

## **Chapter 3 Family Viewing Alternatives: Economic Justifications, Social Efficiency and Educational Support**

### **Introduction**

In the previous chapters we discussed what is at the heart of the European Union's concern: what prospect is there for a technical device that will assist parents to exercise choice within their homes? Furthermore, we provided an analysis of the rating and labelling systems that are the backbone for such technical devices and, in addition, those increasingly common systems that function without technical devices, but provide efficient and useful information to parents and others.

We conclude with a discussion of three extremely important questions. Firstly, in a time when government intervention in areas touching upon personal choice and rights of freedom of speech is often questioned, what can economists tell us about the justification for these labelling and rating systems? Secondly, if ratings and advisories have been introduced, how effective and efficient are they in protecting children from harmful content? And finally, for these systems to work, what needs to be done to educate the public as to the nature of television viewing and to increase the capacity for television consumption to be an activity that is approached critically, with an awareness of its costs and effects as well as its pleasures and benefits? These issues are intertwined, because an analysis of the inadequacies in a "market" or parental television empowerment demonstrates the need for education as well as rating and labelling systems.

### **1 Economic Efficiency and Regulatory Interventions**

We start with a brief economic analysis, examining issues of efficiency and equity in the context of protecting minors by way of public regulation of content. A more

extended version of this discussion, complete with graphs and charts, is contained in the Annex. The key questions that need to be addressed are<sup>1</sup>:

- What actually do we mean by choice? Do consumers really enjoy the greatest possible choice of suppliers, information, and audio-visual services in the current broadcasting setting and is their situation likely to improve in the future digital setting? Are there any income or socio-economic factors associated with the ability to receive information and to make rational choices? These are important issues because of the assumption that the “choice” and/or information available to parents is full and unproblematic, making intervention to repair “market failure” unnecessary.
- Can regulation enhance any of the various aspects of efficiency and equity, by: (i) improving the content information provided to consumers and (ii) facilitating parental control of minors? Obviously more information is usually preferable to less, but we need to ask why the market does not provide all the necessary information itself and who, among the population, is disadvantaged by the current form in which information is distributed or by its absence.
- Are there substantial efficiency and equity benefits associated with having public compulsory intervention rather than a pure free market supply?

The current (and future digital) audiovisual markets are likely to be affected by familiar problems associated with imperfect and asymmetric information; namely, that content is, and is likely to remain, influenced by a small number of operators, with serious consequences in terms of efficiency and equity. Information is imperfect because there is little market for the kind of data that tells consumers not to buy. Information is asymmetric because it is understood or used more readily by some consumers than others. Making information less imperfect and its distribution less asymmetric improves all consumers’ control over the content they wish to view or which they desire for their children. That is or should be the goal of public intervention.

Appropriately co-ordinated government action (which might take the form of encouraging self-regulation) serves efficiency grounds if, as should be the case with a

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<sup>1</sup> The questions are fully examined in the Economic Modelling Background chapter in the Annex (Annex 1, Chapter 1)

properly structured rating system, it can expand competition while improving consumers' information. Multiple ratings and labels can ensure a proper evaluation of content and the quality of the product, as well as its possible benefits. At the same time such a system ensures stimulation of competition. Furthermore, from an economist's perspective, there is another way in which effective ratings and labelling systems—those that allow parents to use technical devices to perform parental functions without being at home - improve social welfare. Assisting parental control by means of technical devices may have positive benefits for family income, since time allocated to watching with children and/or making prior judgements about appropriate television programmes for children's viewing decreases time available for work. This not only reduces earnings directly, but indirectly, by slowing down the growth of the parent's career as a consequence.

There is legitimate social concern about changes in the broadcasting environment, since its regulation is similar to that of a public utility, affecting all households simultaneously (for example, rating and labelling systems which might lead to channelling and blocking of programmes). Moreover, the introduction of rating and labelling systems may have external benefits, or benefits that extend to others than the parents and children themselves. This is the case if such benefits improve parental supervision and if improved parental supervision yields better young people and better citizens. The provision of a better broadcast environment for children brings satisfaction to other members of society, who benefit indirectly from an improved society. Hence, the usual conditions for a "market failure" argument apply; namely where there is a public good and an externality.

The argument for public intervention in the supply of content information is also important from an equity perspective. Obtaining the information necessary for parental control has a cost, which is sometimes significant. The problem of this cost is greater for lower socio-economic groups. Accordingly, television consumption patterns of children in these groups may be more unbalanced than might otherwise be the case, e.g. excessively violent or inappropriately dependent on particular aspects of audiovisual culture. Moreover, parental activities, which often turn on the mother,

have a negative effect predominantly on the labour and earnings of women, which are already subject to discrimination. By decreasing the parental control activity of mothers, regulation may -at the margin, to be sure - redistribute resources to women, help reduce the *feminisation* of poverty and improve the well being of poor lone-parent families. Voluntary action may fail due to the incentive to free ride. The market failure argument applies again and concerns about equity concern should lead to public intervention.

Technological devices that enable a faster selection of content and filter unwanted products may facilitate parents' control of their children's education and decrease restrictive public interventions (those related to delinquency or worse). The transmission of appropriate and multiple ratings would allow each household to determine the broadcast environment best suited for their children.

However, the presence of an externality may lead towards more drastic solutions and, as is the case with education, there may be arguments in favour of stronger regulation if parents cannot always be trusted to act in the best interests of the child, either due to insufficient information or a lack of parental initiative.

It is difficult to determine social benefits or aggregate individuals willingness to pay, since households have incentives to mislead the policy-maker, seeking to reduce required contributions by understating their willingness to pay, or, where acting as free-riders, overstating it in order to increase their benefits.

However, as far as parental control activities are concerned, we can separate parents' expenditure of time (in control activity) from other expenditures (net flow of commodities) that increase child welfare, and examine the impact of a given audiovisual regulatory environment. Reducing control activity through regulation allows parents to devote more time to income-producing activities, other parental activities and leisure. Improvement of the children's broadcasting environment generally increases the benefits from work and parental activities, since the household becomes more productive by being able to spend more time in work and other

parental activities. Moreover, regulation implies additional benefits through the reduction of problems caused by: (i) uncertainty about the future environment (i.e. the *option value* of regulation) and (ii) the *irreversible* harm, which, in the absence of a regulated environment, stems from ex post insufficient parental control.

The benefits deriving from the time saved in parental control activities can be measured by the potential for increasing consumption, i.e. through the *compensating variation* measure of the benefits (the amount of money the household in the original environment should be allocated to make it as well off as the household in the environment improved by regulation). As an approximation, using earning data we can consider the monetary value of parental control activity - which is no longer required in the regulated environment – in order to reach the same level of welfare for children.

Regulatory benefits and costs may vary among different socio-economic groups, even in a perverse way. However, once the financing of regulatory social costs by progressive taxation is taken into consideration, the system as a whole is likely to improve equity. In any case, an unequal and perverse distribution of the regulatory net benefits will not necessarily be the outcome and could be avoided with the right technical design.

## **2. Social efficiency**

Given the economic justification offered for interventions such as ratings, what social benefits do they offer, and how efficient and effective are the systems currently in place? To date, there is surprisingly little research on the efficiency of ratings and advisories (verbal or written warnings). This fact is not only noted in the National Television Violence Study, conducted in the US, it has also been stated repeatedly by the country experts participating in this study and by leading organisations engaged in children and media issues. However, this is less surprising if one considers that visual ratings in contrast to verbal warnings are relatively new - in most countries. As a result the most comprehensive research has been carried out in the United States, where the history of monitoring violence stretches back to the 1950s and has prompted the study

of the efficiency of advisories. Following the more recent development of visual symbols and acoustic signals, studies have also been conducted in Belgium, France -, Italy, and in the UK, as outlined below. Where possible the findings have been grouped into the various issues related to efficiency such as awareness, understanding, satisfaction, utility, appropriateness, impact and need for improvement. Special attention is also given to the US.

## 2.1 Belgium

A study by Herman and Leyens<sup>2</sup> investigated the impact of verbal warnings on the audience in Belgium during the years of 1972-1975. The study focused exclusively on films, and audience sizes were compared for films broadcast with and without verbal warnings. The main conclusions drawn from the study were that films broadcast with a warning about violent or sexual content attracted larger audiences. This is of importance as it may prove that the contrary effects associated with visual symbols (i.e. attracting a young audience) also apply to verbal announcements.

## 2.2 France

An opinion poll conducted by the *Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel (CSA)* early in 1998 researched the effectiveness of the French rating symbols.<sup>3</sup> At the time, the system consisted of three visual symbols: a green circle for programmes containing scenes likely to harm young viewers, an orange triangle for programmes unsuitable for viewers under 12 years of age and a red square referring to films unsuitable for viewers younger than 16. The survey revealed the following results:

### ***Level of awareness amongst parents***

80% of the people interviewed were aware of the existence of the visual symbols; for the parents of minors the figure was 88%.

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<sup>2</sup> Herman, G., and Leyens, J. P. "Rating films on Television," *Journal of Communication*, 27 (4), p 48-53, (1977).

<sup>3</sup> The opinion poll refers to the previous rating system which was replaced in September 1998. The introduction of the new rating system was partly a result of the findings of the study.

***Level of viewer (parents and children) understanding of the warnings provided by the system***

The meaning of the icons was best known for the Red Square - 63% gave a fully or at least partly correct interpretation of its meaning. Awareness of the meaning of the orange triangle was lower with 53%, and only 34% were able to give a definition for the green circle.

***Level of satisfaction***

Of the people interviewed, 63% said that they considered the visual icons as very or relatively useful.

***Perceived utility for a) protecting children b) as an educational modality***

75% of all children between 8 and 14 years of age interviewed say they take the icons into account when choosing a programme for themselves (80% for the 8 to 10 age groups).

***Perceived appropriateness for the range of proposed TV programmes, and perceived need to extend system to additional programming such as news, sports, advertisements***

58% of people questioned said that the classification “is very relevant” (11%) or “rather relevant” (47%) regarding the level of violence of the programme.

***Impact on the viewing policy of the family***

84% of parents stated that they take into consideration the signals provided by the icons for their children’s television consumption “at least sometimes”. This is a considerable increase on the results of a previous opinion poll from January 1997, where only 53% of parents made use of the signals. Also of interest is that 79% of all adults claimed that they do not use of the signalling system for themselves.

***Degree of need for improvements perceived by viewers / level of need for and nature of accompanying additional measures***

Of the parents in favour of the rating system, 19% thought that it needed to be

improved and more details needed to be provided in order to make it more effective. Ideas for improvement of the current system included the complementary use of an acoustic signal. Others suggested the extension of the symbols, currently applying to films and fiction only, to other programmes such as documentaries (e.g. about war or prostitution). The CSA concluded that the system ought to undergo some improvements. Amongst other suggestions, the CSA recommended changing the colour of the green circle, due to the substantial amount of confusion surrounding its meaning, and prolonging the presence of symbols on screen if not displayed permanently (to 1 minute at the beginning of the programme and 15 seconds after commercial breaks).<sup>4</sup>

A qualitative study carried out by SORGEM in November and December 1997 established the following facts about parental use of the above ratings:

- When asked which criteria guided their programme choice most parents said they trusted the schedule and they believed that violent programmes were not broadcast during daytime.
- They also thought that programme guides were the best way to select a programme.
- The majority considered the current system of coloured symbols as effective; some parents, however, stated that their children had a better understanding of the signs than themselves, and that they needed to learn the meaning of the symbols before they were able to explain them to their children.

As with the CSA survey there was a great deal of confusion about the green circle; some interviewees even associated it with the 'go' signal given by a green traffic light and interpreted it as "suitable for all children". Many parents believed that the symbols merely performed the function of a complementary tool, together with other sources of information (TV guides friends). The symbols were perceived as a real warning for children, but on the other hand their efficiency was doubted if they were not present on the screen throughout the broadcasting of the programme.

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<sup>4</sup> In the new rating system the orange and red triangle are present throughout the duration of the programme.



### 2.3 Italy

In January 1994, the private broadcaster Mediaset introduced a colour-code, the so-called ‘traffic light system’, for its channel Canale Cinque, at the time the only initiative of this kind in Italy. The system was introduced following a lengthy survey conducted by a team of university researchers, psychologists, educators and audio-visual experts. All scheduled fiction programmes are classified as to content, with particular reference to scenes featuring sex or violence. The classification criteria were established with the help of a team of external experts who assisted the editorial staff. Three different coloured symbols are used: green to indicate programmes which children can watch without any concerns, yellow to suggest “parental guidance”, and red to mark programmes unsuitable for children. Each coloured symbol contains a graphic logo to make the message clearer in case the colour alone is insufficient. TV programme guides and announcers draw attention to the symbol, which also appears on the screen during the broadcast and immediately following commercial breaks. The “traffic light” symbols are also shown in trailers, announcements, and newspapers, at the beginning of every fiction programme and after every commercial break.

Since February 1997 the channels Italia Uno and Retequattro have also adopted the scheme, by using the same classification criteria and identical symbols. In order to apply the same labelling principles for fiction programmes shown on networks with three completely different types of schedule, regular liaison meetings were held with editorial staff, marketing directors and a team of psychologists and educators.

In July 1994, R.T.I. carried out a telephone survey to verify the level of awareness and effectiveness of the traffic light system. During the course of the survey, 1140 people aged over 14, and representative of the Canale Cinque audience, were interviewed.

#### *Level of awareness amongst parents*

The study established that 53% of respondents were aware of the existence of the colour-coded symbols. Out of these 57% were able to recall them spontaneously, while 43% recalled them when prompted.

***Level of viewer (parents and children) understanding of the warnings provided by the system***

At all events, 81% of respondents judged the symbols to be very clear or fairly clear. There was some degree of uncertainty in respect of the correct interpretation of the various symbols. Among the respondents who were aware of the colour-coding system, 30% were able to provide a spontaneous correct answer and complete interpretation of the symbols used. When asked to choose from a series of pre-set interpretations, more than 50% of respondents correctly interpreted the green and red symbols, 38% correctly interpreted the yellow symbol.

***Level of satisfaction***

83% of the respondents thought that the traffic light system was 'certainly a very useful initiative'. On the other hand 7.5% considered the system ineffectual, as they perceived its meaning as unclear.

***Perceived utility for a) protecting children b) as an educational modality***

91.5% of respondents stated that they interpreted the symbols as aimed at families and at parents with young children.

***Perceived appropriateness for the range of proposed TV programmes, and perceived need to be extended to additional programming such as news, sports, advertisements***

82% of respondents thought that other networks should also introduce the colour-coding system, as an intelligent and effective tool to safeguard children and assist parents in choosing films for their children.

***Level of need for and nature of additional accompanying measures***

Some viewers asked for more detailed information to be provided by the broadcaster, and some asked for audience training in respect of the meaning of the symbols used.

**2.4 United Kingdom**

In the UK awareness and impact of the watershed has been monitored in the UK since

1975. A recent unpublished report by the ITC reveals valuable conclusions, drawn from a survey about the efficiency of the watershed.<sup>5</sup>

### *Level of awareness amongst parents*

The report suggests that up until the mid-1980s, overall awareness of a fixed watershed time remained at around 60% of adults. In the mid-1980s, the levels climbed sharply and have remained stable at around 90%. This increase coincided with a major publicity campaign mounted by the ITC and the BBC in 1986. It seems that the principle of the watershed is now firmly established and widely understood – both by parents and other adults. In a recent survey by the Broadcasting Standards Commission its timing was placed correctly at 9.00pm by 79% of the respondents.

Compared with overall awareness of watershed times for terrestrial channels, the figures for cable and satellite are low, although they have improved markedly over the years since 1990. In 1991, 34% of viewers were aware of the existence of a Family Viewing Policy for cable and satellite channels; in 1997 this figure had risen to 55%. However, it is clear from research that there exists a high level of confusion with the longer-established terrestrial watershed time of 9.00pm. Unlike terrestrial channels, film channels and adult channels are subject to somewhat different scheduling restrictions. For films, those with a “15” certificate cannot be shown prior to 8.00pm., while “18”-rated films can only be screened after 10.00pm. “Adult” channels can only show explicit material after 10.00pm, and generally targeted cable and satellite channels have a 9.00pm. Watershed.

(NB Cable and satellite subscribers have a ‘technological’ advantage in terms of control, since they have access to channel blocking or filtering, either through PIN numbers to prevent access to specified channels, or through removal of the satellite receiver smart card. Despite this fact, however, only 37% of parents with multi-channel access in 1997 knew that such facilities were available to them. And only one

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<sup>5</sup> Independent Television Commission, *Overview of 27 years of Annual Surveys* (London: ITC. Unpublished Report, 1998).

in ten of these said they had in fact used them to prevent children's access to programmes or channels.)<sup>6</sup>

### ***Level of satisfaction***

For the majority of viewers, the degree of regulation of television channels is felt to be at about the right level; possibly verging on too little rather than too much. This overall balance of opinion has been found regularly since 1989 for the main terrestrial channels. Very similar views have been documented for satellite and cable viewers about non-terrestrial channels since 1991.

### ***Perceived utility for a) protecting children b) as an educational modality***

In the UK, parents say generally that the time of day is a useful guide to them for a programme's suitability for their children; a large majority of parents (72%) feel that transmission time is an indication of a programme's content.<sup>7</sup>

### ***Impact on the viewing policy of the family***

Parental responsibility for children's viewing is considered vital and parents in particular are clear that they have to play their part in monitoring children's viewing, especially after the Watershed. Nearly six in ten (56%) of all respondents had watched television recently with children and nearly half of these (43%) had occasion to switch off/over. A recent Gallup Poll commissioned by Pace Micro Technology has also revealed that 75% of parents censor their children's viewing.<sup>8</sup>

### ***Level of viewer (parents and children) understanding of the warnings provided by the system***

The 9.00pm Watershed is a well-recognised and understood principle and many children accept it is there to protect them. The participants were also questioned on information about programme content, on-air pre-transmission warnings. These were

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<sup>6</sup> Broadcasting Standards Commission, *Regulating for Changing Values: A Report for the Broadcasting Standards Commission* (London: British Standards Commission, 1997).

<sup>7</sup> Broadcasting Standards Council, *The Scheduling Game*, ed. Andrea Millwood Hargrave (London: Broadcasting Standards Council, 1995).

<sup>8</sup> Pace Micro Technology plc, *Pace Report 1998* (Unpublished Report, 1998).

deemed the most useful by 37% of poll respondents; well ahead of on-screen symbols (19%).

### *Level of need for and nature of accompanying additional measures*

The Gallup Poll mentioned earlier has revealed that nearly half of children (47%) go to bed after 9.00pm during half term and other school holidays. The same poll shows that 47% of parents interviewed want broadcasters to extend the current 9.00pm watershed to protect children from exposure to unsuitable television programmes. Of this group 72% would like a 10.00pm watershed with the majority of the remainder (23%) wanting the present watershed to be moved to 11.00pm. In last year's Pace report, 60% of parents stated that the watershed should continue to apply to digital channels with only 20% feeling that it would not be required.

## **2.5 United States**

A survey among adults in Georgia, conducted by Wurtzel and Surlin<sup>9</sup> in 1978, found that almost all respondents recalled having seen advisories on television. However, only 24% said that they had had an impact on their viewing. Of the respondents familiar with the advisories, 39% reported that they had resulted in their not watching the programme and 24% said they actually prompted them to watch the programme with greater interest. Of the respondents with children, 54% stated that the advisories had influenced their decisions about their child's viewing, with the overwhelming majority (81%) not letting their child watch the programme as a result.

In 1973, a nation-wide *TV Guide* survey reported that 53% of those questioned were in agreement with a rating system for television programming, and by 1993 an USA *Weekend* reader survey reported that 73% of their readership would be in favour of this initiative.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Wurtzel, A., and Surlin, S., "Viewer Attitudes Towards Television Advisory Warnings," *Journal of Broadcasting*, 22, p 19-31, (1978).

<sup>10</sup> Joel Federman, "Film and Television Ratings: An International Assessment," Unpublished Report ( Studio City, CA: Mediascope, 1993).

A more recent unpublished study by Hamilton looked at the Nielsen ratings for prime time films on network television between 1987 and 1993.<sup>11</sup> He noticed a significant drop among viewers in the 2-11 age band, whereas the advisories did not have a significant impact on the teenage or adult group. This suggests that advisories can fulfil the purpose of protecting minors; the study does, however, not permit us to draw any conclusions as to whether the warnings resulted in parental interference or whether the minors decided not to watch the programmes themselves.

A major issue regarding ratings and advisories has been whether they have their desired effect, namely the protection of viewers, and in particular minors, from harmful content, or whether they actually achieve the opposite by making the content seem more attractive and interesting, especially to children. Although it is commonly agreed that ratings and advisories are directed at adults to inform them about content and to allow them to protect their children, one cannot ignore the question of how children respond to these messages, as children's viewing decisions are often made in the absence of the parent.

An experiment conducted as part of the National Television Violence Study involved 297 children aged 5-14 years, from a variety of schools in Madison, Wisconsin. The children were given programme guides and asked to choose from a variety of films. One group was given a guide with accompanying ratings, the other was given a guide listing the same films without ratings. The experiment concluded that ratings and advisories can have a significant impact on children's viewing. This impact depends on a number of factors, including aspects of the advisory or rating and characteristics of the child. The well-known advisory "parental discretion advised" had a strong and positive impact on boys' interest in viewing reality-action programmes, with the strongest effect for the boys aged 10-14. The same advisory had no impact on girls' tendency to choose such a programme. In contrast, another frequently used advisory, "viewer discretion advised", did not increase boys' interest in viewing police-detective shows, but it decreased the number of choices of such programmes for girls, and

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<sup>11</sup> James Hamilton, "Marketing Violence: the Impact of Labelling Violent Television Content," Paper presented at the International Conference on Violence in the Media (New York: St John's University, 1994).

especially for the younger ones. The Motion Picture Association of America (**MPAA**) ratings, “G”, “PG”, “PG-13” and “R”, also strongly affected children’s desire to see a film. Older boys were especially interested in a film when it was rated “PG-13” or “R” and completely avoided it when it was rated “G”. Younger girls, on the other hand, were most interested in the film when it was rated “G”. For older girls and younger boys, interest in the film peaked when it was rated “PG-13”. All of these findings suggest that ratings and advisories are important factors in children’s choice of programmes, but do not necessarily influence their choice positively.

Also worthy of mention is that half of the children’s comments about rated films implied their appeal; for example, some children said “the cooler the movie the higher the rating”. The study also found that children whose parents set limits and were more involved in their television viewing were less likely than other children to choose programmes with parental advisories and films with more restrictive ratings. These findings suggest that parental involvement may become internalised and have beneficial effects when the child selects programming without adult supervision.

In October 1997, the television industry in the US began implementing a new system for rating all programmes other than news and sports shown on broadcast and cable. The rating system, designed to work in conjunction with the V-chip device, provides for both age-based ratings and content descriptors (V for violence, S for sexual behaviour, D for sexual dialogue, L for adult language, and FV for fantasy violence in children’s programmes). One year into the launch of the new system, the Kaiser Foundation conducted a study to explore how it had been applied during its first year of operation.

Overall, the study found that the television industry had done a good job in complying with the new policy; across all networks and programmes reviewed, only 4% of programmes that qualified for a rating failed to receive one. The findings also suggest that the age-based ratings were applied accurately to general audience shows. However, the study found that the rating system does not flag most sex and violence for parents, but most who use it assume it does.

A companion survey of more than 500 parents found that two-thirds of those who use the ratings say the content descriptors provide the most useful information (13% say the age-based ratings do). In fact, however, content descriptors are not being used on the vast majority of general audience shows containing sex, violence or adult language. Of all the programmes with an age-based rating, only 23% received a content descriptor; 65% received an age-based rating only and 7% were MPAA rated. More than three out of four programmes with violent content and nine out of ten with sexual content do not receive the appropriate V or S content descriptors. Yet, the majority (55%) of those who use the TV ratings believe that the V content descriptor is supposed to be used on all programmes containing violence. 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 programmes without content descriptors. In the words of Vicky Rideout, Director of the Kaiser Family Foundation’s *Program on the Entertainment Media and Public Health*, “The bottom line for parents who want to use the V-chip is clear. Parents cannot rely on the content descriptors, as currently employed to identify most shows containing sex, violence, or adult language.”<sup>12</sup>

## 2.6 Conclusions

Studies addressing the social efficiency of ratings and advisories have produced very mixed results. On the one hand their findings suggest that visual symbols and verbal warnings have their desired effect, namely the protection of the viewer, especially children, from potentially harmful content. On the other hand, despite fairly high levels of awareness and satisfaction, it is clear that there is a list of shortcomings - confusion about the meaning of symbols, misinterpretation and sometimes even a counterproductive effect. The latter, in particular, which has been demonstrated quite clearly by the results of the National Television Violence Study, and to some extent by other studies, is a cause of great concern. Boys approaching adolescence and juvenile males have a particular tendency to be tempted by high ratings; and yet it is specifically

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<sup>12</sup> "Major New Study of the V-Chip TV Rating System: TV Rating System Doesn't Flag Most Sex and Violence for Parents, But Most Who Use it Assume it Does," Press release for Rating the TV Ratings:



this group that plays a substantial part in the occurrence of violence in the United States. Ratings and advisories can play an important part in protecting the viewer, but one cannot deny their “side effects” – they are a strong influence on the choice of children’s and young people’s viewing, and this influence is not always positive. It seems that their role should be more that of a complementary tool; this suggestion has been made by parents in particular and has emerged from various studies. Furthermore, as the study by the Kaiser Family Foundation reports, the majority of parents prefer content descriptors; these can, however, only fulfil their purpose if applied across the whole spectrum of programmes by the broadcasters

### **3. Media Education and Literacy**

As we have seen from the economic analysis, regulation, by providing information through rating and labelling systems, is a means of facilitating parental control and choice. It compensates for market failure by assuring that information is made available. However, it immediately becomes clear from the social efficiency analysis that other forms of providing information can complement rating and labelling systems, and are sometimes necessary to make rating and labelling systems effective. Ultimately, the goal is to enhance the power of the parent by making that parent informed (and able to act on that information). For this reason, the substantial experience of the Member States in encouraging media literacy among both young people and families is an essential adjunct to any discussion of ratings and labelling systems. Furthermore, information about programmes—the essence of rating and labelling systems—is inadequate unless the public is advised of the existence of these systems and educated in their use. The enhancement of children’s media literacy and critical viewing skills is a necessary component of any broad approach to avoiding harm from adverse television viewing. Our study of comparative practices suggests that media literacy does not have a high priority, even though the research literature on harmful effects from the media emphasises the significance of media education in developing healthier viewing habits.

Though many studies argue that the proliferation of violence depictions on television is in itself harmful, most researchers will acknowledge, to a greater or lesser extent, that other factors influence the degree of harmfulness produced. This seems to be particularly true of research conducted in European countries, which has focused more on audience perceptions of violence in order to determine whether the context in which violence is shown has a bearing on its harmfulness. Such studies have found that both adults and children are capable of making varied and complex judgements about violent content, despite a widespread belief that the young are much less able to comprehend the context in which violence is shown, and are therefore more

susceptible to harm.<sup>13</sup> Various factors have been found to affect the audience's response to violent images. These include the degree to which viewers can identify with characters and with the setting in which violence is depicted; the extent to which they understand what is happening within a scene or what the likely outcome is to be; the viewers' perception of the victim's innocence; and the level of detail and/or disturbing effects used in a violent scene. Media literacy approaches need to take these factors into account.

The more we know about the context of viewing and the consequences of various viewing styles, the better a job can be done in terms of the development of media literacy skills. For example, the distinguishing of factual from fictional material is a skill that can be taught in primary schools from as early as the age of seven. In order to foster deliberate, informed selection practices, a comprehensive, well-defined media literacy campaign should supplement the establishment and use of technical blocking devices, engaging parents and children in all aspects of media literacy including reading and writing; speaking and listening; accessing new technologies; critical viewing; and the ability to create personal media content, using a wide range of technologies, including cameras, camcorders, and computers.<sup>14</sup> Finally, a greater understanding of the relationship between children and the media should also result in the improvement and augmentation of programming for young people.

### **3.1 Media Literacy: general framework and recommendations**

In most circles, even academic ones, media literacy is an amorphous concept. The ambiguity as to just what is media literacy implicates how and to whom it is taught<sup>15</sup>. In recent years it has come to include the ability to analyse competently and to utilise skilfully print journalism, cinematic productions, radio and television programming, and even computer-mediated information and exchange. This study therefore defines

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<sup>13</sup> Research on the relationship between children and media violence is discussed in the Annex (Annex 1, Chapter 2).

<sup>14</sup> Renee Hobbs, "Democracy At Risk: Building Citizenship Skills through Media Education." (<http://interact.uoregon.edu/MediaLit/FA/mlhobbs/democracy.html>)

<sup>15</sup> See for instance Dyson (R.A.), Media Literacy: Who Needs it and What Does it Mean? In; Gazette, Volume 60 Issue 2, April 1998, pp 155-166

media literacy - as "the ability to access, analyse, evaluate and produce communication in a variety of forms".<sup>16</sup>

A media literacy campaign can not only facilitate informed, positive television viewing, it can assist in the development of citizenship skills, promoting the development of information literacy skills, offering access to diverse sources of information, and providing opportunities to practise leadership and responsible self-expression.<sup>17</sup> A media literacy campaign should involve broadcasters, community and non-profit organisations, families, educational institutions and the government body responsible for education.<sup>18</sup> The roles of those stakeholders in media education and literacy are described below. It is important to emphasise the need for partnerships in order to stimulate a positive, long-running campaign.

### ***Broadcasters***

We recommend that, as part of a self-regulatory process, the broadcasters agree to the development of a continuous on-screen effort to create general awareness of ratings and parental control mechanisms. Such a campaign would differ from Member State to Member State, but the prospects of cultivating an affirmatively-selected television environment for children presents strong structural inducements to the producers and broadcasters to both provide detailed and sophisticated information about and, simultaneously, greater access to their content by third-party rating providers. In such a positive environment, programming would be white-listed or selected by households as within the range of programming to be available to their children. This approach to children is a dramatic and desirable departure from the "channel-hopping" mode of viewing television. Children's viewing habits, whether determined by their parents or caretakers, or self-directed by the child, should be specific in purpose and temporally delimited. Thus, as has happened in the on-line environment, information about and

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<sup>16</sup> Aufderheide, 1992.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Media literacy clearinghouses such as the Media Literacy Online Project (<http://interact.uoregon.edu/MediaLit/HomePage>), The Media and Communication Studies Site (<http://www.aber.ac.uk/~dgc/mcs.html>), Canadian Association of Media Education Organisations (CAMEO) (<http://interact.uoregon.edu/MediaLit/CAMEO/index.html>) and The Center for Media Literacy (<http://www.medialit.org>) are available on the World Wide Web for the development of comprehensive media education strategies for families, schools, community organisations, and broadcasters.

evaluation of television content would attain a high value. Just as browsers are the portals through which Internet users obtain information, EPGs and related programming menus from a multiplicity of rating providers would provide the means by which parents could positively select programming for their children to view. Initial steps in this direction have been taken by the U.S. television industry, with the development of Web sites such as “The TV Parental Guidelines”,<sup>19</sup> which provides a detailed description and explanation of their television ratings system for the benefit of parents, and as a resource for broadcasters. Within the UK Film Education is an interesting example of industry led education. It is a registered charity funded by the UK film industry,<sup>20</sup> whose aim is to encourage and promote the use of Film and Cinema within the National Curriculum. This states that teachers should give pupils the opportunity to analyse and evaluate a wide range of Media, including film. Study resources include film specific study guides, generic study guides, BBC Learning Zone programmes, study videos, CD-ROMs and educational Internet pages, plus an information booklet for cinema managers working with schools. We recommend to develop a similar system for broadcasting and in particular for parental control mechanism.

### ***Community/Non-profit Organisations***

In order for families to effectively utilise industry “white-list” mechanisms, increased participation by community and non-profit organisations can assist in informing parents about means of parental control. Parents can work with groups such as religious organisations, schools, ethnic and cultural bodies, parents' associations, teachers' unions, and youth organisations, which have a stake in building and reinforcing loyalties and which perceive assisting members in shaping identities to be part of their activities. Programming information and evaluation could be sought and selected according to the credibility of the information provider or third-party rating provider as perceived by the particular group. Whether any given menu is ultimately palatable or credible in the eyes of the individual family is a function of whether what ultimately appears on the television comports with that family's conception of what is desirable and appropriate. Those who use the Internet browsers select their browsers

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<sup>19</sup> The TV Parental Guide. WWW page: <<http://www.tvguidelines.org>>.

<sup>20</sup> UK Film Education. WWW page: <<http://www.filmeducation.org>>.

based on the quality, breadth and reliability of the web pages that are retrieved. In a similar manner, programme content/ratings guides can be developed to provide parents with a proactive mechanism for deliberative television viewing. Using models provided by associations such as “Screen It! Entertainment Reviews for Parents”,<sup>21</sup> organisations can develop detailed programme/ratings guides to inform parents fully about television content.<sup>22</sup> This information can be made available both online and in print form, and designed to complement industry-developed on-screen programme guides.

### *Parental Initiatives*

Parent and family involvement is a significant component of effective, long-lasting media education. Understanding the different rating systems and devices that apply to media is also an important step in becoming a better-informed parent. Media literacy strategies for parents should begin with a focus on more parental involvement in children’s media habits: the location of computers and electronic media in central places in the home (living room, study, etc.), discussion of programming, monitoring, and intentional television viewing (including the maintenance of viewing diaries/logs). Descriptive rating systems can assist parents in undertaking this educational process. The encouragement of family-focused media education will require resources for a determined, long-running campaign. To implement this partnerships with other agencies will be vital.

Supplemented by public service campaigns, announcements, materials from non-profit organisations, guides for parents on viewing television with children, and strategies for parents to use media as a catalyst for educational opportunities, parents can create a culture of informed, responsible television viewing in their homes. In the online guide “Taking Charge of Your TV. A Guide to Critical Viewing for Parents and Children”, Renee Hobbs advises parents to become more aware of TV programme production methods and techniques; establish limits on how much TV the family watches each

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<sup>21</sup> Screen It! Entertainment Reviews for Parents. WWW page: <<http://www.screenit.com>>.

<sup>22</sup> The Movie Mom’s Guide to Family Movies and Videos. WWW page: <<http://pages.prodigy.com/moviemom/moviemom.html>>.

week; develop family guidelines for programme selection; and “Talk back to the TV”, by expressing opinions of what is seen and heard.<sup>23</sup>

Parent education strategies such as “The Television Project Workshops”<sup>24</sup> can provide parents with both specific activities and strategies to assist them in developing television viewing policies for their families and facilitate the use of programme/content guides developed by broadcasters and independent non-profit organisations.

### *Educational Institutions*

For myriad reasons, the time that the family as a single unit watched programming together has declined and this process will become accentuated in a multi-channel, multi-set digital era. We recognise the need to empower parental control of television viewing when parents cannot be with their children, or are unable to directly monitor programme consumption. School-based media literacy initiatives can directly support and supplement efforts in the home and community, fostering the development of youth as informed, responsible television viewers. However, several observers and projects around the world have also underscored the need to train teachers for media education. Teachers must have administrative support to study media phenomena and the resources of literature and support materials. The latter can be initiated by the relevant Government Authorities in the respective countries.

Research indicates that Great Britain, Canada, Australia, Scotland, Germany and other nations include media literacy as part of the language arts programme in primary and secondary schools. While the practice is not so widespread in the United States, North Carolina, Massachusetts, New Mexico and Texas are among those that include media literacy in their curriculum frameworks. Current US efforts employ models provided by British scholars, including Len Masterman, David Buckingham, David Lusted and Cary Bazalgette. Difficulties have arisen in school-based media literacy initiatives, including teachers’ use of media texts, etc. for non-educational purposes such as

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<sup>23</sup> Renee Hobbs, “Taking Charge of Your TV: A Guide to Critical Viewing for Parents and Children. (<http://www.cyfc.umn.edu/Documents/C/C/CC1024.html>).

<sup>24</sup> The Television Project Workshops. WWW page: <<http://www.tvp.org/tvpwork.html>>.

rewards for good behaviour, to keep students quiet, for passive viewing (without discussion, reflection), and as a “filler” to free up time for other tasks.<sup>25</sup> In addition, media analysis in schools has often been a teacher-centred practice, viewed as a process of “demystification” of media for youth, which often disregards students’ prior knowledge and assumes their passivity as an audience.<sup>26</sup> Media production work is often relegated to vocational education, an esteem-building exercise for “at-risk” students only or purely for entertainment purposes. To fully realise the educational benefits of media literacy (the development of literacy and critical thinking skills), well-developed media literacy curricula should be implemented with proper institutional support and comprehensive teacher training. Classroom practices, particularly the nature of student-teacher dialogue, must be re-examined. A school-based media literacy initiative should be an academic discipline, employing both media analysis and practical work to facilitate the development of youth as informed, active viewers. Curriculum examples are available free-of-charge or at low costs, from organisations such as YTV Canada, Inc.,<sup>27</sup> the Just Think Foundation,<sup>28</sup> which provides a professional development model for educators among its services, and Creating Critical Viewers, a partnership between educators and broadcast professionals that produced this online handbook<sup>29</sup>.

Worthwhile mentioning at European level is the European Association for Audio-visual Media Education<sup>30</sup> (AEEMA/EAAME) that was founded in 1989 under the joint auspices of the European Commission and the Council of Europe. It benefits from the recognition of Eureka Audiovisuel and regularly liaises with the European Parliament on matters concerning Media, education, culture and young people. Its purpose is to develop the identity of audio-visual Media Education and to foster the idea of an audio-visual culture amongst the public at large. AEEMA/EAAME has nearly 300 members who represent the key protagonists in a wide variety of national scenarios. It

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<sup>25</sup> Renee Hobbs, *The Uses (and Misuses) of Mass Media Resources in Secondary Schools*. WWW page: <<http://interact.uoregon.edu/MediaLit/FA/mlhobbs/uses.html>>.

<sup>26</sup> David Buckingham, *Watching Media Learning: Making Sense of Media Education*, The Falmer Press, England: 1990.

<sup>27</sup> *Television and Violence Lesson Plan*. WWW page: <<http://ietn.snunit.k12.il/violence.htm>>.

<sup>28</sup> Just Think Foundation. WWW page: <<http://www.justthink.org>>.

<sup>29</sup> <http://www.cyfc.umn.edu/Documents/C/C/CC1026.html>

<sup>30</sup> European Association for Audio-visual Media Education. WWW page: <<http://www.datanet.be/acema/acema.htm>>.



aims inter alia (i) to promote the teaching of the languages of image and sound; (ii) to convince young people, the public at large, the authorities both local and national as well as the professionals that such education is necessary; (iii) to prepare young people to the use of new means of communication; (iv) to encourage a critical approach to audiovisual media by practical exercises; (v) to establish a permanent inventory of audiovisual education in Europe and (vi) to exchange information on the methods used in training and in the audiovisual creation in Europe.

Curriculum development is in most Member States the responsibility of the Department of Education<sup>31</sup>. It is then also clear that in order to develop a successful parental control environment they should be involved in the creation of a supportive education system. At European level, DGXXII is responsible for education, training and youth. The Maastricht treaty's articles 126 and 127 respectively specify that the European Community "shall contribute to the development of quality education by encouraging cooperation between the Member States and, if necessary, by supporting and supplementing their action ..." and "implement a vocational training policy which shall support and supplement the action of the Member States...". In both cases, the Member States maintain full responsibility for the "content and organization" of their national education and training systems. DG XXII has developed three five-year programmes: SOCRATES for education, LEONARDO DA VINCI for training and Youth for Europe, a new programme for young people outside formal education and training systems. We recommend stimulating the use of these programmes for the further development of media education in Europe.

### 3.2 Comparative Country Analysis

#### *Austria*

Since 1973, all primary and secondary schools in Austria have been required to integrate media education across the curriculum. In theory, every teacher addresses the basic principles of media education in every subject. In practice, this means that the teaching of media education depends upon the personal commitment of individual teachers.

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<sup>31</sup> A complete overview can be found at <http://www.eurydice.org/>

*Denmark*

A group of committed teachers introduced media education in Denmark in the 1930s. While the 1950 Education Act ignored their initiative, the 1961 official education handbook devoted a whole chapter to screen education. The subject was offered as an optional course for older students, and focused on film as an art rather than as a medium. When the Danish curriculum underwent a major revision in 1969, media education lost its designation as a separate subject. Since the mid-1970s, the National Media Research Association has encouraged the integration of media education across the curriculum. And, while many teachers of history, social studies, and Danish feel media education to be an important part of their subject, some teachers complain that such teaching interferes with their own course material. Research has shown that Danish students prefer courses in production to courses in analysis and critical awareness.

Currently it is suggested that students "might" or "ought to" be taught media education as part of other courses. There are a number of dedicated teachers who are doing just that, with both critical analysis and production.

*England*

In the 1970s, the sociologists and the semiologists put their marks on British media education. The sociologists concentrated on the media as a collaborative industrial form, and encouraged its study from such viewpoints as that of ownership and control, audience, and the ideological role of the media. They gave more attention to what made the media what it was, rather than to media texts themselves.

Media education in Britain evolved in the 1980s with Len Masterman's work. His approach is essentially interrogative and has the benefit of being informed by critical mass communication research. His questions are based on the assumptions that the mass media construct their own realities. These questions cluster around four general areas:

(1) the sources, origins and determinants of media constructions. Who constructs

media reality?

(2) the dominant techniques and codings employed by the media to convince us of the truth of their representations. How is this process of representation carried out and achieved?

(3) the nature of the 'reality' constructed by the media and the values implicit in media representations. What are the characteristics of the world so represented?

(4) the ways in which media constructions are read or received by their audiences. How are these representations read and understood by the people who receive them?

The current situation in England is as follows:

For primary students, the English national curriculum currently requires a minimal element of media literacy within the reading attainment target for English, which can be taught by using print texts only. Secondary students have been offered courses in media literacy since the early '60s. At present there are courses available - Film and Media Studies, Media Studies, and Media Studies Advanced - in both the GCE (General Certificate of Education) and the GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education). Teacher training programmes are available in many colleges throughout England, such as the University of London and the University of Southampton.

One institution has been central to the development of media education in Britain, the British Film Institute (**BFI**). This organisation receives government funding to foster public appreciation and the study of film and television. The BFI's operations include the National Film Archive, the National Film Theatre, and the Museum of the Moving Image. Its London offices house large libraries of books, periodicals, photographs, and publicity materials, and a database on film and television.

The Education Department of the BFI works with people in education and training to develop knowledge, ideas, and ways of teaching about film and television. This work includes research, teaching and advising, publishing teaching materials, and organising courses and conferences.

*Finland* In the curriculum of Finnish schools, media education is described as a

"pervasive" subject. This means that while mass media education has no course of its own, it is taught at certain points in the following subjects - Finnish, art, history, social studies, and study of the environment.

There have been two significant projects in Finnish media education. In the first, organised during the mid-1970s by the National Board of General Education in co-operation with the Finnish Newspaper Publishers' Association, students received - for a period of one week - teaching about newspapers and mass media. The second, the Mass Media Entertainment Project, took place during the 1978/79 and 1979/80 school years. This National Board project focused on different forms of mass media entertainment, and getting teachers and students to discuss their use. The Board provided material aimed at developing students' critical viewing skills. Both the Association of Film Clubs and the Finnish Broadcasting Company also produced materials, which have continued to prove useful. The National Board has indicated that it considers media education an important subject, yet there are few textbooks in the area and there is no adequate training for teachers. Moreover, many educators feel the subject would work best as a separate course.

*France* Media education - especially in the area of film study - has had a long history in France, though generally not as part of the formal system of education. Traditionally it has been an extracurricular activity carried on by film societies, school clubs, and youth activity groups. By the late 1970s there were literally hundreds of thousands of these film societies (Cine-Clubs) organised into federations.

One of the first initiatives in teaching media within the school curriculum began in the mid-1960s and continues today. Known as "*Langage Total*", it was developed at the *Institut du Langage Total* in Lyons under the direction of Brother Antoine Vallet in conjunction with the Catholic University of Lyons and the Catholic University of the West at Angers. Programmes are taught in over 200 French primary schools and more than 100 secondary schools. The *Langage Total* method is also used in other European countries, the Near East, Latin America, and French-speaking Africa.

On the initiative of a research/action team from the *Centre Régional de Documentation Pédagogique (CRDP)* in Bordeaux, René La Borderie directed the development of the project known originally as Introduction to Audiovisual Culture (**ICAV**) and now called Introduction to Communication and the Media (**ICOM**).

As ICAV, the project introduced to schools an integrated approach to the study of image forms transmitted through advertising, newspapers, and educational publications. Until 1982, education authorities recognised the project only as a provisional programme allowed into schools attached to the Ministry of National Education (primary and secondary schools). In 1982 there was a new definition of the Introduction to Communication and the Media project, formulated and adopted at a national meeting. Within this new definition, ICOM wants education to cover all media and all situations involving communications. In 1979 the various government ministries involved in educational activities for young people - the Ministries of Agriculture, Education, the Family, Leisure, Youth and Sport - conducted a joint nation-wide experiment in educating young television viewers. *Le Jeune Téléspectateur Actif (JTA)*<sup>32</sup> lasted until 1983. The project urged all who played a role in education - parents, teachers, youth club organisers, etc. - to integrate into their educational activities a consideration of the part played by television in the daily lives of the young. After two years, JTA evaluated the changes that had taken place in the relationships between children and television. As was expected, the amount of knowledge acquired about television had increased. Furthermore, the young showed a change in their capacity for observation. They were paying more attention to the form of the messages, to the modes of representation and the prevailing meaning. They were also seen to have developed research attitudes towards the kinds of programmes watched. At the end of the experiment in 1983, a number of training courses in critical viewing skills were incorporated into in-service and training for teachers at various levels. It is also important to note that the new official curriculum published by the Ministry for secondary schools makes some important statements about media education.

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<sup>32</sup> Young Active Television Viewers.

The *Centre de Liaison de l'Enseignement et des Moyens d'Information (CLEMI)* was established in 1982 by the French Ministry of Education to help students develop critical thinking skills and to train them in the responsibilities of modern citizenship. CLEMI organises national and regional teacher training courses, publishes professional journals for teachers and makes available its documentary resources on contemporary media education.

*Germany* There are records to indicate that German schools introduced media education at the time when the first newspapers were published in the 17th century. Scholars attribute the first mention of media education to Johann Amos Comenius (1592-1670) in *Schola Pansphica*. Comenius held that the study of newspapers "would benefit the development of language skills, and provide basic information for current affairs and geography." His educational philosophy insisted on a relevant curriculum - students must learn about the world around them.

By the late 1960s, German educators acknowledged that the media were not only educational tools, but also worthy of study for their content. Gradually media education made its way into the curriculum: not as a separate subject but as part of other subject disciplines.

Today media education is usually taught in such courses as Political Education, Knowledge About Society, or Social Studies. These courses must be included in the curriculum of each federal region's school system. The function of these courses is to promote awareness of citizenship. A student is to be given an education that will "not only enable him to develop his personality but to take part in social decision making. In such a concept the importance of receiving the correct information about current affairs is likely to be stressed as a precondition for informed action. It is in this role that media teaching often appears to play a part in basic social studies courses."

A 1984 study commissioned by the *Institut Für Publizistik der Universität Mainz* showed that of the 199 teachers surveyed, 91% had dealt with the mass media in class and 72% dealt with the topic regularly. Surprisingly, however, they placed most emphasis on

analysing newspapers, despite the fact that West German adolescents at that time viewed 72 minutes of television a day on average and spent only 8 minutes a day reading newspapers. Each federal region has its own resource centre to help teachers. The major one is the *National Institut Für Film Und Bild im Wissenschaft und Unterricht (FWU)*.<sup>33</sup> Along with two journals, *AV Praxis* and *AV Forschung*, FWU has produced a portable case of materials for classroom use. The resource materials include a film cassette with three different commentaries, and the same script filmed from three different perspectives. These are used to demonstrate the constructed nature of media images and messages.

Media education is seen by some German parents as a useful way to protect minors from the "dangerous" influences of the media. Other parents see television as "mere entertainment" and therefore not worth studying in school. And some see any kind of visual literacy as something that belongs to a left wing philosophy.

In 1984 the *Institut Jugend Film Fernsehen* in Munich completed a project for the German Research Institute. For four years the group had been developing a media education curriculum; by 1984 four textbooks had been piloted, revised and published. Unfortunately, funding for the project was stopped. And while the government gave teachers in the federal region of Bavaria permission to use the new curriculum, they provided neither training nor teaching aids.

*Ireland* Although it is not officially included in the curriculum, a growing number of Irish schools are including some form of media education in their courses. Since the late 1960s the Catholic Communications Centre in Dublin has conducted in-service courses in media for teachers. As a result of these courses - and courses organised by other groups - scores of individual teachers have attempted, with varying degrees of success, to introduce some media education topics into such traditional subjects as English and Religion.

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<sup>33</sup> The Institute for Film and Image in Science and Education.

The first publication of the Curriculum and Examination Board, *Issues and Structures in Education* (1984) made clear that media education would be a basic part of the new curriculum. With the support of the European Economic Community, a training programme was established and media education included within its one-year syllabus. In August 1985, Ireland's first two media textbooks were published with the hope that they would be used to incorporate media education within other subjects.

*Italy* In 1985, a new curriculum was announced for Italian primary schools. This went into effect in 1987 and was preceded by refresher training for all Italian primary teachers. Media education was included in the area known as Image, Sound, Music and Movement. This area deals with the cultural and social values of non-verbal language and their role in the development of children.

*Netherlands* As of 1990, Audiovisual Education (as media education is known in the Netherlands) was neither an autonomous nor mandatory subject in the Dutch national curriculum. Audiovisual Education takes place mainly within art education and as a result has a very aesthetic approach. Media are regarded as purposeful constructs whose form is highly significant.

*Scotland* Growth in media education, especially in the secondary school system of Scotland, was stimulated and shaped by the Media Education Development Project (**MEDP**), which was established by the Scottish Council for Education Technology (**SCET**) in 1983.

1983 was also the year in which the Scottish Education Department began a reassessment of the curriculum in Scottish secondary education. In the midst of all these changes, there were many opportunities to develop courses in media education. The MEDP made use of these.

The curriculum development work of the MEDP differentiated between media education and Media Studies. In media education, components are inserted into existing subjects. Media Studies refers to a series of modules, which are taught as a



separate course. These modules range from a general overview of all media, to eight specialised modules.

The Media Studies modules were written to have either an analytical or practical emphasis. Television, Radio, Press and Magazines, and Graphic Design and Photography were written into the practical domain. Students were asked to produce short television or radio shows, a newspaper, a magazine or advertisement. They were also asked to analyse professionally produced examples of media to help them with their own productions. In the analytical domain, specialised modules were developed in Film, Contemporary Popular Music, Representations and Narrative Forms in Broadcasting. As early as 1984, over 100 institutions were teaching Media Studies using the first five modules to be published.

The MEDP's efforts in the area of teacher training included direct provision of in-service training, planning of locally based courses and involvement in the planning of National and Certificate courses. The Scottish Film Council has worked in conjunction the Association for Media Education in Scotland (**AMES**) to produce many teaching aids and a quarterly journal, The Scottish Media Education Journal.

*Spain* The Department of Education at the *Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia* produces a number of books, audio tapes and videocassettes on media education. A number of North American media education books are available in Spanish.

*Sweden* The Education Department of *Sveriges Radio* (**SR**) has produced materials for media education in Sweden's secondary schools since the beginning of the 1960s. The courses developed were basically theoretical. While the emphasis has been on film study, some television has been included. The official policy is that media education should be taught so that students will have "...the ability to watch critically and make an independent judgement of the messages received from the different media, and the ability to talk about how one has experienced films and TV programmes". This was made compulsory in 1980.

**Glossary of acronyms**

A.G.E.	<b>Associazione Genitori</b>
ANICA	Associazione Nazionale Industrie Cinematografiche Audiovisive e Multimediali
API	Application Programme Interface
ASAI	Advertising Standards Authority of Ireland
ATSC	Advanced Television Systems Committee
ATR	Agrupación de Telespectadores y Radioyentes
AUC	Asociación Usuarios de Comunicación
AUI	Asociación de Usuarios de Internet
AVP	Audiovisual Platform
BACC	Broadcast Advertising Clearing Centre
BBFC	British Board of Film Classification
BPjS	Bundesprüfstelle für jugendgefährdende Schriften
BSC	Broadcasting Standards Commission (formerly the Broadcasting Standards Council)
CCE	Comissão de Classificação de Espectáculos
CCE	Comissão de Classificação de Espectáculos
CCPC	Comisión de Calificación de Películas Cinematográficas
CEACCU	Confederación Española de Asociaciones de Amas de Casa, consumidores y Usuarios
CICF	Commission intercommunautaire de contrôle des films
CNC	Centre National de la Cinématographie
CNP	Conseil national des programmes
CNU	Consiglio Nazionale degli Utenti

CRI	Divisie Centrale Recherche Informatie
CSA	Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel
DAVIC	Digital Audio-Visual Council
CvdM	Commissariaat voor de Media
DPR	Decreto Presidente della Repubblica
DR	Danmarks Radio
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
DVB	Digital Video Broadcasting
EACEM	European Association of Consumer Electronics Manufacturers
EBU	European Broadcasting Union
ECHR	European Court of Human Rights
ECJ	European Court of Justice
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EPG	Electronic Programme Guide
ETS	Enhances Teletext Specification
FSF	Freiwillige Selbstkontrolle Fernsehen
FSK	Freiwillige Selbstkontrolle der Filmwirtschaft
FSM	Freiwillige Selbstkontrolle Multimedia Dienstleister e.V.
GEIE	Groupement Européen d'Interêt Economique
GjSM	Gesetz für die Verbreitung jugendgefährdender Schriften und Medieninhalte
ICAA	Instituto de Cinematografía y Artes Audiovisuales
IDL	Independent Data Lines
INCORE	Internet Content Rating for Europe

IRD	Integrated Receiver Coder
IRTC	Independent Radio and Television Commission
ISPA	Internet Service Providers Association
ISPA	Internet Service Providers Austria
ITC	Independent Television Commission
IuKDG	Informations- und Kommunikationsdienstegesetz
IWF	Internet Watch Foundation
IWGCR	International Working Group on Content Rating
JÖSCHG	Fesetz zum Schutz der Jugend in der Öffentlichkeit
MCCY	

PICS	Platform for Internet Content Selection
RAI	Radiotelevisione Italiana
RSACi	Recreational Software Advisory Council
RTE	Radio Telefís Éireann
RvtV	Raad van Toezicht Videovoorlichting
SCA	Secretariado do Cinema e do Audiovisual
SRC	Stichting Reclame Code
TIVEKE	TietoVerkköjen Kehittämishanke
TUPS	Testo Unico di Pubblica Sicurezza
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
TVI	Televisão Independente
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
USK	Unterhaltungssoftware Selbstkontrolle
US	United States
VBI	Vertical Blanking Interval
VESTRA	Vereniging voor Satelliet, Televisie, radio programma Aanbieders
VSC	Video Standards Council
VUD	Verband der Unterhaltungssoftware Deutschland e.V.
WOF	Wet op Filmvertoningen
WSS	Wide Screen Signalling
YLE	Yleisradio

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