



CS 97-55

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MAR 24 1997
FCC MAIL ROOM

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MAR 27 10 11 AM '97

CABLE SERVICES BUREAU

March 19, 1997

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary
1919 M St.
NW., Room 222
Washington, D.C. 20554

Gentlemen:

This letter is to indicate the current age based system of TV ratings be replaced with a content specific format whereby shows would be graded by the amount of sex, violence and foul language they include.

Sincerely yours,

Richard D. Phillips

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List ABCDE

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March 20, 1997

MAR 24 1997

RE CS Docket No 97-55, FCC 97-34

FCC MAIL ROOM

Dear Chairman Hundt and Commissioners:

I am writing as a concerned parent to voice my opposition to the V-chip rating system as presented by Jack Valente on Jan 17, 1997. This system does not provide sufficient content information for parent to make decisions about what is appropriate TV programming for their children. I do not want the TV industry to interpret what is best for my children. Any rating system without content descriptions is useless.

I ask the FCC not to approve the industry rating system. Instead I request the following:

- That the FCC accept only a rating system that includes content information about programs such as V (for violence), S (for sexual depiction and nudity), and L (for language);
- That the rating score appear more frequently during the course of a program;
- That the rating board be independent of the industry and the FCC and that it includes parents;

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1

That any rating system approved
by the FCC be evaluated by independent
research to determine if it meets the
needs of parents.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment
on an issue so important to children
and families.

Sincerely,

Rita M. Costello
1011 Bunting Green Dr
Westbury, NY 11590

CS 97-55

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MAR 24 1997

Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20541

2009 Van Karajan Dr.
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA

2/26/97

90275

Dear Chairman Reed,

I want to address the new TV Rating System. The only thing it will do well is absolve the networks of responsibility for the content of these programs. And it is not working. Some parents can control TV watching, and they do monitor the programs, but many children have free reign of the TV and can watch anything they please.

Another problem is -- the rating is flashed only at the beginning and should be shown in a corner of the screen throughout the program -- or movie.

Why not let a consensus of parents decide the ratings instead of the person who produces the program? The latter is like putting the chocolate in charge of the chocolates!

I cannot see why some very interesting and some quite dynamic scripts can't let sex stop at the bedroom door and cut out the gutter talk. More folks would watch TV and the sponsors would get their products sold. just the same.

Many of us who feel this way are consumers and would like to buy a product ~~that~~ ~~or~~ whose sponsor cares about the morals of those watching.

As for me, I will boycott any product that wilfully sends messages over the TV and radio media that will cause one to stumble and even perhaps be led into lawlessness and/or disobedience.

Thank you for reading my letter. I am a grandmother who cares what her grandkids are watching - but they live out of state -- so all I can do is plead with you. Sincerely, Sara Svendsen

P.S. Did you know ??

Walmart has taken a public stand for decency and against vulgar and obscene lyrics by refusing to sell compact discs or other music labeled with the industry's own "parental advisory" label.

Please - reject the TV industry's new rating system as unacceptable and devise your own - and begin enforcing the indecency laws against TV stations that violate it.

Mr. Reed Hundt
FCC Commission
Office of the Secretary
1919 M Street N.W.
Room 222,
Washington, D.C. 20554

97-55-108

REC 2 4 1997

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

CS Docket No. 97-55, FCC 97-34.

February 28, 1997

ABC

Dear Mr. Hundt,

Thank you for taking the time to allow me the opportunity to express my concerns over the new rating system and how it was implemented in the showing of an unedited Schlinder's List.

You should know I am attempt to be a well informed viewer. In fact I was aware that the networks were implementing a new TV rating system. However, at no time was I informed accurately what they meant.

The new rating system is extremely vague and offers parents and viewers no real information. For example, the TV-M rating did not inform me on public TV a mature audience could be shown full frontal nudity, graphic violence and profanity. Recently, Sen. Joe Lieberman, a Connecticut Democrat, told the Senate Commerce Committee, "The current TV ratings system is a little bit like putting a sign up in front of shark-infested waters that says: 'Be careful when swimming.'"

Many of our nations lawmakers from both parties have looked at the new rating system and have concluded that the ratings are inadequate and that industry executives should adopt a content-based system that spells out the level of sex, violence and strong language in a program. With them, I wish to complain that the vast majority of shows receive a middle-of-the road TV-PG rating -- parental guidance suggested -- even though the amount of sex, violence and foul language varies greatly from show to show within that category.

The new rating system also makes an unfounded assumption that all "mature audiences" for that matter all PG-14 "14 year olds" and all PG-7 (7 year olds) are alike. What is appropriate for you 14 year old may not be for mine. There is not way as a parent to make an informed decision with the lack of information the new system offers. I agree with Dan Coats, an Indiana republican senator who said, "We don't want Hollywood telling parents what is age-appropriate. We just want Hollywood telling parents what is in their shows."

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INFORMATION FOR INVESTIGATORS
FEB 28 1 49 PM '97

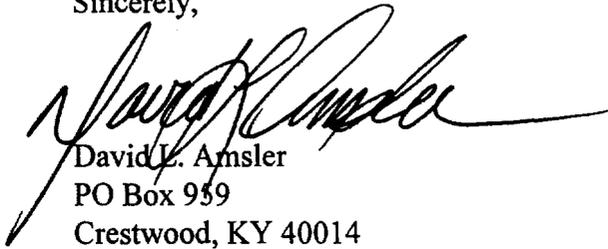
The new rating system also does not protect against accidental viewing by children during the switching of channels I was doing when confronted with full frontal nudity during what I discovered later was Schlindler's list.

I call on you to use your influence to demand responsible television that create a content based TV rating systems and also, avoid the showing of nudity, graphic violence and profanity.

There are plenty of video stores, movie channels and other outlets for those kind of movies. We do not need another outlet to be on broadcast television.

Thanks again for your willingness to consider carefully my concerns.

Sincerely,



David L. Amsler
PO Box 959
Crestwood, KY 40014
502-241-6865

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List ABCDE _____

CS 97-55
127

February 28, 1997

MAR 2 4 1997

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

Dear Network Executive:

We recently completed presentation of a 3-week Series on Media Violence at our Church in Downers Grove. Attendees were very interested in discussions of the impact of TV violence on violence in our society today.

A recent national TV violence study indicated that almost 60 percent of all TV shows contain violence-the same study showed that two-thirds of childrens shows contained violence. By age 18, the average child will have witnessed over 200,000 acts of violence, including over 16,000 murders.

The pervasive impact of TV on societal violence seems overwhelming. The American Medical Association, and seven other major national medical and public health organizations, have gone on record saying that there is overwhelming evidence that violent entertainment is a causal factor in the promotion of violent attitudes and behavior.

I believe the TV networks have a responsibility to better reflect societal values in TV programming. Having violence in two-thirds of TV programming sends a message that violence is a normal and accepted way of life. The portrayal of violence as the only solution to problems sends the wrong message to our children. I strongly suggest that every effort be made to reduce the extent of violent programming.

One of the comments I hear in the press from TV executives is that the networks are just responding to public demand for violent programming. From our discussions, I believe that position is nonsense. While a large segment of TV viewers will just watch whatever is offered, I believe few if any people are clamoring for more violence in TV programming.

Another issue which we discussed during our series was the new ratings system which has been recently implemented. While I clearly support the need for a ratings system, there was much discussion during our Series about the inadequacies of the current system. First, there appears to be inconsistencies in ratings given between different networks. Second, there appears to be little distinction in evaluating shows-the vast majority appear to be rated PG, thus giving no meaningful basis for a parent to evaluate acceptable from potentially unacceptable programming.

It is strongly suggested that a more comprehensive ratings system which specifically identifies program content (e.g. extreme violence, strong language, sexual content), similar to, but on a more expanded basis than some of the cable movie channel ratings, be implemented. Such ratings should specifically identify violence content with different ranking levels.

The TV industry claims that technology advances like the V-chip will help solve this problem, but without meaningful ratings the V-chip is worthless. What good is a PG rating if the parent can't determine whether the show got that rating due to one passionate embrace or due to 20 people being mowed down with automatic weapons.

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MAR 6 2 50 PM '97
JAMES BERGEN
COMPLAINTS
INVESTIGATION

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I ask you to take all possible steps to reduce the violent content of TV programming as quickly as possible, and to promptly establish a new TV ratings system giving detailed identification of violence content in all programming. Thank you for your prompt consideration of these very important issues.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David A. Schulz".

David A. Schulz
5509 Washington
Downers Grove, IL. 60516

cc: President William Clinton
Senator Moseley-Braun
Senator Durbin
Federal Communications Commission

February 28, 1997

MAR 24 1997

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INVESTIGATION

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David A. Schulz
5509 Washington
Downers Grove, IL. 60516

cc: President William Clinton
Senator Moseley-Braun
Senator Durbin
Federal Communications Commission

Mr. Reed Hundt
FCC Commission
Office of the Secretary
1919 M Street N.W.
Room 222,
Washington, D.C. 20554

97-55-105

REC-1057

CS Docket No. 97-55, FCC 97-34.

February 28, 1997

NBC

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Dear Mr. Hundt,

Thank you for taking the time to allow me the opportunity to express my concerns over the new rating system and how it was implemented in the showing of an unedited Schlinder's List.

You should know I am attempt to be a well informed viewer. In fact I was aware that the networks were implementing a new TV rating system. However, at no time was I informed accurately what they meant.

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Many of our nations lawmakers from both parties have looked at the new rating system and have concluded that the ratings are inadequate and that industry executives should adopt a content-based system that spells out the level of sex, violence and strong language in a program. With them, I wish to complain that the vast majority of shows receive a middle-of-the-road TV-PG rating -- parental guidance suggested -- even though the amount of sex, violence and foul language varies greatly from show to show within that category.

The new rating system also makes an unfounded assumption that all "mature audiences" or for that matter all PG-14 "14 year olds" and all PG-7 (7 year olds) are alike. What is appropriate for you 14 year old may not be for mine. There is not way as a parent to make an informed decision with the lack of information the new system offers. I agree with Dan Coats, an Indiana republican senator who said, "We don't want Hollywood telling parents what is age-appropriate. We just want Hollywood telling parents what is in their shows."

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INVESTIGATIVE
PROGRAMS
PLANS
5 1 49 PM '97

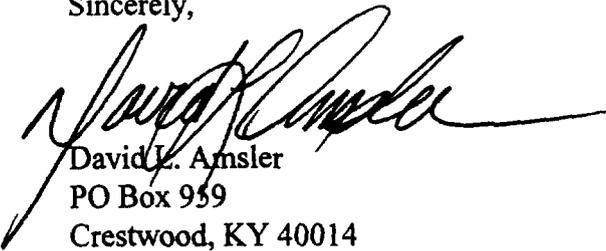
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I call on you to use your influence to demand responsible television that create a content based TV rating systems and also, avoid the showing of nudity, graphic violence and profanity.

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Thanks again for your willingness to consider carefully my concerns.

Sincerely,



David L. Amsler
PO Box 959
Crestwood, KY 40014
502-241-6865

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2-7-97

C897-55

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

FEB 2 4 1997

Federal Communications Commission
1919 "M" St. NW
Washington DC 20554

Dear Honorable Hundt,

As a concerned parent of 4 children under the age of 8, I'd like to voice my opinion of the new TV ratings system.

It is totally inadequate and of no use to parents.

Just as every child is different, so is every family. What one family may deem appropriate for an 8-yr-old, another family would recommend for a 12-yr-old. Thus, it is ludicrous to base TV ratings (or movie ratings for that matter) on age.

Parents need to know what is in a show to be effective monitors for their children's viewing. Ratings that

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show abbreviations for "Language," "Sexual Nudity," "Innuendo," "Violence," and "Gore," etc would be much more useful.

Another problem with the present ratings system is that the rating is shown for only the first few seconds of a program. To make that information accessible for those who tune in a bit late, the rating should stay on the screen throughout the show. And it should be listed in newspaper TV listings as well.

At present our family will continue to rely on our VCR for quality entertainment because the TV Ratings system is inadequate. (At least we can preview videos that are questionable before viewing them as a family.) If a new system is devised, we may actually be able to use more than PBS for our family's TV programs.

Sincerely,

Janet M. Bobbitt

4602 Drexel St.

Omaha Ne 68117

CS 97-55

May this fall into the hands of one who cares about
Traditional Values Coalition
ACTION ALERT America



139 C Street, S.E. • Washington D.C. 20003 • (202) 547-8570
100 S. Anaheim Blvd., Suite 350 • Anaheim, CA 92805 • (714) 520-0300

MAR 24 1997

Speak Up Now to Clean-up TV

BUCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

The level of violence, profanity and sexually explicit television programming is increasing rapidly. Studies show it is damaging our children and we can see what it is doing to our culture.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has just opened the "public comment period" on the "age-based rating system" engineered by the television industry. We have a window of opportunity--just over two months--to get letters in the mail to the FCC.

It is TVC's opinion that a content-based rating system and restoring the "family hour" is the most effective way to control the growing problem of violence, inappropriate language and sexual themes now on TV. A content-based rating system was found to be favored 5-to-1 by parents in a PTA study. Experts on the influence of the media on children are in favor of the content-based rating system as well. A content-based system would give a description of the subject matter, type of language, amount of sex and violence a specific show contained.

We all know that Hollywood and the television industry have been and willfully continue to contribute in a significant way to the moral decline in our culture. Driven by recent university studies and parental outcry, Congress passed the Telecommunication Act of 1996 which mandated a television rating system. The FCC is now reviewing how effective the age-based system is and studies show it is not doing the job. (cont.)

Action Alert:

Please write a letter to the FCC telling them you are opposed to the age-based system and want a content-based system and the restoration of the Family Hour to clean-up television.

Address your letters as follows:

The Honorable Reed Hundt, Chairman
Federal Communication Commission
1919 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554.

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Age-Based Television Ratings Scheme

Rating	Recommendations
TV-Y:	Suitable for all children.
TV-Y7:	For children able to distinguish between make-believe and reality.
TV-G:	Most parents would find this program suitable for all ages.
TV-PG:	Parental guidance suggested.
TV-14:	Parents strongly cautioned. May contain material many parents would find unsuitable for children under age 14.
TV-M:	Mature audiences only.

With the age-based rating system, studies have found that to get by with whatever levels of indecent or sexually provocative themes the TV industry wants to market, a TV-PG rating will work. Shows with profanity, sex outside marriage and even including homosexual relationships are shown during prime time under this rating. For example, TV-PG ratings have been given to *Wings*, *Friends*, *Beverly Hills 90210*, and *Savannah* all which feature pre-marital sex, sex with various partners and sex with no commitment.

SODOM & GOMORAH
 Under the age-based system, any form of sex--including the practice of homosexuality and same-sex marriage--seems to be rated TV-PG, while violence kicks the program into a TV-14 rating. The aim of the present media is to promote bizarre lifestyles, as well as violence and the pursuit of selfish pleasures - a reflection of the Hollywood lifestyles responsible for much of the content on television and the movies. A total of 91% of all sex presented on prime-time programming on ABC, CBS, NBC and Fox is depicted outside marriage.

A recent study of the television industry revealed that 90% of the theatrical movies shown on television depict violence! And the percentage of shows which depict violence on independent broadcast is 44%. But the deepest concern is that of the shows which depict violence, no long-term consequences are depicted in 84% of them and the perpetrators go unpunished in 73%¹

Amazingly, while the total combined depiction of sex, violence and profanity went down 9% from 1995 to 1996, still over 87% of shows had at least one incident of either sex, violence or profanity in June, '96.²
RISE & FALL OF AMERICA AS ROME
defeat for those trying to stop cultural and moral decline in this nation.
 An age-based rating system gives them the green light to continue polluting the airwaves by continually allowing more violence, sex and foul language for lower and lower age groups.

¹National Television Violence Study, Mediascope, Inc. Feb. 1996.

²AFA Dirty Dozen, American Family Association, Tupelo, MS, 1996.

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Prepared 2/19/967

Wisconsin PTA

CS 97-55

4797 Hayes Road, Suite 2. Madison, WI 53704-3256 (608) 244-1455

March 8, 1997

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

MAR 10 1997

Chairman Reed Hundt and FCC Commissioners
c/o Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street N.W., Room 222
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Hundt and Commissioners:

I am writing on behalf of the National PTA, the West Allis/West Milwaukee PTA Council and as a member of the Wisconsin PTA Board of Directors, to share my feelings of **opposition** towards the V-chip rating system presented by Jack Valenti, Chair of the TV Rating Implementation Group on January 17, 1997.

Parents need a rating system that provides **content information** about the TV programming, so that they may decide for themselves what they believe to be appropriate for their child's TV viewing. My child may be 10 years old, but maybe I don't feel what is rated as 10 year old viewing is appropriate. I don't want the TV industry to interpret what is appropriate for my family. A rating system without content description would be quite useless.

The FCC, by law, is required to determine whether the TV industry's rating system has met statutory requirements of the Telecommunications Act of 1996. In their good judgement, I am sure the FCC **will not** approve this rating system. I would hope the parents voices and views would be a consideration in making your decision.

Please consider the following requests:

That under no circumstances should the FCC accept a rating system that does not include information about programs such as V (for violence), S (for sexual depiction and nudity) and L (for language).

That the FCC require a V-chip band broad enough that would allow parents to receive more than ~~one~~ rating system.

That the rating icon on the TV screen be made larger, more prominently placed on the screen, and appear more frequently during the course of the program.

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That the rating board be independent of the industry and the FCC and that it include parents.

That the approved rating system be evaluated by independent research to determine if it meets the needs of parents.

Thank you in advance for allowing me the opportunity to comments on this very important issue concerning children, as well as the general public's welfare.

Sincerely,

Pat Hladilek

Pat Hladilek
2213 South 55th Street
West Allis, WI 53219

MAR 24 1997

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

713 Woodfield Drive
Cincinnati, Ohio 45231-2639

March 3, 1997

Mr. Reed Hundt
FCC Commission
Office of the Secretary
1919 M Street NW
Room 222
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Mr. Hunt and the FCC Commission:

I am writing about the Age-Based Television Rating System, CS Docket No. 97-55, FCC 97-34.

As far as I am concerned the TV rating system now in place is a farce for families and is a cynical escape hatch for the TV networks.

The system is too broad and general, and doesn't give families the information they need to make intelligent decisions about programming.

Change is needed because as it stands now, two thirds of all shows are lumped together into the TV-PG category.

The code system that is needed by the TV networks should be the same code system used by the cable stations such as HBO and SHOWTIME. Both of the cable stations have used their rating system with great success for years.

In a survey by the University of Wisconsin and the National PTA, a content-based system was preferred by 80 % of parents, this evidently was not taken into consideration by the TV networks when they made their decision.

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It's no mystery why the networks rejected this system, they and their advertisers want a broad audience for their shows. They keep the ratings vague and lump as many shows together as they possible can.

MAR 24 1997
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C.

Families deserve better. It's becoming increasingly difficult to separate the trash from the treasure using the existing code system, and if HBO and SHOWTIME can do it effectively with their rating system, then so can the TV networks.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

I remain,

Sincerely yours:


Nancy L. Schlemmer

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RECEIVED

MAR 24 1997 3-7-97

Dear Chairman Hundt & Commissioners,

Re: CS Docket # 97-55, FCC 97-34

I am writing on behalf of the National PTA & the Allen Park, Michigan PTA to voice my opinion to the v-chip rating system as presented by Jack Valenti, Chair of the TV Rating Implementation Group, on January 17, 1997. The rating symbol on the TV screen does not provide sufficient content information so that parents can make decisions about what is appropriate TV programming for their children. Major surveys released this fall which demonstrate overwhelming parent preference for a rating system that gives parents information about the content of programs were conducted by the National PTA, U.S. News and World Report & Media Studies Center/Roper. Parents do not want the TV industry to interpret what is best for their children. Parents want to make those choices themselves based on content information about the program. Any rating system without content descriptions on the screen and publicized in periodicals that carry TV scheduling is useless.

The FCC by law, is required to determine whether the industry's rating system has met statutory requirements of the Telecommunications Act of 1996. I do not

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believe this system does so and ask that the FCC not approve the industry rating system. Instead I request the following:

- 1) That under no circumstances should the FCC approve the industry's rating system. Further, the FCC should accept no rating system that does not include content information about programs such as V (for violence), S (for sexual depiction and nudity) and L (for language);
- 2) That the FCC require a V chip band broad enough that would allow parents to receive more than one rating system;
- 3) That the rating icon on the TV screen be made larger, more prominently placed on the screen, and appear more frequently during the course of a program;
- 4) That the rating board be independent of the industry and the FCC and that it include parents; and
- 5) That any rating system approved by the FCC be evaluated by independent research to determine if it meets the needs of parents.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment
on an issue so important to children
and families.

Sincerely,

Dawn Brayman

Dawn Brayman

7663 Robinson

Allen Park, MI 48101