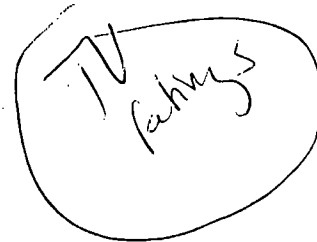


7/20/98

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS
TV RATINGS CONTENT STUDY



Note: This is one of the most extensive television content studies ever conducted. The study does *not* merely count incidences of violent or sexual content, but looks at the level and intensity of that content, at the context in which it is presented, and also includes a special analysis of programs containing the specific kinds of depictions that previous research has shown pose the highest-risk to young viewers.

I. Content of television shows: overall findings.

- 28% of all ratable shows contained sexual behavior
- 57% of all ratable shows contained talk about sex
- X% of all ratable shows contained violence
- 53% of all ratable shows contained coarse language

II. Overall, only 20% of rated shows included any content descriptor.

12% of rated shows received a D rating; 10% a V; 5% an L, and 3% an S.

III. A large percentage of shows without content descriptors contained questionable content. Of the 80% of shows without content descriptors, X% had content justifying a rating.

Violence: 42% of all shows *without* a V rating contained violence
(average of five scenes per show, fairly intense)
46% of network prime time shows *without* a V rating contained violence
In network prime time shows, 79% of shows rated TV-14 *without* a V rating contained violence, most of it the same amount and level of violence as those TV-14 shows that *did* receive a V.

Talk about sex: 54% of shows *without* a D rating contained sexual dialogue
(average of nearly four (3.9) scenes per show)
62% of network prime time shows *without* a D rating contained sexual dialogue
Almost half (48%) of all TV-PG shows *without* a V contained violence, and 57% of shows rated TV-14 *without* a V contained violence.

- Sexual behavior:** 26% of all shows *without* an S rating contained sexual behavior (average of two scenes per show; most not explicit, some egregious – ie, TV-G shows, without an S, with clearly implied sexual intercourse)
 26% of network prime time shows *without* an S rating contained sexual behavior
 In general, it appears that implied intercourse is not seen by the networks as warranting an S rating.
- Coarse language:** 51% of shows *without* an L rating contained adult language (average of nearly five scenes per show)
 68% of network prime time shows *without* an L rating contained adult language

IV. Most shows with questionable content do *not* receive the appropriate content descriptor. (Another way we may choose to look at the information in #III.)

A majority (80%) of all shows with violence did not receive a V rating.
 ___% of all shows with sexual behavior did not receive an S rating.
 ___% of all shows with sexual dialogue did not receive a D rating.
 ___% of all shows with coarse language did not receive an L rating.
 ___% of all children's shows with violence did not receive an FV rating.

V. Some shows are being inappropriately rated TV-G.

28% of shows rated TV-G had sexual dialogue
 20% had coarse language (most mild, some shit, bitch, whore)
 X% had violence; more than 25% in network prime time had violence, with an average of 2-3 scenes per show

VI. Children's programs.

The way the FV rating is applied now, it does not reliably tell parents whether there is violence in a children's program or not, although it does indicate that there is more violence than in other children's shows. In other words, there is no effective way for parents to block out all children's shows containing violence.

60% of all children's shows contain some violence, averaging 5.6 scenes per show, mostly of low intensity, yet only 11% of children's shows are rated FV.

55% of shows rated TV-Y contain violence (average of 5.7 scenes per show), and 79% of shows rated TV-Y7 contain violence.

Half (52%) of all shows rated TV-Y *without* a V rating contain violence (2.9 scenes per show).

VII. High risk violence.

The study assessed those shows that contain the kinds of depictions of violence known by researchers to pose the greatest risk to young viewers.

Overall, 10% of all shows contained high-risk violence, half in general audience shows and half in shows designed specifically for children.

Of the general audience shows, 40% of the shows with high-risk violence were rated TV-PG, and two-thirds of those (65%) did not receive a V rating.

Of the children's shows, two-thirds were rated TV-Y, and X% did not receive a V rating.

VIII. Eligible shows that received no rating.

A small percent of shows (7% in 1997 and 4% in 1998) that ought to have been rated did not receive a rating. Of these:

- 30% contained violence (need to check intensity level)
- 13% contained sexual behavior (mostly mild)
- 50% contained talk about sex
- X% contained coarse language

Other general findings:

In general, the age-based ratings are applied in a way that makes sense in terms of denoting a meaningful difference in the amount and level of relevant content (ie, shows rated TV-PG have more scenes with more intense violence than shows rated TV-G; shows rated TV-14 have more scenes with more intense levels of sexual content; and so on.

Most rated shows are rated either TV-G or TV-PG. Only 10% were rated TV-14, and almost no shows were rated TV-MA.

HBO needs to shift to v-chip readable ratings, and NBC and BET need to begin using content ratings, or else parents are going to have a very difficult time weeding out inappropriate content.

SCHEDULING REQUEST

July 24, 1998

☐ ACCEPT☐ REGRET☐ PENDING

TO: Stephanie Street, Director of Scheduling and Advance

FROM: Rahm Emanuel, Senior Advisor to the President
Bruce Reed, Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy

REQUEST: To unveil the results of the largest report on t.v. ratings on the one-year anniversary of the implementation of the t.v. rating system.

PURPOSE: To highlight the President's commitment to t.v. ratings and children's television.

BACKGROUND: The President would be joined by television media executives, who also support the t.v. ratings system, as well as parent and children advocacy groups. The President will unveil the findings of a new University of California Santa Barbara study commissioned by the Kaiser Family Foundation. The study examines which ratings were applied to different shows and will provide an opportunity to help explain to parents why the rating system is important. At the same time, the study will reveal that certain shows have gone un-rated, and the President could challenge industry to do more to implement the rating system thoroughly.

DATE & TIME: September, 1998

LOCATION: Los Angeles, CA or D.C.

PARTICIPANTS: POTUS, VPOTUS, FLOTUS, Secretary Shalala, Governors, children's health groups.

OUTLINE
OF EVENTS: TBD

REMARKS
REQUIRED: Yes.

MEDIA
COVERAGE: Yes.

RECOMMENDED
BY: Bruce Reed/Tom Freedman

CONTACT: Tom Freedman x6-5587
Christa Robinson x6-5165

Draft Date: 7/30/98

September, 1998

Close held

One Year Out: A Status Report on the Television Ratings System
A Kaiser Family Foundation Study

Executive Summary

Content Study by Dale Kunkel, Ph.D.,
University of California, Santa Barbara

Logo

Background: The TV Ratings System

In October 1997, the television industry began implementing a new system for rating all programs shown on broadcast and cable TV other than news and sports. The ratings system, agreed to after extensive negotiations with parent's organizations and policymakers, was designed to help parents monitor and guide their children's television viewing.

Networks and program providers rate their own programs. All eligible shows are given one of six "age-based" ratings, such as TV-14 (may be unsuitable for children under 14). In addition, after extensive negotiations with parent's and children's organizations, the industry also agreed to add "content descriptors" to the age-based ratings as appropriate, letting parents know when programs contain particular types of content such as violence, sex, or adult language. Two networks, NBC and BET, have declined to add the content descriptors to their ratings.

The ratings are designed to work in conjunction with the V-chip device, which will be available in half of all new TV sets starting in January, 1999, and in all new sets a year later. Using the V-chip, parents should be able to block programs with certain ratings from their home. Until then, the ratings are displayed on-screen for fifteen seconds at the start of each program, and are printed in some TV listings.

Sidebar: The TV Ratings

General audience:

TV-G: definitions here

TV-PG

TV-14

TV-MA

V

S

L

D

Children's programs:

TV-Y: definitions here

TV-Y7

FV

Overview: A Content Analysis of the TV Ratings System

The purpose of this study is to explore how effectively the new system has been applied during its first year in operation. In particular, the study examines whether the rating assigned to shows accurately reflects their content, and how consistently the ratings are being applied across different genres and networks.

The Kaiser Family Foundation takes no position on the television ratings system. Our goal is to provide objective data to parents, policymakers and decision-makers in the television industry.

In conducting the study, a randomly-selected composite week of television programming on ten channels was subjected to rigorous content analysis. In addition, a three week over-sample of broadcast network prime-time programming was analyzed, to provide a closer look at the most highly viewed television shows.

This study is one of the largest analyses of television content ever conducted. It is designed to meet the most rigorous academic standards for scientific research. Unlike some studies of television content, this analysis does *not* simply "count" the number of violent or sexual acts in a show, but rather takes full account of both the varying degrees of intensity of the depictions, and the context in which they are shown.

For example, in measuring the amount and nature of violent content in television shows, the study not only counted the percent of programs that contain violence, but also calculated the average number of violent scenes in each of these shows, as well as the level and intensity of the violence. The "level" of violence was calculated based on the type of violent action depicted and the number of violent acts in each scene; the "intensity" of the violence was calculated based on the seriousness of harm to the victim, the graphicness of the action depicted, and the degree of blood and gore shown.

Similar measures were used to evaluate the levels and explicitness of sexual behavior, sexual dialogue and adult language in all shows analyzed for this study.

I. Overview of the television landscape.

A. Most shows that are supposed to be rated *are* rated.

In general, the networks have done an impressive job in assigning a rating to all programs that were meant to receive one. Only 4% of shows that ought to have been rated failed to receive any rating in 1998.

B. Many television shows contain a significant amount of sex, violence, and adult language. Of all programs eligible for the ratings system:

More than six out of ten shows (67%) contain sexual dialogue. These shows have an average of four scenes a piece featuring talk about sex, and on average the discussions about sex had a "substantial" emphasis within those scenes.

More than half of all shows (53%) contain adult language. These shows have an average of five scenes a piece containing adult language, most of which are limited to one or two "non-profane" adult words per scene.

Nearly half of all shows (48%) contain violent content. These shows have an average of more than five (5.7) scenes a piece with violence; the level and intensity of the violence was, on average, moderate.

More than one out of four shows (28%) contain sexual behavior. These shows have an average of about two (2.2) scenes a piece featuring sexual behavior; the average level of behavior was moderate (passionate kissing and intimate touching), with a low level of explicitness.

C. TV-PG and TV-G are the most frequently used ratings.

Of all general audience (ie, non-children's) shows that were eligible to receive a rating, X% were rated TV-PG, Y% received a TV-G, and Z% received a TV-14. The rating TV-MA was applied to only 1/10th of 1% of shows. **[PIE CHART]**

In a closer look at prime-time programming on the four commercial broadcast networks, the study found that 56% of rated shows received a TV-PG, 25% received a TV-14, 18% a TV-G, and none received a rating of TV-MA.

D. Content descriptors are used far less frequently than age-based ratings.

Overall, only 23% of general audience shows eligible to receive a rating included *any* content descriptors. Excluding NBC, which has specifically declined to use the content descriptors, 25% of all eligible shows included any content descriptor.

The most frequently used content descriptor was the rating D, which was applied to 12% of eligible shows, followed by V (10%), L (5%) and S (3%).

Eligible shows broadcast on the four major networks during prime-time received a content descriptor 36% of the time, but there was significant variation in the use of content descriptors by network. No shows on NBC received content descriptors; 38% of rated shows on ABC included at least one content descriptor; 49% on CBS; and 67% on FOX.

In this sample of prime-time programming, V was the most commonly used content descriptor, applied to 18% of rated shows; L was applied to 16%, D to 13% and S to 4% of rated programs.

II. Key Findings – Accuracy of the Ratings

A. In general, the age-based ratings of general audience program are applied in a way that accurately reflects the content of those shows.

The amount, level and intensity of the content in programs rated TV-G, TV-PG and TV-14 fell largely within the bounds of the definitions of those ratings.

For example, the TV-G rating is defined as indicating a program with “little or no” violence, sexual situations, or sexual dialogue, and “no” strong language. In this study, the 20% of TV-G shows that contained violence had an average of two violent scenes per show, with a low level and intensity of violence. The 9% of TV-G shows that contained sexual situations had an average of 1.4 sexual scenes per show, mostly consisting of physical flirting, with some intimate touch or passionate kissing. The 28% of TV-G shows that contained sexual dialogue had an average of about 2 (2.1) scenes per show featuring talk about sex, with a moderate level of emphasis in the scenes.

However, one out of every five shows (20%) rated TV-G did contain adult language, with these shows averaging a little more than two scenes (2.1) with adult language per show. Most of the strong language used consisted of words such as “damn” and “hell,” although instances of stronger words such as “bitch,” “shit” and “whore” were found in shows rated TV-G, which is meant to indicate shows with “no” strong language.

While the TV-PG and TV-14 ratings were generally applied in a manner consistent with the definitions of those ratings, parents should be aware that there is a significant amount of sex, violence and adult language in shows that receive these ratings.

For example, the definition of the TV-PG rating states that shows receiving that designation may contain “some suggestive dialogue,” “infrequent coarse language,”

“moderate” violence, or “some sexual situations.” In this study, 68% of shows rated TV-PG contain sexual dialogue (averaging nearly four scenes with talk about sex per show), 66% contain adult language (averaging three and a half scenes with adult language per show), 55% contain violence (averaging more than five violent scenes each), and 28% contain sexual behavior (averaging two sexual scenes per show). However, the average level and intensity of the content did not exceed the “moderate” level.

B. Most shows with sex, violence or adult language are not being rated with the appropriate content descriptors.

In general, it appears that a significant amount of violent, sexual, or adult-language content is being aired in general audience shows unaccompanied by the relevant content descriptor. Parents who wish to use the ratings to prevent their children from viewing content of this nature need to be aware that under the current ratings system, as implemented, there is still a significant amount of moderately intense sex, violence and adult language in shows without content ratings.

Eight out of ten shows containing violence did not receive a V rating. Shows that contained violence but did *not* receive a V rating contained an average of five violent scenes per show. The level and intensity of the violence in these scenes was, on average, “moderate.”

The amount, level and intensity of violence in shows that did *not* receive a V rating was generally substantially lower than in those shows that did receive a V. However, in the sample of prime-time programming from the four commercial broadcast networks, 79% of those shows rated TV-14 but *without* a V contained violence, averaging more than 6 (6.4) violent scenes per show, most of it of the same level and intensity of violence as in those TV-14 shows that *did* receive a V rating. [Examples]

X% of all shows with sexual behavior did not receive an S rating. Shows that contained sexual behavior but did *not* receive an S rating had an average of two (2.1) sexual scenes per show, consisting on average of acts such as intimate touching or passionate kissing, although several contained scenes in which sexual intercourse was strongly implied. [Examples]

X% of all shows with sexual dialogue did not receive a D rating. Shows that contained sexual dialogue but did *not* receive a D rating contained an average of nearly four (3.9) scenes of such dialogue per show, most of which had at least a “substantial” emphasis on the sexual talk. [Examples]

X% of all shows with adult language did not receive an L rating. Shows that contained adult language but did *not* receive an L rating had an average of 4.8 scenes per show with adult language. [Need to discuss the words here]

There are a number of reasons why most of the violent, sexual, or adult-language content in today's television programming is being broadcast without content descriptors. Two networks, NBC and BET, have declined to use content descriptors on any of their programming (no BET programs were included in the sample analyzed for this study). Any sex, violence, or adult language on those networks, however intense, does not receive a content descriptor. Another reason is that, as allowed under the current ratings system, HBO uses MPAA ratings for movies shown on their network, rather than the kind of content ratings that would be consistent with the V-chip.

In addition, as the ratings system is currently designed, content ratings are not applied to any shows that are rated either TV-G or TV-Y. Many of these shows contain violent, sexual, or language-related content, although mostly of a mild nature. Finally, shows that are rated TV-14, for example, due to intense sexual situations, may also contain a significant amount of "moderate" violence, but would not be rated V unless they contained the "intense" violence mentioned in the definition of the TV-14 rating.

Whatever the reasons, the bottom line for parents who want to use the ratings and the V-chip to guide their children's viewing is that they cannot rely on the content descriptors, as currently employed, to block shows containing adult language, violence, or sexual content.

C. Children's programs contain a significant amount of violence, most of which is not indicated by an FV rating.

The way the FV rating is applied now, it does not reliably tell parents whether there is violence in a children's program or not. It does, however, indicate that there is *more* violence than in children's shows without an FV. In other words, there is no effective way for parents to block out all children's shows containing violence.

Six out of every ten shows designed for children contain violence, averaging more than 5 scenes of violence per show. Yet only 11% of children's shows are rated FV.

More than eight out of ten (81%) of children's shows containing violence do not receive an FV rating.

One of the reasons that many children's shows that contain violence are not designated with an FV is that much of this violence occurs in shows that are rated TV-Y; as the ratings system is currently designed, there is no requirement to use content descriptors in conjunction with TV-Y shows.

More than half (55%) of all children's shows rated TV-Y contain violence, and these shows have an average of more than 5 (5.7) violent scenes per show. The level and intensity of the violence in TV-Y programs was low.

Nearly eight out of ten (79%) children's shows rated TV-Y7 contain violence, with an average of 5 (5.2) violent scenes per show. The violence in TV-Y7 shows was of a "moderate" level and intensity.

Half (52%) of all shows rated TV-Y *without* an FV rating contain violence, averaging nearly three scenes of violence per show.

III. Key Findings – Effectiveness

Researchers studying the impact of television on young people have identified certain kinds of depictions that pose the greatest risk of harm to children. For example, while some types of television violence may be presented in the context of an anti-violence theme and may in fact be educational for some young people, other types of television violence have been shown to be problematic for young viewers, such as depictions in which the victims of serious harm experience little or no consequences or those that include scenes featuring especially graphic images and significant amounts of blood and gore.

In an effort to fully take into account the context of sexual, violent and language-related content, and to differentiate between those depictions which pose the greatest risk for young viewers and those that do not, the study identified a special category of "high risk" programs. The ratings assigned to these shows were then examined, to determine whether the ratings system is flagging these "high risk" shows appropriately.

A. Depictions of violence which pose the greatest risk to young viewers are not being rated appropriately.

Of all shows eligible for the ratings system, 10% contained high-risk violence. Half of these were shows created for a general audience, and half were shows created for children.

Of the general audience shows that were judged to contain high-risk violence, the largest portion, 40%, were rated TV-PG. Nearly two-thirds (65%) of all general audience shows containing high-risk violence did not receive a V rating.

Of the children's shows containing high risk violence, two-thirds were rated TV-Y. More than seven out of ten (72%) children's shows containing high-risk violence did not receive an FV rating.

[Give examples; explain why cartoon violence matters for the youngest children.]

B. High risk sexual content.

C. High risk language-related content.

BACK COVER:**Methodology:****Kaiser Family Foundation:**

The Kaiser Family Foundation, based in Menlo Park, California, is an independent national health care philanthropy and not associated with Kaiser Permanente or Kaiser Industries. This study was conducted as part of the Foundation's Program on the Entertainment Media & Public Health, which was established to examine the impact of entertainment media in society, and to work with the entertainment industry, researchers and policymakers on important public health issues.

LOGO**ADDRESSES, including Web Page**

Copies of this summary and the full study it is based on are available free-of-charge by calling the Kaiser Family Foundation's publication request line at 1-800-656-4KFF (#???).

2400 Sand Hill Road
Menlo Park, CA 94025
Phone: (650) 854-9400, x-222
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**Kaiser Family
Foundation**

TV
ratings

Fax

To: Tom Freidman

From: Vicky Rideout

Fax: (202) 456-7431

Date: July 22, 1998

Phone: (202) 456-5587

Pages: 6

Re: Overview: Content Analysis of TV Ratings **CC:**
System

☐ **Urgent** ☐ **For Review** ☐ **Please Comment** ☐ **Please Reply** ☐ **Please Recycle**

•Comments:

Overview: A Content Analysis of the TV Ratings System

The purpose of this study is to explore how effectively the new system has been applied during its first year in operation. In particular, the study examines whether the rating assigned to shows accurately reflects their content, and how consistently the ratings are being applied across different genres and networks.

The Kaiser Family Foundation takes no position on the television ratings system. Our goal is to provide objective data to parents, policymakers and to decision-makers in the television industry.

In conducting the study, a randomly-selected composite week of television programming on ten channels was subjected to rigorous content analysis. In addition, a three week over-sample of broadcast network prime-time programming was analyzed, to provide a closer look at the most highly viewed television shows.

This study is one of the largest analyses of television content ever conducted. It is designed to meet the most rigorous academic standards for scientific research. Unlike some studies of television content, this analysis does *not* simply "count" the number of violent or sexual acts in a show, but rather takes full account of both the varying degree of intensity of the depictions, and the context in which they are shown.

07/22/98 13:18 415 834 4800 KATSEK PAM FOUND

7/22/98

Highlights: Key Findings

Most shows that are supposed to be rated are rated.

In general, the networks have done an impressive job in assigning a rating to all programs that were meant to receive one. Only 4% of shows that ought to have been rated failed to receive any rating.

Many television shows contain a significant amount of sex, violence, and adult language.

Of all programs eligible for the ratings system, 57% contained sexual dialogue, 56% contained violent content, 53% contained coarse language, and 28% contained sexual behavior.

Intensity?

TV-PG and TV-G are the most frequently used ratings.

Of all non-children's shows that received a rating, X% were rated TV-PG, Y% received a TV-G, and Z% received a TV-14. The rating TV-MA was applied to only 1/10th of 1% of shows.

In a closer look at prime-time programming on the four commercial broadcast networks, the study found that X% of rated shows received a TV-PG, Y% received a TV-14, Z% a TV-G, and none received a rating of TV-MA.

Overall, only 23% of rated shows included *any* content descriptors. The most frequently used content descriptor was the rating D, which was applied to 12% of rated shows, followed by V (10%), L (5%) and S (3%). Excluding NBC, which has specifically declined to use the content descriptors, X% of all rated shows included any content descriptor.

Rated shows broadcast on the four major networks during prime time received a content descriptor 36% of the time, but there was significant variation in the use of content descriptors by network. No shows on NBC received content descriptors; 38% of rated shows on ABC included at least one content descriptor; 49% on CBS, and 67% on FOX. In this sample of prime-time programming, V was the most commonly used content descriptor, applied to 18% of rated shows; L was applied to 16%, D to 13% and S to 4% of rated programs.

In general, the age-based ratings are applied to non-children's programs in a way that accurately reflects the content of those shows, and differentiates appropriately between different levels and intensities of relevant content.

Most ratings are applied to programs in a way that accurately reflects the amount and intensity of relevant content, as described in the definitions of those ratings. However, the TV-G rating does contain a significant number of shows with a fair amount of sex, violence or adult language, although most such content is mild in nature.

TV-G is defined as indicating a program with "little or no" violence, sexual situation, or sexual dialogue, and "no" strong language. The study found that 20% of shows rated TV-G contained some violence, 9% contained sexual situations, 28% contained sexual dialogue, and 20% contained strong language. The intensity and explicitness of the violent and sexual content was low, with a moderate level of sexual dialogue. Most of the strong language used consisted of words such as "damn" and "hell," although instances of stronger words such as "bitch," "shit" and "whore" were found in shows rated TV-G, which is meant to indicate shows with "no" strong language.

The content in programs rated TV-PG and TV-14 fell largely within the bounds of the definitions of those ratings. Parents should be aware, however, that there is a significant amount of sex, violence and adult language in shows that receive those ratings. For example, 68% of shows rated TV-PG contain sexual dialogue, 66% contain coarse language, 55% contain violence, and 28% contain sexual behavior. The levels and intensity of this content do fall within appropriate levels for the TV-PG rating.

Most shows with sex, violence or adult language are not being rated with the appropriate content descriptors.

In general, it appears that the networks are significantly under-using the content descriptors they had pledged to apply to shows containing sex, violence or adult language.

Eight out of ten shows containing violence did *not* receive a V rating.
____% of all shows with sexual behavior did not receive an S rating.
____% of all shows with sexual dialogue did not receive a D rating.
____% of all shows with coarse language did not receive an L rating.
____% of all children's shows with violence did not receive an FV rating.

By and large, the sexual, violent, or language-related content of those shows that did not receive the relevant content descriptor was less extensive and intense than in those shows that did receive a content rating. However, there was still a

significant amount of moderately intense sex, violence and adult language in shows without content ratings.

For example, shows that contained violence but did *not* receive a V rating contained an average of five violent scenes per show, of X level of intensity. In the sample of prime-time programming from the four commercial broadcast networks, 79% of those shows rated TV-14, but *without* a V, contained violence, most of it the same level and intensity of violence as in those TV-14 shows that did receive a V rating.

In another example, shows that contained sexual dialogue but did not receive a D rating contained an average of nearly four (3.9) scenes with sexual dialogue. With regard to sexual behavior, most shows without the S rating contained only mild sexual content, but several contained scenes in which sexual intercourse was strongly implied.

NBC. The fact that NBC has declined to apply content descriptors to any of its shows accounts for much of the unlabelled sex, violence, and adult language. For example, on prime time shows on NBC, X% contained violence, Y% contained sexual behavior, Z% contained sexual dialogue, and W% contained adult language. The questionable content ranged from mild to quite intense. For example, with regard to those shows containing violent content on NBC's prime-time shows, there was an average of X violent scenes per show, with _____ levels and _____ intensity. With regard to those shows containing sexual content on NBC's prime time lineup, there was an average of X scenes with sexual behavior and Y scenes with sexual dialogue. Some of this sexual content included _____, _____ and _____. Adult words in these NBC prime time shows included _____, _____, and _____.

Children's programs.

Amount with violent content.

Amount with violent content that does not receive an FV.

Is TV-Y being applied appropriately, or would TV-Y7 have been more applicable? (Sig. Amounts of violence in TV-Y programs; any other measures?)

The way the FV rating is applied now, it does not reliably tell parents whether there is violence in a children's program or not, although it does indicate that there is more violence than in other children's shows. In other words, there is no effective way for parents to block out all children's shows containing violence.

60% of all children's shows contain some violence, averaging 5.6 scenes per show, mostly of low intensity, yet only 11% of children's shows are rated FV.

55% of shows rated TV-Y contain violence (average of 5.7 scenes per show), and 79% of shows rated TV-Y7 contain violence.

Half (52%) of all shows rated TV-Y *without* an FV rating contain violence (2.9 scenes per show).

High risk programs not being appropriately designated.

The study assessed those shows that contain the kinds of depictions of violence known by researchers to pose the greatest risk to young viewers.

Overall, 10% of all shows contained high-risk violence, half in general audience shows and half in shows designed specifically for children.

Of the general audience shows, 40% of the shows with high-risk violence were rated TV-PG, and two-thirds of those (65%) did not receive a V rating.

Of the children's shows, two-thirds were rated TV-Y, and X% did not receive a V rating.

RE/MG - RATINGS.

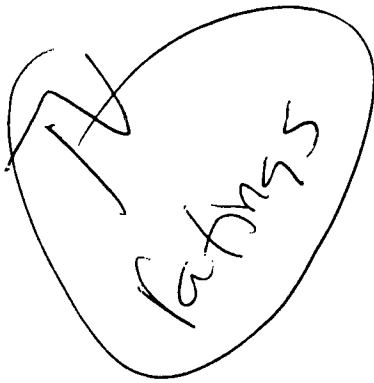


① Not ready until late Sept.

② Would POTUS be interested in releasing in LA?

~~(A)~~

Tom



THE TV RATINGS SYSTEM: A COMPREHENSIVE CONTENT STUDY

HENRY J. KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

The Kaiser Family Foundation has commissioned from researchers at the University of California, Santa Barbara, one of the largest television content studies ever conducted, designed to examine the implementation of the new television ratings system. Release of the study will be timed to coincide with the first anniversary of the implementation of the ratings system (the system was launched on October 1, 1997).

The Foundation has no position on the ratings system. The study is a systematic content analysis, based on a coding framework designed by expert researchers. Coding is rigorously monitored to ensure scientifically acceptable levels of reliability and objectivity. The study will meet the highest possible academic standards.

* More than 2,000 hours of television content will be analyzed, across ten major networks and channels.

* The study is designed to measure the extent to which the ratings categories differentiate meaningfully between different types of content, and the consistency of the ratings as applied across different genres and networks. For example, the study will examine what percent of shows in the different ratings categories contain violent content; the level of intensity of the violence in shows that receive certain ratings; and whether shows with violent content are being designated with a "V".

The study will be released at a briefing for members of the press in late September, 1998. Every effort will be made to ensure that representatives from various interested parties are available to comment on the findings – including parents groups, academic experts, and members of the television industry.



THE TV RATINGS SYSTEM: A COMPREHENSIVE CONTENT STUDY

HENRY J. KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

The Kaiser Family Foundation has commissioned from researchers at the University of California, Santa Barbara, one of the largest television content studies ever conducted, designed to examine the implementation of the new television ratings system. Release of the study will be timed to coincide with the first anniversary of the implementation of the ratings system (the system was launched on October 1, 1997).

The Foundation has no position on the ratings system. The study is a systematic content analysis, based on a coding framework designed by expert researchers. Coding is rigorously monitored to ensure scientifically acceptable levels of reliability and objectivity. The study will meet the highest possible academic standards.

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BR / Ek -
This is the
Study Rahm would
like to release
in late Sept. in
LA or Chicago.
Tom.

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- I should get
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EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE UNTIL:
9:00 a.m. ET, Thursday, September 24, 1998

TV
Rating 5

Major New Study of the TV Rating System:

Age-Based TV Ratings Accurately Reflect Content of Shows;

But Most Sex and Violence Is Aired Without the S or V Content Descriptors

Washington, D.C. -- One year after the television industry began using a new system for rating program content, a major new study finds that the age-based ratings such as TV-G have been applied in a way that accurately reflects the substance of most shows, as described in the guidelines agreed to by the industry and advocacy groups. However, the more detailed "content descriptors" favored by most parents are not being widely used to flag programs with sexual or violent content.

More than three out of four (79%) shows with violence and nine out of ten shows with sex (92%) do not receive the V or S content descriptors. Among children's programs, eight out of ten shows (81%) with violence do not receive the FV ("fantasy violence") descriptor, the only content indicator available for use with children's programs.

Although shows without content descriptors generally had lower levels of violence or sex than shows that received the descriptors, that was not always the case. For example, an episode of *Walker, Texas Ranger* (CBS) that aired without a V included the stabbing of two guards on a bus, an assault on a church by escaped convicts who threaten to rape a nun, and a fight scene in which one escapee is shot and another is kicked and beaten unconscious.

The study released today by the Kaiser Family Foundation -- *Rating the TV Ratings: One Year Out* -- found that the failure to flag the majority of sex and violence is the result of several factors, including judgment calls by the industry, NBC's decision not to use the content descriptors on any of its shows, and the design of the system as described in the guidelines agreed to by the industry and parent's organizations.

"The bottom line for parents who want to use the V-chip to guide their children's viewing is clear," said Drew Altman, President of the Kaiser Family Foundation. "Parents cannot rely on the content descriptors, as currently employed, to block all shows containing sex, violence, or adult language."

In a survey released by the Foundation in May, 1998, two-thirds (64%) of parents who use the ratings said they find the content descriptors the most useful part of the rating system (22% found the age-based ratings most useful).

DRAFT

With regard to violence in children's programs, the guidelines do not call for the FV descriptor to be used on every show containing violence, but only on those shows rated TV-Y7 that contain "more intense" or "more combative" violence than other shows in that rating category. The study found that six out of ten (60%) children's shows contain violence; less than one out of five (19%) children's shows with violence receives an FV ("fantasy violence") content descriptor.

Under the rating system, all shows other than news or sports are supposed to receive a rating. Overall, the study found that the television industry has done a good job in complying with this policy: across all networks and programs reviewed, only 4% of shows that qualified for a rating failed to receive one.

Independent of the use of content descriptors, the study found that the age-based ratings for general audience shows (i.e., shows other than those created specifically for children) are applied in a way that accurately reflects the shows' content and the descriptions of the ratings in the guidelines. For example, the guidelines state that shows rated TV-G will contain "little or no" violent or sexual content. The study found that 80% of TV-G shows contain no violence, and the remainder contain an average of two scenes of low-level violence; 90% contain no sexual behavior, and the remainder contain an average of less than two scenes of mostly mild sexual behavior.

The new TV rating system, combining both age-based ratings and content descriptors, was launched in October, 1997 as the result of an agreement among advocacy groups, parents organizations, policymakers and representatives of the television industry. The ratings are designed to work in conjunction with the V-chip device, which will allow parents to block shows with certain ratings from their home. The V-chip will be available in some TV sets by next January, and in all new sets in January, 2000.

Methodology: The study, conducted for the Foundation by experts at the University of California, Santa Barbara, is one of the largest analyses of television content ever conducted. A randomly selected composite week of television programming on eleven channels was subjected to elaborate content analysis. The channels were selected to represent network and independent broadcast stations as well as basic and premium cable (ABC, CBS, NBC, FOX, HBO, Lifetime, Nickelodeon, PBS, TNT, USA, and the independent Los Angeles station KTLA (which airs nine hours a week of WB programming)). A two-week over-sample of prime time programming on the major broadcast networks was analyzed as well. The results for PBS are reported independently of the commercial stations. Rather than simply counting the number of incidences of violence, sex or adult language in a show, the study also analyzed the level and intensity of such content as well as the context in which it was presented. The analyses were conducted by trained coders using standard research techniques that yielded a high degree of consistency in judgments among coders.

Copies of the study, entitled "One Year Out: Rating the TV Ratings," or of the Executive Summary, are available by calling the Kaiser Family Foundation's publications request line at 1-800-656-4533 (ask for publication # _____).

Executive Summary

September 1998

An Assessment of the Television Industry's Use of V-Chip Ratings

TV ratings
DRAFT

**Rating the
TV Ratings:
One Year Out**
**A REPORT TO THE
KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION**

By Dale Kunkel,
Wendy Jo Maynard Farinola,
Kirstle M. Cope, Edward Donnerstein,
Erica Biely, and Lara Zwarun
University of California, Santa Barbara

THE HENRY J.
**KAISER
FAMILY**
FOUNDATION

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The Research Project: A Content Analysis of the TV Rating System

The purpose of this study is to explore how effectively the new system has been applied during its first year in operation. In particular, the study examines whether the ratings assigned to shows accurately reflect their content, according to the guidelines developed by the industry.

The Kaiser Family Foundation takes no position on the television rating system. The Foundation commissioned this study to provide objective data to parents, policymakers and decision-makers in the television industry. The study was conducted as part of the Foundation's Program on the Entertainment Media & Public Health, which was established to examine the impact of entertainment media in society, and to work with the entertainment industry, researchers and policymakers on important public health issues.

This study is one of the largest analysis of television content ever conducted. It is designed to meet the most rigorous academic standards for scientific research. In conducting the study, a randomly-selected composite week of television programming on eleven channels was subjected to elaborate content analysis. The eleven channels include network and independent broadcast stations as well as basic and premium cable channels. In addition, a three week over-sample of prime-time programming on the major broadcast networks was analyzed to provide a closer look at the most highly viewed television shows.

Unlike some studies of television content, this analysis does not simply "count" the number of violent or sexual acts in a show, but rather takes account of both the varying degrees of intensity of the depictions, and the context in which they are shown.

For example, in measuring the amount and nature of violent content in television shows, the study not only counted the percent of programs that contain violence and the average number of violent scenes in each of these shows, but also analyzed the level and intensity of the violence. The "level" of violence was calculated based on the type of violent action depicted and the extent of violent acts in each scene; the "intensity" of the violence was calculated based on the seriousness of harm to the victim, the graphicness of the action depicted, and the degree of blood and gore shown.

Similar measures were used to evaluate the levels and explicitness of sexual behavior, sexual dialogue and adult language in all shows analyzed for this study. The analysis were conducted by trained coders who were monitored statistically to verify that a high degree of consistency in judgments across coders was maintained.

Background: The TV Rating System

In October 1997, the television industry began implementing a new system for rating all programs other than news and sports shown on broadcast and cable TV. The rating system was designed to help parents monitor and guide their children's television viewing.

Networks and syndicators rate their own programs, although individual stations have a right to change that rating. All non-exempt shows are given one of six "age-based" ratings, such as TV-14. In addition, after extensive negotiations with parent's and children's organizations, the industry also agreed to add "content descriptors" to the age-based ratings in certain instances, letting parents know when some programs contain particular types of content such as violence, sex, or adult language. NBC has declined to add the content descriptors to its ratings.

The ratings are designed to work in conjunction with the V-chip device, which will be available in half of all new TV sets starting in January, 1999, and in all new sets by the following year. Using the V-chip, parents will be able to block programs with certain ratings from their home. In addition, the ratings are displayed on-screen for fifteen seconds at the start of each program, and are printed in some TV listings.

Key Findings

1. The age-based ratings for general audience shows (i.e., all shows except children's programs) are applied in a way that reasonably reflects the content of those shows.

On average, the amount, level and intensity of the content in programs rated TV-G, TV-PG and TV-14 fell largely within the bounds of the definitions of those ratings as provided in the guidelines.

For example, the TV-G rating is defined as indicating a program with "little or no" violence, sexual situations, or sexual dialogue, and "no" strong language.

Eight out of ten (80%) TV-G shows contained no violence at all. Twenty percent of shows rated TV-G did contain violence, averaging two violent scenes per show, with a level and intensity of violence evaluated as "low."

Nine out of ten (91%) TV-G shows contained no sexual behavior. Nine percent of shows rated TV-G did contain sexual situations, averaging 1.4 sexual scenes per show, mostly consisting of physical flirting, with some intimate touch or passionate kissing.

Almost three-quarters (72%) of all TV-G shows had no sexual dialogue at all. Twenty-eight percent of shows rated TV-G did contain sexual dialogue, averaging 2.1 scenes per show featuring talk about sex, with a "moderate" level of emphasis in the scenes.

Eight out of ten (80%) TV-G shows had no adult language at all. Twenty percent of shows rated TV-G did contain some adult language. Almost all instances consisted of mild words, although several programs used words such as "bitch" and "shit."

Summary of Sensitive Content by Rating Category...

TV-G Shows

	Percent of TV-G shows that contain	Average number of scenes per show	Average level within scenes	Percent of TV-G shows that received
Violence	20%	2.0	Low level and intensity	V ▲
Sexual Behavior	9%	1.4	Moderate level & no explicitness	S ▲
Sexual Dialogue	28%	2.1	Moderate level of emphasis	D ▲
Adult Language	20%	2.1	Low level of language	L ▲

TV-PG Shows

	Percent of TV-PG shows that contain	Average number of scenes per show	Average level within scenes	Percent of TV-PG shows that received
Violence	55%	5.2	Moderate level and intensity	V 13%
Sexual Behavior	28%	2.0	Moderate level & low explicitness	S 2%
Sexual Dialogue	68%	3.8	Moderate level of emphasis	D 16%
Adult Language	66%	3.5	Low level of language	L 6%

TV-14 Shows

	Percent of TV-14 shows that contain	Average number of scenes per show	Average level within scenes	Percent of TV-14 shows that received
Violence	70%	6.9	Moderate level and intensity	V 29%
Sexual Behavior	56%	2.4	Moderate level and explicitness	S 12%
Sexual Dialogue	82%	4.9	Moderate level of emphasis	D 34%
Adult Language	78%	5.5	Low level of language	L 15%

▲ The rating guidelines make no mention of using content descriptors with TV-G shows.

2. However, content descriptors are not being used on the vast majority of general audience shows containing sex, violence or adult language.

A significant amount of violence, sex, and adult language is being aired in general audience programs unaccompanied by the relevant content descriptor. As a result, parents who wish to use the ratings to prevent their children from viewing content of this nature may not be aware that there is still a significant amount of "moderately intense" sex, violence and adult language in shows without content descriptors.

The failure to flag the majority of sex, violence and adult language with content descriptors is a result of several factors, including judgment calls by the industry, NBC's decision not to use the content descriptors at all, and the design of the system as described in the guidelines.

More than nine out of ten (92%) shows with sexual behavior did not receive an S content descriptor; these shows averaged two (2.1) scenes of "moderate" sexual behavior per show. In general, most of the sexual behavior in shows without an S consisted of acts such as passionate kissing, although many contained scenes in which sexual intercourse was depicted or implied. For example, in the Lifetime movie *Danielle Steele's Family Album*, rated TV-PG, a married man named Ward steals away for a trip to Mexico with his mistress. In one scene on the veranda, the two begin to kiss passionately and talk about how they excite one another. The woman says seductively "I'm going to do things to you you've never had done before," as they roll to the floor to begin making love. Two scenes later, the man returns home to his wife and immediately engages her in a session of lovemaking. Ward undresses his wife in between passionate kisses. Then, this couple is shown having intercourse in the bed, with the bedsheets covering them from the waist down.

Nearly eight out of ten shows (79%) containing violence did not receive a V content descriptor; these shows averaged five scenes of "moderate" violence per show. On average, the amount, level and intensity of violence in shows that did not receive a V content descriptor was substantially lower than in those shows that did receive a V, but this was often not the case. For example, an episode of *Walker, Texas Ranger* that did not receive a V included the stabbing of two guards on a bus, an assault on a church by escaped convicts who take a group of people hostage and threaten to rape a nun, and an episode-ending fight scene in which one escapee is shot and another is beaten unconscious with punches and kicks.

More than eight out of ten (83%) shows with sexual dialogue did not receive a D content descriptor; these shows averaged nearly four (3.9) scenes of "substantial" sexual dialogue per show. For example, in one episode of *Beverly Hills 90210*, which did not receive a D, a woman plays a tape of her boyfriend and his new lover discussing how they felt when they had sex together.

Nine out of ten (91%) shows with adult language did not receive an L content descriptor; these shows averaged more than four (4.8) scenes per show with adult language.

Reasons why most violence, sex and adult language in general audience programs does not receive a content descriptor:

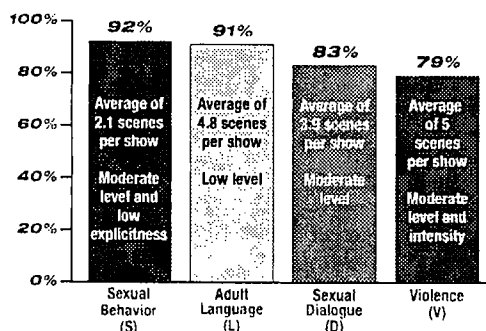
As mentioned above, there are a number of reasons why most of the violence, sex, and adult language in general audience shows is being aired without content descriptors. This section reviews those reasons, and, using violence as an example, indicates how much of the unlabeled content is attributable to each reason.

NBC does not use content descriptors: NBC has declined to use content descriptors on any of its programming. Any sex, violence, or adult language on that network, however intense, does not receive a content descriptor. *Seven percent of the unlabeled violence was found in shows on NBC.*

TV-G programs are not given content descriptors: The rating guidelines do not make reference to the use of content descriptors in conjunction with shows rated TV-G, and no shows that were rated TV-G received any content descriptors. *Seventeen percent of the unlabeled violence was found in TV-G shows.*

Not all sensitive content in TV-PG and TV-14 shows receives a content descriptor: In some cases, the study identified TV-PG or TV-14 programs that contained substantial sex, violence or adult language, but did not receive the relevant content descriptor, even though the guidelines seem to indicate that one should have been given. For example, in network prime-time programming, TV-14 shows that contained violence but did not receive a V content descriptor had an average of more than six (6.4) violent scenes per show, most of it of the same level and intensity of violence as in those TV-14 shows that did receive a V content descriptor.

Percent of shows with sex, violence, or adult language that did NOT receive a content descriptor...



*This chart includes all general audience (i.e. non-children's) shows qualified for a rating.

Key Findings

In other cases, the rating guidelines themselves appear to allow some sex, violence, or adult language in TV-PG or TV-14 programs to go unlabeled. For example, the guidelines for TV-14 shows indicate that such shows will receive a V descriptor if they contain violence that is judged by the broadcaster to be "intense," but they make no mention of applying a V if the show contains "moderate" violence. Similarly, the guidelines only discuss applying a V to TV-PG shows if the violence is judged "moderate." This practice limits the V-chip system's ability to consistently identify violence with a V. *Fifty-five percent of the unlabeled violence was found in non-NBC shows rated TV-PG or TV-14.*

Movies can be shown with MPAA ratings: According to the rating guidelines, television stations that air uncut movies may use the MPAA ratings instead of the ratings designed specifically for TV. HBO generally chooses this option. Accordingly, movies that contain violence on HBO may receive a PG-13 or an R rating, but do not have a V content descriptor. While that network has developed its own parental warnings that may be applied to such movies, these warnings will not work in conjunction with the V-chip. *Seventeen percent of the unlabeled violence was found in MPAA-rated movies.*

Some shows that are supposed to be rated don't receive any ratings at all: A small portion (4%) of non-news or sports shows that were supposed to receive ratings did not receive one, and these unrated shows often contained violence, sex or adult language. *Four percent of the unlabeled violence was found in unrated programs.*

Whatever the reasons, the bottom line for parents who want to use the V-chip ratings to guide their children's viewing is clear. Parents cannot rely on the content descriptors, as currently employed, to block all shows containing adult language, violence, or sexual content. While most of the unlabeled content was milder than that found in shows with content descriptors, there is still a significant amount of "moderate" to "high" level sex and violence in shows without content descriptors.

3. Children's programs also contain a significant amount of violence, most of which is not indicated by an FV ("fantasy violence") content descriptor.

Six out of every ten shows designed for children contain violence, averaging more than five scenes of violence per show.

TV-Y More than half (55%) of children's shows rated TV-Y contain violence, and these shows have an average of 5.7 violent scenes per show. The level and intensity of the violence in TV-Y programs is, on average, "low," but this is not always the case. For example, one TV-Y episode of *Spiderman* reviewed for this study contained an extended battle scene between Spiderman and an enemy, which included extensive firing from machine guns and tanks, with Spiderman being repeatedly shot at and pummeled by his opponent.

TV-Y7 Three out of four (76%) children's shows rated TV-Y7 contain violence, with an average of more than five violent scenes per show. The violence in TV-Y7 shows was of a "moderate" level and intensity.

PBS Children's shows on PBS were analyzed independently of those on the commercial stations. All but one of the PBS children's programs analyzed for this study were rated TV-Y. Fourteen percent of these shows contained violence, compared to 55% of TV-Y programs industry-wide. Those children's shows on PBS that did contain violence had an average of fewer than half as many violent scenes as other channels.

Eight out of ten (81%) children's shows containing violence do not receive an FV content descriptor.

The rating guidelines do not require that all children's shows containing violence be flagged with the FV content descriptor (indicating "fantasy violence").

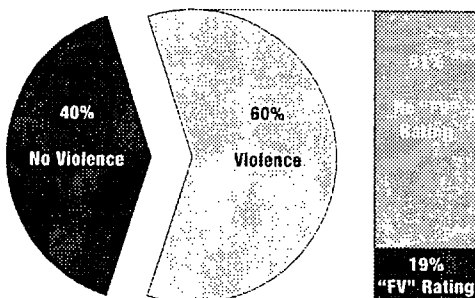
For example, the guidelines make no mention of using the FV content descriptor on shows rated TV-Y. Instead, the guidelines simply state that shows rated TV-Y are supposed to be specifically designed for a very young audience, including children as young as two, and are not expected to frighten younger children. Yet many shows that have been rated TV-Y do contain violence, none of which receive the FV designation.

In addition, for the rating TV-Y7, the guidelines call for the FV descriptor to be used only on shows "where fantasy violence may be more intense or more combative than other programs in this category."

The way the FV content descriptor is applied now, it does not reliably tell parents whether there is violence in a children's program or not. Again, the bottom line for parents who want to use the V-chip ratings to guide their children's viewing is clear: there is no effective way for parents to block out all children's shows containing violence.

Percent of children's programs containing violence...

Of children's programs containing violence, the percent that receive the content descriptor "FV" for "fantasy violence"...

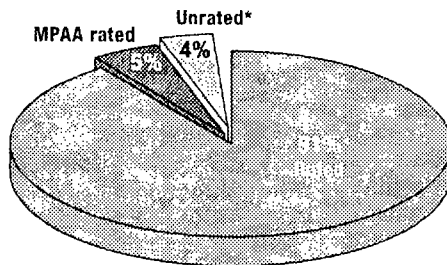


The Television Ratings Landscape:

Assigning a rating to non-exempt shows

Under the rating system, all shows other than news or sports are supposed to receive a rating. Across all networks and programs reviewed in 1998, only 4% of shows that qualified for a rating failed to receive one. The commercial broadcast networks (ABC, CBS, NBC and Fox) failed to rate 7% of shows that qualified for a rating. Shows broadcast on PBS were analyzed independently of the commercial stations in this study; on PBS, 48% of all shows that qualified for a rating did not receive one.

Percent of all non-exempt TV programs that received a rating...



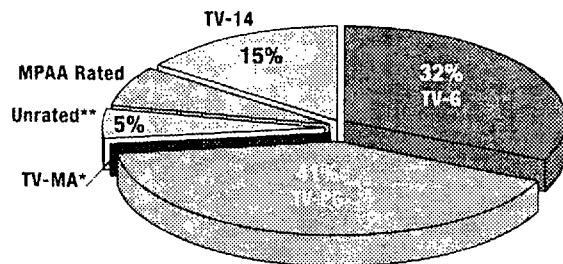
*These programs were unrated, but according to the guidelines, should have been rated.

Use of age-based ratings

Among programming designed for a general audience (i.e., all shows except children's programs), the most commonly used ratings are TV-PG and TV-G. The TV-MA rating is virtually unused. Forty-one percent of non-exempt general audience shows were rated TV-PG, 32% received a TV-G, and 15% received a TV-14. The rating TV-MA was applied to only .2% of shows. The remainder of programs were either not rated, or were given an MPAA movie rating.

In a closer look at prime-time programming on the four commercial broadcast networks, the study found that 56% of non-exempt shows received a TV-PG, 25% received a TV-14, 19% a TV-G, and none received a rating of TV-MA.

Breakdown of age-based ratings among general audience shows...



*Accounts for .2 percent

**These programs were unrated, but according to the guidelines, should have been rated.

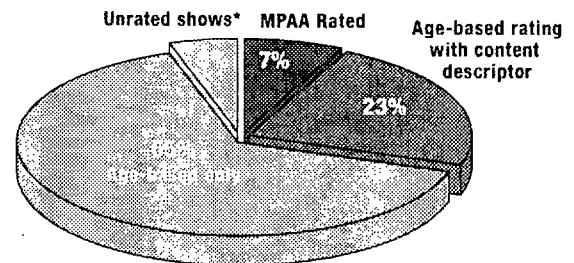
Use of content descriptors.

The rating system provides for content descriptors (V for violence, S for sexual behavior, D for sexual dialogue, L for adult language, and FV for fantasy violence in children's programs) to be applied to some shows that contain sensitive content. The study analyzed what proportion of shows that qualify for an age-based rating also received a content descriptor.

Among children's programs, 11% received a content descriptor. Among general audience programs, 23% received a content descriptor. Excluding NBC, which has specifically declined to use the content descriptors, 25% of all non-exempt general audience shows included any content descriptor. No programs on PBS received a content descriptor (these programs were analyzed independently of those on the commercial stations). Non-exempt shows broadcast on the four major networks during prime-time received a content descriptor 36% of the time. Excluding NBC, prime time network shows received a content descriptor half the time (51%).

The most frequently used content descriptor on general audience shows was the rating D (sexual dialogue), which was applied to 12% of non-exempt shows, followed by V (violence) at 10%, L (adult language) at 5% and S (sex) at 3%. In prime-time programming on the major networks, V was the most commonly used content descriptor, applied to 18% of non-exempt shows; L was applied to 16%, D to 13% and S to 4% of non-exempt programs.

The use of age-based ratings and content descriptors general audience shows...



*These programs were unrated, but according to the guidelines, should have been rated.

The TV Ratings

The TV Parental Guidelines, agreed to by the television industry and parent's organizations, are the only official descriptions of the various ratings and how they should be applied. Following is the exact text of these guidelines.

The following categories apply to programs designed solely for children:

TV Y All Children
This program is designed to be appropriate for all children.
Whether animated or live-action, the themes and elements in this program are specifically designed for a very young audience, including children from ages 2-6. This program is not expected to frighten younger children.

TV Y7 Directed to Older Children
This program is designed for children age 7 and above.
It may be more appropriate for children who have acquired the developmental skills needed to distinguish between make-believe and reality. Themes and elements in this program may include mild fantasy violence or comedic violence, or may frighten children under the age of 7. Therefore, parents may wish to consider the suitability of this program for their very young children. Note: for those programs where fantasy violence may be more intense or more combative than other programs in this category, such programs will be designated TV-Y7-FV.

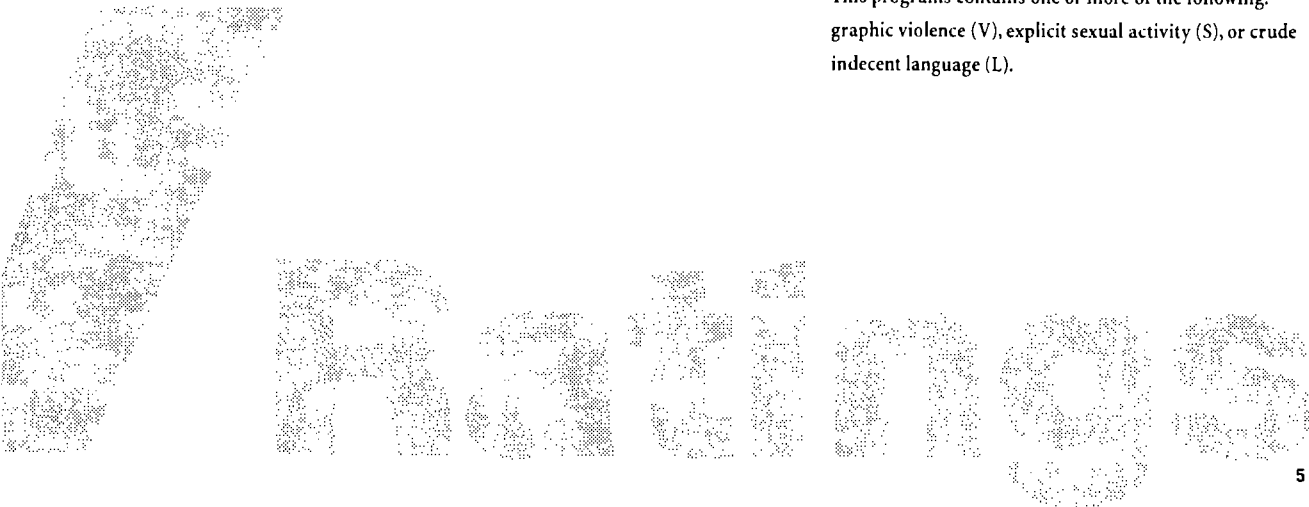
The following categories apply to programs designed for the entire audience:

TV G General Audience
Most parents would find this program suitable for all ages.
Although this rating does not signify a program designed specifically for children, most parents may let younger children watch this program unattended. It contains little or no violence, no strong language and little or no sexual dialogue or situations.

TV PG Parental Guidance Suggested
This program contains material that parents may find unsuitable for younger children. Many parents may want to watch it with their younger children. The theme itself may call for parental guidance and/or the program contains one or more of the following: moderate violence (V), some sexual situations (S), infrequent coarse language (L), or some suggestive dialogue (D).

TV 14 Parents Strongly Cautioned
This program contains some material that many parents would find unsuitable for children under 14 years of age.
Parents are strongly urged to exercise greater care in monitoring this program and are cautioned against letting children under the age of 14 watch unattended. This program contains one or more of the following: intense violence (V), intense sexual situations (S), strong coarse language (L), or intensely suggestive dialogue (D).

TV MA Mature Audience Only
This program is specifically designed to be viewed by adults and therefore may be unsuitable for children under 17.
This programs contains one or more of the following: graphic violence (V), explicit sexual activity (S), or crude indecent language (L).



Methodology:

More than 2600 randomly-selected television programs were examined for this study across two television seasons. For both the 1996-97 and the 1997-98 seasons, a composite week of programming from 7:00 a.m. - 11:00 p.m. was taped and analyzed, along with an over-sample of two additional weeks of prime-time programming on the commercial broadcast networks.

The findings reported in this executive summary are based exclusively on the 1997-98 sample, after the content descriptors had been added to the rating system. The channels included in the composite week sample include ABC, CBS, NBC, Fox, HBO, Lifetime, Nickelodeon, TNT, and USA, along with the independent Los Angeles station KTLA (a WB affiliate, airing nine hours a week of WB programming). A one-week sample of programming on PBS was also analyzed and is reported independently of the commercial stations. The prime-time over-sample includes programs broadcast on ABC, CBS, NBC, and Fox.

After the sampling was completed, each television program that qualified for a rating (all programs except news and sports) was analyzed for portrayals of violence, sex, and adult language. Intricate scales were developed to determine the level, and where appropriate, the intensity or explicitness of the content in the three areas. The content analysis of programming captured not only the amounts and types of violence, sex and language, but also the context of these portrayals.

The scientific integrity of the content analysis data reported in this research is established by careful statistical monitoring of the inter-coder reliability for all judgments, which is presented in detail in the complete report.

For a full explanation of the methods used in this study, please refer to the full report, publication #1435, which is available for free online at: www.kff.org, or by calling 1-800-656-4533.

Kaiser Family Foundation:

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Additional copies of this publication (#1435) and the full study (#1434) it is based on are available free-of-charge by calling the Kaiser Family Foundation's publication request line at 1-800-656-4533.