reports of their typical high school grades in English, math, and science
- Transcript Grades — For 491 adolescents, an official copy of their high school transcript, sent directly by the school. For the 79 participants whose transcripts were not available, estimation procedures based on those with complete information were used to adjust self-reported grades for inflated reporting.

RESULTS

Each of the three identified models predicting effects of early educational television exposure was tested. In each case, preschool viewing of child informative television programming was tested as a predictor of high school achievement. Differences in parent education and children's early intellectual ability that might affect both viewing and achievement were statistically controlled. This procedure permits disconfirmation of a model if the results contradict it. Alternatively, the results may fail to support a model without actually contradicting it, an outcome that weakens confidence in the model without disconfirming it. If the results are consistent with the predictions of a model, that can be considered "support," but the model cannot be considered "proven". The relations dictated by a model might be equally well accounted for by alternative explanations or by factors in the child's environment that were not measured.

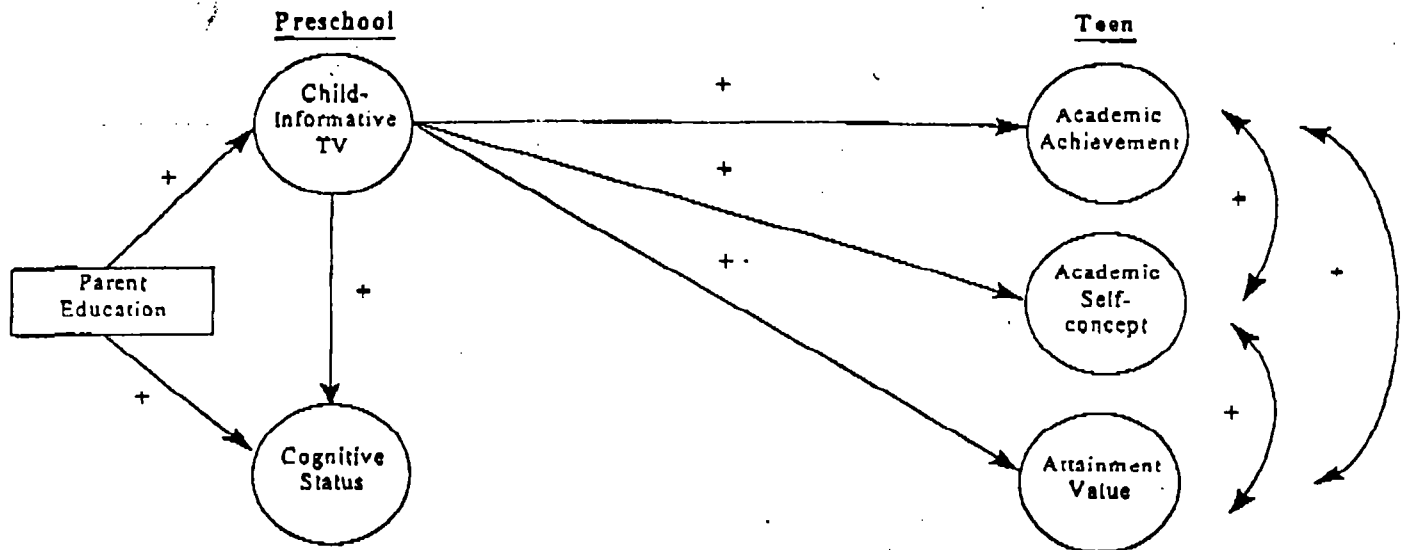
Early Learning Model Is Supported

The Early Learning Model is outlined in Figure 1. The results supported the model as indicated by the directional arrows and check marks.

Children's Informative Programs

Exposure to child informative programs predicted *vocabulary* scores at age 5. Frequent viewers had better vocabulary scores than infrequent viewers.

Early Learning Theoretical Model



Early Learning Results

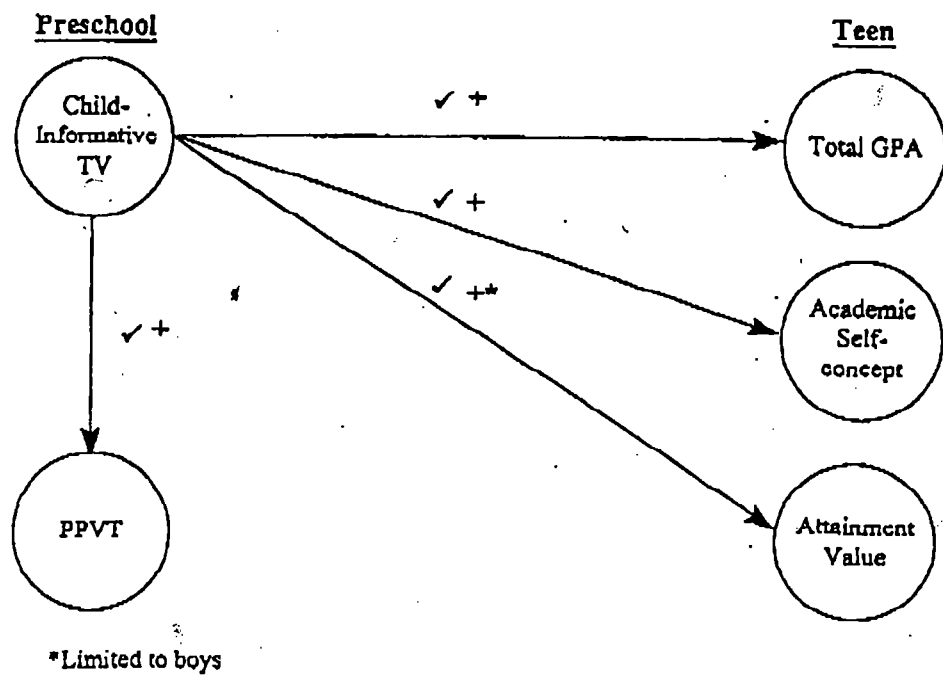


Figure 1

Exposure to child informative programming at age 5 predicted average *high school grades* in English, math, and science. Children who watched child informative programs frequently in preschool had higher grades than infrequent viewers. Viewing predicted achievement better for boys than for girls.

Sesame Street

Of all the time children watched child informative programs, over half was devoted to *Sesame Street*. *Sesame Street* also has more emphasis on school readiness skills than many educational programs. Analyses of exposure to *Sesame Street* provided clear support for the early learning model. Preschool viewing predicted high school grades equally well for both boys and girls.

Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood

Although children watched *Mr. Rogers* less frequently than *Sesame Street*, exposure to *Mr. Rogers* predicted high school grades for boys. Exposure was unrelated to grades for girls.

How Large Are the Differences?

One method of understanding how large the differences in grades are is to examine the increase in grade point average for every hour per week of preschool viewing. Grade point average was computed on a 4-point scale with 4=A, 3=B, 2=C, 1=D, 0=F. For every hour per week of viewing child informative programs at age 5, grade point average for English, math, and science in high school increased by .03. For every hour per week of *Sesame Street* viewing, high school grade point average increased by .052. A child who watched *Sesame Street* for five hours a week (one hour each week day) at age 5 performed in high school, on average, about 1/4 of a grade level higher than a child who never viewed.

Academic Motivation

Child informative viewing predicted *academic self concept* in high school. Adolescents who had been frequent viewers made higher estimates of their ability and expected higher levels of success in English, math, and science than those who had been infrequent viewers.

Preschool informative viewing predicted the *value* attached to English, math, and science courses for boys. Boys who had been frequent viewers in preschool valued achievement more than infrequent viewers did.

Language Deficit Hypothesis Is Contradicted

Contrary to the language deficit model, preschool viewing of *Sesame Street* was positively related to preschool vocabulary.

Contrary to the language deficit model, preschool viewing of *Sesame Street* was positively related to high school English grades.

Attention Span Model Is Not Supported

The positive relation of *Sesame Street* viewing to high school grades and academic motivation contradicts the model suggesting that programming with short segments and rapid pace leads to reduced attention span.

According to the attention span model, viewing *Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood* may increase persistence and reduce physical activity level, leading eventually to good school performance. As noted, boys who were frequent viewers of *Mr. Rogers* had better high school grades than infrequent viewers. Some additional measures collected in the Massachusetts preschool study allowed us to establish that the difference in high school grades did not seem to be due to effects of the program on preschool task persistence or activity level.

CONCLUSION

These analyses support the Early Learning Model. The findings are consistent with the hypothesis that curriculum-based television viewed by preschoolers has a long term positive impact on academic achievement. High school grades and academic motivation were measurably higher in those participants who viewed relatively more child informative programming, particularly *Sesame Street*, as preschoolers.

The positive relations of early viewing to achievement and motivation were especially strong for boys. The fact that boys are more often alienated from school and have more frequent academic problems than girls suggests that early experience which keeps them involved, motivated, and eager to learn is especially valuable.

While alternative explanations for these long term relationships may exist, they are not attributable to higher ability among children who were frequent users of educational television, nor to better education among parents of frequent viewers. Both variables were controlled in the analyses, and neither could account for the observed relations.

The findings contradict the assertions that educational television in general and *Sesame Street* in particular impede academic performance either through interference with language development or by reducing children's attention spans.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

High-quality, curriculum-based educational television can make a significant contribution to children's early school readiness and to their long-term school performance and motivation. Television has the advantage of reaching many children long before they reach formal schooling at a very low-cost, relative to other forms of early education. *Sesame Street*, for example, costs about \$6 per regular viewer per year. Educational television should not be considered an alternative to other forms of early education, but a part of the educational offerings to young

children. In a time when school failure is of national concern, investment in quality educational programming could provide important benefits.

Young children spend 20-30 hours in front of the television set as early as age 2. Some of that time could be used to teach rather than merely to entertain.

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Educational TV for Preschoolers Linked to High School Grades

Children who had regularly watched educational children's TV programs in early childhood had better grades in high school than those who had not, according to children's television researchers at the University of Kansas (Lawrence) and the University of Massachusetts (Amherst). The researchers announced today the results of a follow-up study of the high school achievement of children whose preschool TV viewing had been recorded in earlier investigations.

The study, supported by the Markle Foundation, showed that the 570 Kansas and Massachusetts youngsters had better Grade Point Averages in English, Science, and Math if they had watched more educational and informative programs, like *Sesame Street* and *Mr. Rogers*, when they were five. The results held even when the preschool data were equated for the child's vocabulary size and parents' education.

Professor Aletha Huston of the Center for Research on the Influences of Television on Children (CRITC) of the University of Kansas reported the findings at a White House Conference entitled the "Children's TV Summit", held today (July 29) in the East Room of the White House, and hosted by President Bill Clinton, First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, Vice President Al Gore, and "Tipper" Gore, wife of the Vice President. The conference was attended by representatives of the broadcast industry, public broadcasting, ~~the administration and regulatory agencies, the Congress, and leaders of children's interest and advocacy groups.~~ Professor Daniel Anderson, a psychologist at the University of Massachusetts was co-author of the report, as were John C. Wright, Professor at Kansas and Co-Director (with Huston) of CRITC, and Dr. Patricia Collins of U. Mass, a Research Scientist working with Dr. Anderson.

Early childhood TV viewing records and extensive testing, interview, and observational data were available on 655 children at the two sites combined. Of these 570 were located, and re-interviewed at ages 15 to 19. Official high school transcripts were obtained for 491 of them.

The findings support an "Early Learning Model" which argues that the cognitive and attitudinal benefits of regularly viewing educational programming as a preschooler lead to greater success as the child enters school. That success in turn results in greater expectancies of oneself and greater motivation for achievement, both of which act to improve and sustain high school performance.

Preschool educational viewing predicted grades for both the Kansas and the Massachusetts samples. These positive effects were somewhat stronger for boys than for girls. The benefits were not attributable to differences in preschoolers' cognitive ability nor to positive effects of the family environment associated with the parents' level of educational attainment.



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*file
Charren's
TV*

LUNCHEON ADDRESS

BY

PEGGY CHARREN

FOUNDER, ACTION FOR CHILDREN'S TELEVISION

ANNENBERG SCHOOL FOR COMMUNICATION CONFERENCE

PRESS CLUB

WASHINGTON, D.C.

JUNE 17, 1996

I WORKED IN TV IN THOSE DAYS... AT WPIX, THE NEW YORK CITY INDEPENDENT TV STATION. I CALLED SHOTS IN THE CONTROL ROOM --- EVERYONE DID --- , I RAN TALENT SHOWS AT MIDNIGHT, AND APPEARED ON THE NEWS EVERY FRIDAY THE 13TH, CARRYING BLACK CATS UNDER LADDERS. IN 1951, CHILDREN'S TV WAS NOT A BIG ISSUE, WITH ME OR THE AMERICAN PUBLIC.

BY THE LATE 60S, HOWEVER, PARENTS, TEACHERS AND CONGRESS WERE CALLING FOR AN END TO SEX AND VIIOLENCE, AND ACT BEGAN IN MY LIVING ROOM. FROM THE BEGINNING, ACT'S GOAL WAS NOT TO GET RID OF WHAT WAS GHASTLY, BUT TO CREATE A MARKET FOR WHAT WAS MISSING FROM SERVICE TO CHILDREN IN AN INDUSTRY LICENSED TO SERVE THE PUBLIC.

NOW THE QUESTION IS: WHAT'S MISSING? IN 1969, "TV GUIDE" ASKED SOME SOCIAL SCIENTISTS, PSYCHOLOGISTS AND EDUCATORS WHAT THEY WOULD LIKE TO SEE ON CHILDREN'S TELEVISION. "THE ULTIMATE ACCOMPLISHMENT," ACCORDING TO TV GUIDE'S SAMPLING OF EXPERTS, " IS TO CATCH THE CHILD'S IMAGINATION BY SHOWNG HIM THE WORLD, WHAT ITS POSSIBILITIES ARE, HOW PEOPLE GET ALONG IN IT, HOW THEY INTERACT WITH EACH OTHER, AND WHAT HIS PLACE IN IT MIGHT BE."

I'M SURE THEY WOULD HAVE AGREED THAT "BIKER MICE FROM MARS" DOESN'T QUITE DO IT.

FIVE YEARS LATER, IN A 1974 POLICY STATEMENT, THE FCC DEFINED PROGRAMS THAT COULD BE CONSIDERED EDUCATIONAL OR INFORMATIVE: "THERE ARE MANY IMAGINATIVE AND EXCITING WAYS IN WHICH THE MEDIUM

HAS THE CAPABILITIES OF MASS DESTRUCTION OF SOCIETY. ISSUES OF SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND RESPONSIBILITY ARE SHOW THEMES."

I SUPPOSE IF JOE STOPPED ON THE WAY TO MURDER AND MAYHAM TO EAT AN ORANGE, THEY'D SAY THE PROGRAM WAS NUTRITION EDUCATION.

BROADCASTERS LISTED "YO, YOGI" AS SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO EDUCATE AND SAID, "SNAG LEARNS THAT HE CAN CAPTURE THE BANK-ROBBING COCKROACH MORE SUCCESSFULLY BY USING HIS HEAD RATHER THAN HIS MUSCLES."

WEIRD! AFTER ALL, HOW MANY KIDS WILL EVER HAVE TO DEAL WITH A BANK-ROBBING COCKROACH!

CHILDREN'S TV TODAY IS A FRONT PAGE ISSUE. WHY SHOULD WE BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE EFFECTS OF TV IN THE LIVES OF YOUNG AUDIENCES? MOST OF US IN THIS ROOM KNOW THE ANSWERS TO THAT QUESTION.

MOST IMPORTANT: CHILDREN WATCH SO MUCH TV -- 20 TO 25 HOURS A WEEK. THEY LEARN FROM WHAT THEY SEE. THEY LEARN THAT VIOLENCE IS A SOLUTION TO PROBLEMS, THAT CASUAL SEX HAS NO CONSEQUENCES. THEY PICK UP RACIST, SEXIST ATTITUDES DIFFICULT TO DISLODGE. FOR CHILDREN AT RISK, TV OPERATES AS A KIND OF SUBSTITUTE PARENT.

EVERYONE INVOLVED IN LIGHTING UP THE NATION'S TV SCREENS SHOULD KEEP REMINDING THEMSELVES THAT ONE IN FOUR OF TV'S YOUNG

CABLE DOES IT.....WITH SHOWS LIKE LINDA ELLERBEE'S "NICK NEWS" ON NICKELODEON, AND HBO'S "HAPPILY EVER AFTER," A DELIGHTFUL SERIES THAT TRANSFORMS FAMILIAR FAIRY TALES INTO MULTICULTURAL FESTIVALS OF STORY, SONG AND DANCE, AND THE CARTOON NETWORK'S "BIG BAG," WHICH FEATURES, AMONG OTHER MAGIC MOMENTS, SOME EXTRAORDINARY USES FOR THE MISMATCHED SOCKS THAT ALWAYS APPEAR IN MY WASHING MACHINE.

UNFORTUNATELY, COMMERCIAL BROADCASTING EDUCATES ALMOST NEVER.....AT LEAST IN REGULARLY SCHEDULED SERIES. AND WHEN IT DOES DO IT, THE SHOWS OFTEN APPEAR BEFORE KIDS GET UP IN THE MORNING. AT 6 A.M. SATURDAY IN BOSTON, WNAC-TV AIRS "NEWS FOR KIDS," AND WSBK SHOWS "BILL NYE, SCIENCE GUY." THESE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS ARE CERTAINLY NOT DESIGNED FOR PRE-SCHOOLERS, THE ONLY POSSIBLE AUDIENCE SEGMENT UP AT 6 A.M. THAT'S WHY THE FCC GUIDELINE SHOULD ESTABLISH A 7 A.M. START FOR QUALIFYING PROGRAMS.

TO BE FAIR, I SHOULD MENTION THAT ON SATURDAY, WBZ, THE CBS AFFILIATE IN BOSTON AIRS "BEEKMAN'S WORLD" AND THAT REALLY WONDERFUL NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SHOW, "REALLY WILD ANIMALS" BETWEEN NOON AND ONE P.M., AND FOLLOWS THEM UP WITH THE AWARD-WINNING, LOCALLY PRODUCED "RAP AROUND" FOR YOUNG TEENAGERS.

THIS MEETING AT THIS MINUTE IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE THE FCC IS ABOUT TO ENSURE THAT THE CHILDREN'S TV ACT WILL PROVIDE MORE TERRIFIC CHOICES FOR KIDS. CHANCES ARE THAT THE PROCESSING GUIDELINE, WHICH WILL REQUIRE THAT BROADCASTERS OFFER AT LEAST

OPPOSITE SIDES OF A CENSORSHIP DISPUTE WITH SCHOOL OFFICIALS ABOUT RACIAL SLURS IN "HUCKLEBERRY FINN." AND I REALLY ENJOYED^{the very funny} "HOW TO BE A PERFECT PERSON IN THREE DAYS," STARRING HERMIONE GINGOLD IN A BIT PART AS A TEACHER.

WHEN RICHARD PECK, THE AUTHOR OF NUMEROUS YOUNG ADULT NOVELS, WAS ASKED WHAT KIND OF STORIES WOULD APPEAL TO YOUNG TEENAGERS, HE RESPONDED, "ADOLESCENTS MUCH PREFER A SWEETLY SAD LOVE STORY WITH A HAPPY ENDING TO ANY SORT OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION. THEY LIKE STORIES OF GOOD CHARACTER. BUT THE YOUNG WILL NOT BE PREACHED TO. THEY WANT INSTEAD STORIES THAT INSPIRE THEM TO SURVIVE IN THE WORLD AS IT IS: IN THEIR ALMIGHTY PEER GROUP, IN THEIR UNREMITTING NEED TO BE ACCEPTED. THEY DO NOT WANT THE BOAT ROCKED; THEY WANT TO KEEP FROM FALLING OVERBOARD. AND SO THEY WILL BE DRAWN TO STORIES THEY CAN RISE TO: STORIES THAT PIT THE STANDARD OF THE INDIVIDUAL AGAINST THE RULES OF THE GROUP. THERE ARE PLENTY OF SUCH STORIES, IF ONLY TELEVISION CAN CHANGE ENOUGH TO FIND THEM."

THE AFTERSCHOOL SPECIALS ARE A NIFTY EXAMPLE OF THE KIND OF PROGRAMS PECK DESCRIBES. WHY DOESN'T EACH NETWORK ADD ITS SPECIALS FROM THE SEVENTIES AND EIGHTIES TO TODAY'S ALL TOO OCCASIONAL SHOWS AND SCHEDULE A WEEKLY DRAMATIC SERIES FOR THIS UNDERSERVED AGE GROUP? AND WHY NOT RISK A FEW BUCKS BY SCHEDULING THEM AT 8 P.M., INSTEAD OF 4 P.M. ON A WEDNESDAY OR THURSDAY? AUDIENCES ARE USED TO THE INDUSTRY PRACTICE OF AIRING AFTER-SCHOOL SHOWS EVERY DAY MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY, AND

WORK. WITH THESE FIRST RESEARCH REPORTS AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PRESTIGIOUS ADVISORY COUNCIL ON EXCELLENCE IN CHILDREN'S TELEVISION, WITH MEMBERS INCLUDING JONATHAN KOZOL, ROGER ROSENBLATT, MARTA TIENDA, JAMES COMER AND KEN BURNS, THE ANNENBERG SCHOOL FOR COMMUNICATION HAS ALREADY ESTABLISHED ITSELF AS A MAJOR RESOURCE AND CONTRIBUTOR TO THE PUBLIC POLICY DEBATE ON THESE ISSUES.

SINCE I BELIEVE THAT ONE THING WE DO NOT DO OFTEN ENOUGH IN THE WORLD OF CHILDREN'S TV IS TO HIRE THE BEST WRITERS FOR KIDS' SHOWS, I'D LIKE TO CLOSE WITH A QUOTE FROM E. B. WHITE, THAT WONDERFUL WRITER WHO KNEW SO MUCH ABOUT MICE AND SPIDERS AND PIGS AND HOW TO ENCHANT YOUNG AUDIENCES. HE WROTE:

"CHILDREN ARE DEMANDING. THEY ARE THE MOST ATTENTIVE, CURIOUS, EAGER, OBSERVANT, SENSITIVE, QUICK AND GENERALLY CONGENIAL READERS ON EARTH. THEY ACCEPT, ALMOST WITHOUT QUESTION, ANYTHING YOU PRESENT THEM WITH, AS LONG AS IT IS PRESENTED HONESTLY, FEARLESSLY AND CLEARLY." HE SAID, "ANYBODY WHO WRITES DOWN TO CHILDREN IS SIMPLY WASTING HIS TIME. YOU HAVE TO WRITE UP, NOT DOWN."

Effects of educational TV viewing of lower income preschoolers
on academic skills, school readiness, and school adjustment
one to three years later.

A Report to Children's Television Workshop

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Effects of educational TV viewing of lower income preschoolers on academic skills, school readiness, and school adjustment one to three years later.

Executive Summary

Background and Purpose of Study

- This report summarizes the key initial results from a four-year longitudinal study of low-income children's media use and its relationship to the subsequent development of their academic skills, school readiness, and school adjustment.

Method

- More than 250 families with a preschool child participated in the study. Children were two or four years old at the beginning of the study, five or seven at the end. All families lived in low-income census tracts, and 46% had received means-tested assistance in the past three years. About 40% were African American, 40% European American, and 20 % Hispanic.
- Families were evaluated four times, each a year apart, in an office visit lasting about two hours, during which the parent was interviewed, and the child was tested on a variety of achievement tests and assessment situations.
- A two-hour visit was made to the home of each family on four occasions, also a year apart, to assess supports for social, emotional, cognitive and educational development.
- During the year separating each of these home and office assessments, periodic telephone interviews were conducted with the parents, yielding a detailed record accounting for how the child spent every minute of the preceding day.
- In analyses of the relationship between television viewing and subsequent academic outcomes, statistical controls were applied for parent education, family income, preschool attendance, the child's first language, the supportiveness of the home environment, and the child's initial level of language skills at the outset of the study.

Key Findings

- The children's viewing of educational children's programming accounted for just under two hours per week at ages two to four, and declined to about one hour per week by age six to seven. Almost 80 % of that viewing up to age five was accounted for by Sesame Street.
- Non-educational cartoon viewing occupied 7-8 hours per week of these children's lives up to the time when they started kindergarten, then it declined.

- Viewing of adult (general audience) programs was about 16 hours per week at age two (mostly because they were with parents who were watching). This viewing declined to 8 hours by age five or six, then started to rise slowly at age seven, to about 9 hours per week.
- Viewing of children's educational programs was negatively related to viewing of non-educational cartoons and adult entertainment programming. The relationship was small, but consistent.
- Up to age five, there was a strong positive relationship of viewing educational children's programs in general and Sesame Street in particular to time spent reading or being read to and time spent in educational activities. It was still positive but less so at six and seven.
- Viewing of non-educational cartoons and of adult entertainment programs was consistently negatively related to time spent reading, and also negatively, but less strongly, to time spent in educational activities.
- For the younger children only, prior viewing of children's educational programs in general and Sesame Street in particular were consistent positive predictors of letter-word knowledge, math skills, vocabulary size, and school readiness on age-appropriate standardized achievement tests, even when statistical controls for children's background and initial levels of language skills were applied. About 25 minutes per day of viewing added a third of a standard deviation in test scores (about five points on a test with a range of scores from 70 to 130 points).
- With the same controls in place, non-educational cartoon viewing and adult program viewing had consistently negative, but somewhat weaker effects on the same outcomes.
- For six- and seven-year-olds, prior viewing of children's educational programs in general and Sesame Street in particular was a positive predictor of reading skill (paragraph comprehension) and also a positive predictor of teachers' judgments of overall school adjustment in first or second grade.

Conclusion

Young disadvantaged children's viewing of Sesame Street and other educational children's programs appears to play a positive causal role in their development of readiness for school. That contribution occurs between two and five years of age, and is independent of the contributions of parents' education, quality of the home environment, and family income, all of which also make contributions to the same positive outcomes. By contrast, the viewing of non-educational cartoons and adult programming has negative effects on readiness for school. Among four- to seven-year-olds educational TV viewing favorably affects reading and school adjustment.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 26, 1995

REMARKS BY THE FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
AT PBS PANEL DISCUSSION
THE WHITE HOUSE

MRS. CLINTON: Good morning. And welcome, everyone, to the White House for this very important meeting. I am delighted that you could all be with us, and I want particularly to recognize a few people who were able to join us this morning. We have Representative Jim Moran from across the river in Virginia, and Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton from here in the District of Columbia.

We are also delighted that Richard Carlson, the President of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting; Ervin Duggan, the President of the Public Broadcasting Service; Delano Lewis, the President of National Public Radio; and Larry Irving, the Secretary for Communications in the Department of Commerce are also all here with us.

This is a meeting about a very important subject. It is about the role that television plays in the lives of our children and, particularly, the role of public broadcasting. I think that it is very important in our country today to acknowledge and admit that television is a pervasive influence in our lives and has a particularly significant impact on the development of our children.

There are some who have engaged in a long discussion -- even an argument -- over the last decades about what television means in our lives, what the role of violence, for example, in television is. But I would like to focus today on an issue that we are now finding more about, and that I hope will influence the debate about the role of public broadcasting and its contribution to children's development as we struggle with and argue over the proper role of government.

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Public broadcasting is for many, many children the only channel available that has consistently effective educational programming. Probably about 40 percent of our families in America do not have access to cable television. And because of the demographics and incomes of those 40 percent of our families, we know that they have a disproportionate number of our children. More than 40 percent of our children reside in those 40 percent of our families.

If you were to look, as I have done, at the daily television schedule of our three major networks and our public broadcasting channel, you would see what is available for those children in those homes. Now, certainly, there are other options on cable, but they are often far outnumbered by channels that provide information and programming that is not always suitable for our children.

But looking only at the four available channels that those 40 percent of our families have access to, it is clear that what is available to children with respect to their educational and developmental needs is not usually found on commercial television. It is found during the day on public broadcasting.

And there are those who think that the educational programming of public broadcasting is a luxury. But to them I would ask: What is the necessity that can be substituted for that luxury? Where are the outlets for the kind of helpful, productive, learning opportunities that children have access to on public broadcasting day in and day out?

But you don't have to take my word for it. You don't have to take anybody's word for it. We actually have research. We have evidence about the impact of television and the impact, in particular, of public broadcasting.

One of my great hopes from a meeting such as this is that our decision makers will not just engage in ideological discussions, but will make decisions based on the evidence that we have available to us. If one disagrees with the evidence -- fine. Provide counterevidence. But it is difficult to engage in a conversation about what is in the best interests of our children if the people engaging in it are merely taking ideological positions.

And so, today, I have asked some people who have a great deal of experience and knowledge about the impact of television and, particularly, the impact of public broadcasting on children, and

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especially on low-income children who often do not have the educational opportunities, the intellectual stimulation, the academic preparation that many of us try to provide for our own children.

I am sure anyone who has followed our national discussion about television knows of the woman I am about to introduce. She is someone who, for many years, has been, in effect, sounding the alarm about the impact of television. I wish that alarm were heard in every family more loudly than it sometimes is, as well as in the board rooms and legislative chambers of our country because she has pointed out, time and time again, that children are shaped by what they see, by what they hear, by what they are taught.

And the constant, pervasive presence of television in most of our homes is a challenge for parents who will have to learn and be willing to accept responsibility for monitoring more closely the television-watching of their children. But it is also a challenge for the larger society.

And so it gives me great pleasure to introduce Peggy Charren. She is the founder of Action for Children's Television and is currently serving as a visiting scholar at Harvard, continuing to examine and accumulate and analyze evidence about the impact of television on our children's lives.

* * * * *

MS. CHARREN: There's time for a few questions, and I thought that, given that we have the First Lady with us, we would let the First Lady ask the questions today instead of the audience.

MRS. CLINTON: Well, the one thought that kept running through my mind after what we've heard is, can you imagine any child rushing home from the first day of school and trying to tell the Power Rangers that she'd gone to school? (Laughter and applause.) You know, there's just sort of a disconnect there.

Well, I really find everything that each of you has said to be born out in our common experience. Really, it is common sense. But let's see if we can maybe take it one step further for people who are still saying to themselves, well, if this is so important, commercial television will pick up the slack; if this is so significant in the lives of our children, there will be a market for it, so all of what you are saying can be understood and accepted, but

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doesn't necessarily lead to the conclusion that you have to have a public television presence with designated programming for children in order to make the point that each of you has supported.

So let me ask both Peggy and John and then everyone else to comment. Why isn't it likely that if the worst were to happen, and the programming that we've already talked about and the significance of it that the research has demonstrated were to disappear, that that vacuum wouldn't be filled by the existing marketplace?

MS. CHARREN: I think that if there's anything that my 27 years of activism on behalf of choices for children on television has proved, it is that even with a lot of conferences, even with articles in the paper, even with the people who make that kind of television having children, they will not provide the kind of programming that children need that really enhances education. They are more comfortable with the other kind of programming.

And the problem is that when you talk to 2- to 15-year-olds in a voice that you want to tell them something important, you speak in a different language to preschoolers, to elementary-age kids and to older kids. And if you want to get the most eyeballs watching the commercials, you tend to say things that all children will listen to. And maybe all children do read comic books at one point. But when you talk to them about how wonderful literature is, you do it the way the book business does. And Public Broadcasting handles that screen the way the book business handles children's books.

MR. WRIGHT: I think the most important thing to think about with respect to the private sector is not that it's unwise, not that it's entirely vicious, not that it's a handicapping condition to the entertainment and education of children, but that they are focused entirely on the bottom line. They exploit children. They gather eyeballs glued to TV sets which they then sell to ad agencies and advertisers who then re-exploit the children to sell them products they don't need, food that's not good for them, and toys that enhance their fantasy and their willingness to attend the programs which gather their eyeballs for sale. I think I'll stop on that line. (Laughter.)

But the research that they do -- I spoke to the executive producer of Mighty Morphin Power Rangers, and I asked her, what kind of research do you do? How do you know what messages you are getting across to children? And she said to me -- and this is a

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quote -- "After every rap we sit around and we ask each other, what questions have we answered; what ideas would children take away from this episode that we have just made?" And in the research community -- this was at a Children Now conference and some of you were there -- in fact, you were there by television -- everybody said, you asked who? They said, we asked ourselves.

Until we start asking the children, until we start doing the research, something other than market research, until we leave a program like "My So-Called Life," -- one of the few decent programs for young people that the commercial ever made that was cancelled. Not enough eyeballs to sell. Not a wide enough range of children watching it. And every network has done that. I can remember "Hot Hero Sandwich" on NBC -- a wonderful, wonderful program. What happened to "Big Blue Marble" on ABC? And many, many, many more.

It is incompatible. The system is incompatible. You've got to do it because air waves belong to the people, the children belong to the people. And you've got to have something for kids that is theirs.

MS. MANZANO: Well, I'd just like to say, the private sector won't pick up the slack because I'm always amazed that "Sesame Street" hasn't been imitated in the private sector. We've been on the air so long, and everybody agrees that we're great. But nobody cares to sort of -- to imitate us. And like you said, there were all these wonderful shows for children that got cancelled right away.

I was asked once to write for a children's show on commercial television. And I asked, what age group is this show aimed at? And they said, oh, you know, kids. (Laughter.) Well, how could -- you don't write for a three-year-old the same way you write for a five-year-old, and certainly not a seven-year-old. So I knew immediately that they hadn't even examined themselves and they didn't even know what they were going to say to these children. It was bottom line. And they started out with the result of what they wanted their show to do which was sell a certain product -- not what the show was about.

MS. CHARREN: And one of the worst problems that happened in the last few years is that the show itself has become a product too often on children's television on commercial broadcasting. And that's unfortunate because it -- that line between editorial and commercial speech so you don't know who's talking to you.

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And it means that we're telling our children, one in four of whom lives below the poverty line, what they should spend money on to feel good, to have friends. And that's really very sad. They can do what they do as long as we have the part of that broadcasting service that is saved for public broadcasting which cares first about the public and first about our children. And I'm not sure they care about anything else at all.

MRS. CLINTON: Joan, do you want to add anything?

MS. DYKSTRA: No. I think everyone has stated it very clearly. I think the bottom line is that we want quality programming for children. They have an opportunity. They can give us quality programming. I fail to see where it is. I do know that PBS brings me quality programming for children.

MRS. CLINTON: You know, I think it's an important point that the economy that we all rely on is driven by a need to create aspirations and expectations and, really, unfilled wants. I mean, that's how people continue to buy goods and services. So that's really the reason -- for a market economy in a way that is going to continue to grow and provide more prosperity for people, it has to be rooted, in a funny kind of way, in people's insecurity. I mean, if all of us today said to ourselves, we have more than enough stuff, we are not buying anything else, and we really meant it, you know, that would not be good for the economy. (Laughter.)

So there is a need on the part of the economy, and particularly one like ours, to continue to try to create in our minds the desire for more and different things. And there's absolutely nothing wrong with that. That is the way the system works.

But I do think there is a dark side that we don't pay attention to. And it's something that was just alluded to -- that when we turn our children and think of our children as miniature adults, and really see them primarily as consumers, as little shoppers who we want to turn into grown-up buyers of as many goods and services as we possibly can sell them, that has a very different perspective than if we see them as individuals with certain potentials who it is our responsibility as parents, as citizens to nurture.

And so there is an inherent conflict as the Professor pointed out. And it is very difficult, I think, to be fair to

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commercial television, for them to fulfill a nurturing developmental responsibility when that is not, as they clearly understand, their bottom line.

So part of what we have to do as a society is to assign different roles and responsibilities to different sectors of our society. And commercial television has a different role and responsibility, particularly as it pertains to children, than public broadcasting.

And I think without that kind of choice, it is very difficult for parents, even those trying hard to be conscientious ones, Joan, to do what they believe they should do. I mean, teaching values to children in between commercials on Saturday morning cartoons is a lot harder, believe me, than watching "Sesame Street" or "Mr. Rogers" or "Barney" or something like that with your child.

So it's not an either/or. And that's what I think we have to keep trying to emphasize. It is not an either/or where it's only commercial television or it's only public broadcasting. It is both. And we have to see the responsibilities, particularly for child rearing, in a much broader way so that each sector of our society, starting with parents, but expanding far beyond just the nuclear family, understands they have a role in determining how well our children turn out.

And that's really what your research has shown is that we know children are going to watch television. What we have to do is provide the best possible choices. But if we don't have the choice, then we've already made the decision, haven't we? And that's what we're trying to avoid in this discussion about what happens with the future of public television.

MR. WRIGHT: I'd like to add a parenting anecdote because I think you did bring in parents and you did bring in teachers, and they are going to be critical in the future of kids' understanding and use of media.

And I'd just like to tell a very quick story. I have four grandchildren, two more on the way. And these four kids love to watch television. They watch lots of television. But none of them, as yet, know that there is such a thing as commercial broadcast entertainment television. I'm not even sure about PBS. And the reason is that television for them is something that you take off the shelf in a little box and put it in a machine and play it. And on

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that shelf are videocassettes and books. And the videocassettes were taped off the air; they were bought; they were rented. I blush to admit, some of them were taped from rented copies. (Laughter.)

But they got there because some parent cared enough to put them there and to let the children watch over and over again, as they do with their favorite books, the stories that are dear and near to them.

MS. CHARREN: And to follow up on that, a lot of the choices that are available from the new technology, which I mentioned earlier, are not available to kids who need them the most. They are expensive. Cable is expensive. Some of the pay channels are money on top of money, and they provide a number of the choices that cable does provide for children, and that if we don't really take care of the public sector of broadcasting, we are going to have a situation in this country that will make what's going on now look nice by comparison when we don't reach one, whole, big portion of kids growing up in America. So I want to take very good care of PBS.

MRS. CLINTON: And I just want to add to that comment, Peggy, that we haven't talked this morning about the evidence that I think is now conclusive about the impact of watching violence on television and on children's behavior. We have argued about this issue ever since the Surgeon General's report back in 1972 talking about the impact of television viewing on children's behavior. There have been many studies since.

And it is like the old problem we have -- every time there is another irrefutable piece of evidence about the linkage between smoking and lung cancer, there will be somebody, well-paid, who will stand up and say, well, that's not definitive. And we face the same problem when we talk about the effects of violence and children's behavior.

But Peggy is right. I mean, this is not just a do-gooder, altruistic, nice thing that people like Peggy and I and the rest of us here think should be done because we like children's television. Certainly, I do. And I believe strongly in it. And that's what my daughter watched, and we read the books that went along with it.

But I am equally concerned about the other side of the equation that the Professor talked about. And that is, those children who are not watching the 25 minutes a day of public

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broadcasting but are, instead, watching the 25 minutes of commercial television without much parental supervision or mediation as to what they are seeing.

It is absolutely true that not every child who watches hundreds of hours of violent television becomes violent. But most of the reason for that rests in the home and the neighborhood that are structured and coherent enough that the child's experience of watching television is mediated. But in the absence of that mediation, and in the absence of the other factors that help a child separate reality from fantasy, that help a child learn empathy and sensitivity, it is absolutely clear that the television-watching habits of vulnerable children will affect both their own violent behavior and their response to violence that they see around them. It has a desensitizing impact.

So this is an issue that we think goes far beyond the narrow concerns of the group of us who are arguing strongly to preserve public television and, particularly, educational and children's programming. It is also a plea to all programmers of television, including commercial television, to think about the impact of your decisions.

The bottom line can be described in many ways. Only one of those descriptions concerns profitability and the dollars that come in. There's a bottom line to society as well. And we think that bottom line is better served by having better television programming for our children

Thank you all very much for being with us. (Applause.)

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