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CARTOON VIOLENCE: A COMPARISON OF PAST AND PRESENT

A Thesis
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
Criminal Justice

by
Elizabeth Cameron Macias

June 2010

CARTOON VIOLENCE: A COMPARISON OF PAST AND PRESENT

A Thesis

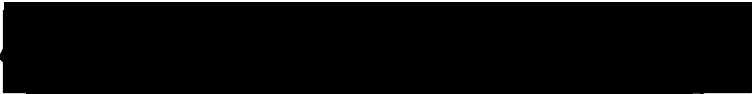
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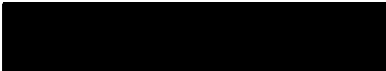
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ABSTRACT

Media is an ever evolving field, yet discussions on cartoon violence have centered on analysis of older cartoons. To continue current discussions on the topic it is necessary to develop an understanding of cartoon violence in this generation. This study examined four cartoons in order to determine the extent of violence, type of violence, and the context of violence in both dated and modern cartoons.

To achieve this goal a content analysis of 'The Flintstones', 'The Jetsons', 'The Simpsons' and 'Family Guy' was performed. These shows were chosen based on their popularity, classification as family programming, and the influence they have had on American culture. Six episodes of each series was viewed and coded in order to gain a better understanding of how violence in older cartoons compared to violence in modern cartoons.

The results of this study were analyzed and a comparison was made to determine if there is a difference in the amount, context, and type of violence exhibited in each cartoon. As expected the modern cartoons had more violent acts, they exhibited more gruesome violence than in the past, and the context of violence has changed to

reflect a more violent culture. In addition to the increase in violent content this study found new controversial issues present in cartoons that deserve future attention; these included sex, harsh language, sexism, racism, and homosexuality.

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In addition to the academic support I have received I would like to thank my family for their support. I am especially indebted to my grandma and grandpa Thompson for their continual love and praise. They have helped shape me into who I am today and have always encouraged me to try my best and never give up. For them I am forever grateful.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Research shows that the average American watches between 28 (Sanchez-Tabernero) and 32 (Neilsen, 2007) hours of television per week. It is argued that television contains a high content of violence, which means Americans are exposed to a heavy daily dose of violence. This is especially harmful to children since studies have shown that children's programming contains as much if not more violence than adult programs (Gerbner et al., 1980; Smith et al., 1998; Signorelli, 2005).

Policies regulating children's viewing habits have been put into place, but it is not enough to shield children from violence in the media. The Telecommunications Act of 1996 was integral in trying to control the amount of violence children are exposed to. This act required that televisions be equipped with a v-chip and that the industry develop a rating system (Signorielli, 2005, p.278). The advent of television ratings helped by informing parents of the age appropriateness of shows as well as whether the shows

contained violence, sexual content, coarse language, suggestive dialogue, or fantasy violence (Signorielli, 2005, p. 279). The v-chip allowed parents to block certain shows from their television sets based on the ratings of the programs.

Despite the disclaimers and warnings given, parents may still lack a full understanding of what their children are watching and the impact it may have. According to Signorielli, one in five shows rated TV-G contained violence, as well as more than half of shows rated TV-PG (2005, p. 280). Though these shows have been rated and approved for young children they still contain several acts of violence. Animation is a medium that is generally trusted by parents, but perhaps more scrutiny is necessary. Much research has gone into examining cartoons of yesteryear, but there is little research on modern cartoons (Bruce, 2001; Gerbner et al., 1980; Huesmann et al., 2003).

Cartoons can appeal to audiences of all ages but children are especially susceptible to them. They feature lovable characters and use catchy songs and phrases to relate to children. Children are exposed to popular cartoon characters not just through watching television, but in everyday life as well. These characters are on

cereal boxes, bed sheets, backpacks, and virtually everywhere. Regardless of whether a parent permits their child to watch certain cartoons, they will be exposed to the images of the characters at school, daycare, or anywhere else that other children are present.

According to the Nielsen company the television viewing habits of Americans is continually growing (2007). It is essential to conduct an in depth study of violence in modern cartoons. It is necessary to determine not only how much violence is present in cartoons but also the type of violence being portrayed, and the context in which it is presented.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine both dated and modern cartoons in order to assess their violent content. There has been much discussion on cartoon violence, however it often centers on cartoons that were created half a century ago. Examples of this include often cited cartoons such as; 'The Road Runner', 'Tom and Jerry', and 'Woody Woodpecker' (Bruce, 2001; Kirsh, 2005). While these cartoons may have exemplified violent cartoons at one

point, they are no longer relevant when compared to more current animated shows.

This study hopes to demonstrate how violence in cartoons has evolved not just in terms of the amount of violence but also the type of violence and context of violence currently being portrayed. Cartoon violence is often dismissed and not taken seriously based on the claim that the violence is fantasy and unlikely to happen in real life (Smith et al., 1998, p. 109). However, as cartoon characters become more relatable and the violence more realistic, it is time they are taken more seriously. It is important to have a proper understanding of what television viewers, especially children, are actually being exposed to.

To gain a better understanding of the difference between past and present cartoons this study will examine the animated television series 'The Flintstones', 'The Jetsons', 'The Simpsons', and 'Family Guy'. These shows represent family cartoons that span several decades, have been put into syndication, and each have a strong following in the United States.

The Flintstones is an animated series created by Hanna-Barbera that ran from 1960 to 1966 on ABC (Alexander,

2009). This show follows the lives of Fred and Wilma Flintstone along with their daughter Pebbles and neighbors Barney and Betty Rubble. The show reads modern for the times with the exception of the couples living in the Stone Age. "The Flintstones was the first, and longest running, animated situation comedy shown in prime-time animation" (Alexander, 2009). The Flintstones series spawned a plethora of merchandise ranging from vitamins and cereal to bed sheets and lunch boxes, several movies, a theme park ride, and can be viewed in the form of reruns as well as on DVD and the internet.

After the success of The Flintstones Hanna-Barbera produced The Jetsons which ran from 1962 to 1963, as well as from 1985 to 1987. The Jetsons were a family comprised of George, his wife Jane, daughter Judy, son Elroy, dog Astro and maid Rosie the robot. Similar to The Flintstones The Jetsons faced everyday issues but were living in the future. Originally only twenty-four episodes were produced and aired, however due to their popularity an additional two seasons were produced and aired from 1985 to 1987 (International Movie Data Base [IMDB], 2009). This animated series led to a movie entitled "The Jetsons Meet The Flintstones", as well as a variety of merchandise.

Episodes can still be seen in syndication, on DVD, and on the internet.

In 1989 the first season of The Simpsons created by Matt Groening was aired on Fox (McAllister, 2009). This animated sitcom followed the Simpson family comprised of Homer, his wife Marge, son Bart, daughters Lisa and Maggie, as well as an abundance of reoccurring secondary characters. While The Simpsons have faced much controversy for their often crude depiction of the American family they have also gained great acclaim. In addition to winning numerous Emmy and Annie awards, as well as receiving a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, the series has won the distinction of "the longest running cartoon on American prime-time network television" (McAllister, 2009). The series has generated a great deal of merchandise including video games and board games, a movie, and a theme park ride. Current episodes of the series can be seen on Fox and reruns can be viewed on several networks, the internet, or on DVD.

Family Guy was created by Seth MacFarlane and made its debut on FOX in 1999 (IMDB, 2009). This series follows the lives of Peter and Lois Griffin along with their teenagers Chris and Meg, their infant Stewie, and the family dog

Brian. This series has garnered a great deal of criticism as well as praise. Parentstv.org (2009) ridicules the series for its excessive use of sex, violence, and coarse language; there is even a link where viewers can lodge a complaint with the FCC. The show has won a number of awards including Emmys, Annies, and people's choice awards (IMDB, 2009). According to Entertainment Weekly, Seth MacFarlane "is now the highest paid writer in TV" (2008, p.41). The success of the show has resulted in a movie, a spin-off series and an assortment of merchandise.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Since the advent of media there have been critics who have questioned the goals, intentions, and consequences of media. Media can take many forms such as print, movies, video games, music, internet, and television. Of these forms, television has faced the most scrutiny over the years since it has become so accessible to the average American. As a result of this accessibility it has deeply permeated American culture. Studies about television have generally focused on three topics; the violent content of television, the effects television has on viewer's perceptions, and the effect that television has on viewer's behavior (Bruce, 2001; Coyne & Whitehead, 2008; Gerbner et al., 1980; Huesmann et al., 2003; Murray, 2008).

Before undertaking a discussion on media and its influences, it is important to understand the scope of the problem. According to a 2007 report by the Nielsen Company, the average household has a television set on eight hours and fourteen minutes a day, with the average viewer watching four hours and thirty-four minutes of

television daily. There has also been a rash of increased media options over the last few years. Viewers are no longer required to sit in front of the television waiting for their favorite shows. Viewers can now view television shows on their computer, their phone, their I-pod, or simply use their DVR to record shows and watch them later. This is undeniable proof that television has become an important part of American life and will likely remain that way.

Theoretical Perspectives

There are many theories that apply to discussions of media and violence. The theories that will be discussed are social learning theory, cultivation theory, the disinhibition or desensitization effect, and the 'third variable' theory. These theories are presented to give an understanding of why examining violence in media is important.

Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory was first introduced by Albert Bandura. Social learning theory asserts that people are not born with aggression but rather learn the behavior whether it be through personal experience or simply by

seeing others behave aggressively (Bandura, 1976, p. 204-205). It is important to note that social learning theory does not suggest that observing aggression will result in the viewer behaving aggressively. It suggests that observing aggressive behavior will enable the viewer to store those acts in their memory; whether they choose to act out aggressively can be due to other factors (Bandura, 1976, p. 206).

According to Bandura (1976) the most common sources from which people learn how to behave aggressively are familial influences, subcultural influences, and symbolic monitoring (pp.206-211). Family can have a strong influence on future behavior since it is generally where a person is raised and spends a majority of their time. Bandura found that parents who favor aggressive solutions to solve their problems will likely pass those same aggressive attitudes onto their children (p. 207). Subcultural influences can also play a big role since people rely on culture to dictate standards and norms. For example, gang subcultures place high value on pride, aggression, and violence. As a result, gang members are encouraged to behave violently and criminally to gain respect and prestige within their subculture.

The last source, and most pertinent to discussions of media, is the symbolic modeling provided by the mass media. With accessibility of television also comes the accessibility of models which viewers may not have otherwise had contact with. Bandura (1976) points out that "... the modern child has witnessed innumerable stabbings, beatings, stompings, stranglings, muggings, and less graphic but equally destructive forms of cruelty before he has reached kindergarten age" (p. 208). This means that no matter how good of role models parents are for their child, they can still be influenced by what they are watching on television.

Cultivation Theory

Cultivation theory was proposed by Gerbner in response to the effects media was having on viewer's minds. It was found that people who are heavy television viewers tend to relate more closely with the TV world than with the real world (Gerbner et al., 1980, p. 711). The more that viewers watch TV, the more it influences their perceptions of the real world. Information that people used to obtain from sources such as parents, school, peers, and religion are now being obtained through viewing television. These same viewers develop a "mean world" perspective and are

more likely to overestimate their own chances of victimization. This perspective is a gradual process that cultivates over a period of time.

Disinhibition/ Desensitization Theories

The theories of disinhibition and desensitization refer to the media's ability to make viewers less shocked by violence. Desensitization is the ability to slowly develop a tolerance for behavior that would have otherwise been intolerable (Signorelli, 2005, p. 19). Before media it was unlikely that many people would have been exposed to violent crimes, but now anyone who watches TV can see reports on the news or even in TV shows about murder, rape, robbery, and a plethora of other crimes. Huessman et al. (2003) point out that constant exposure to these types of violent acts builds up viewers' tolerance and makes them less shockable (p. 202). This developing lack of emotion can lead people to behave more violently because they no longer feel the crimes are as reprehensible.

Third Variable Theory

The "third variable" theory is a more recent theory that attributes less blame to media as a cause of violence than past theories. The "third variable" theory suggests that positive relationships between aggression and exposure

to media violence are spurious, and the link is due to several other variables (Huesmann et al., 2003, p. 202). These other variables include such things as social class, parenting skills, and IQ which have long been associated with both aggression and TV viewing. "These factors are viewed not as explaining away the 'effect' of exposure to violence on aggression but as explaining individual differences in exposure to violence and individual differences in the strength of the effect" (Huesmann et al., 2003, p. 202).

Defining Violence

To undertake a study on children's programming it is important to have some universal understanding of what constitutes violence. Depending on what aspect of violence is being measured, a variety of definitions can be deemed appropriate.

Many problems arise when trying to define violence in cartoons and other children's programs. One issue is whether the violence is aimed at humans, animals, or inanimate objects. It is also important to note whether the violence was an intentional act such as hitting or shooting, or whether the act was portrayed as an accident

such as a character falling and injuring himself or herself.

It is equally important to determine whether the violent act being perpetrated is a form of 'real world' violence or whether it is merely 'TV land' violence. 'Real world' violence depicts things that can and do actually happen such as murder, assault, and robbery. 'TV land' violence shows acts that are not conceivable in the real world and exist only in cartoons such as attacks by aliens, dinosaurs, and monsters. A distinction should be made between acts the viewer is capable of reenacting such as a fistfight, rather than acts that exists solely in 'TV land' such as anvils falling from the sky.

George Gerbner was one of the pioneers in studies of violence in children's programming. He defined violence as "...the overt expression of physical force compelling action against one's will on pain of being hurt or killed, or actually hurting or killing" (Gerbner et al., 1980, p. 705). This definition became a basis on which future researchers would develop their own definitions of violence. This definition was used in much of the subsequent research on media violence he conducted along with colleagues. Signorielli's (2005) assessment of TV

ratings uses Gerbner's definition of violence to determine whether TV shows are being labeled appropriately. However, she adds to the definition by including acts of nature and accidental violence, but excludes idle threats and verbal abuse (Signorielli, 2005, p. 284). Potter and Warren (1998) also started with Gerbner's definitions as a base to define violence, however they felt the definition was conservative and needed additional elements. They added to the definition harsh verbal violence that could cause emotional and psychological harm, and ruled out such acts as animal aggression, accidents and acts of God (p. 44).

Other researchers of cartoon violence choose not to define violence, but rather just analyzed the shows on the messages that were being sent (Bruce, 2001; Kirsh, 2005; Murray, 2008). Bruce (2001) states that "rather than finding violence so that it can be condemned, I undertake a criticism based on the message transmitted by that violence..." (p. 229). He does however give examples of the violent acts that range from "pills that instantly produce larger and stronger legs" (violence to the body) to Wile E Coyote being blown up (p. 232).

The problem with not defining violence is that a broad range of 'violent acts' may be interpreted differently by various audiences. Kirsh (2005) also fails to conceptualize violence but does make some distinctions. He notes that cartoon violence tends to portray minor acts of violence and there is seldom graphic portrayal of violence (p. 548). According to Kirsh, examples of violent cartoons include Popeye the Sailor, Roadrunner, and Woody Woodpecker (2005). Another study that fails to define violence is Murray's (2008) study which tests the effects that violence has on various parts of the brain. While he goes into great depth about the effects on the brain, in reference to the material being tested he simply states that his experiment involved the viewing of violent and nonviolent material (p. 1224).

It is clear that to even begin a discussion on cartoon violence there must be some accepted definition of violence. This will ensure that evolving data are as accurate, reliable, and valid as possible. If any comparisons are to be made concerning various shows or mediums, there must first be a consensus as to what constitutes violence. Gerbner created a well-accepted definition that is often referred to by other researchers.

As television evolves and research continues the definition will need to be reexamined and modified. The public must be wary of studies that simply refer to violence or nonviolence without giving a proper definition.

Extent of Violence

Once violence is conceptualized an analysis of how much violence is on television can begin. There has been an assortment of studies (Gerbner et al., 1980; Smith et al., 1998; Signorelli, 2005) conducted to determine how much violence is present in various forms of media. While statistics may vary from source to source, it is clear that violence is a staple ingredient contained in children's programming.

Gerbner et al. (1980) found five violent acts per hour in primetime and weekend daytime programs compared to eighteen violent acts per hour in weekend daytime children's programs (p. 706). Smith et al. (1998) found that the average rate of violent acts on television was 6.8 per hour with the highest rates found in children's programming (p. 107). In a more recent study, Signorielli (2005) concluded that one in five shows rated TV-G contained violence, more than half of shows rated TV-PG,

and six out of ten shows rated TV-14 contained violence (p. 280). Potter and Warren's (1998) assessment of comedy and non-comedy shows revealed that comedy programs contained 50.4 acts per hour compared to other types of programs which contained 31.4 acts of violence per hour (p. 49).

Type of Violence

It is not just the amount of violence in cartoons that is shocking, but also the type of violence present. When violence is not portrayed as 'real world' violence it can often go undetected. Unlike shows containing real people, cartoons are able to create their own reality in which events can occur (Bruce, 1998, p. 233). Cartoons are not bound by such inconveniences as logic and physics. In the cartoon world it is entirely possible for characters to fly, for things to appear and disappear from nowhere, and for characters to die in one scene and miraculously come back to life in the next. It is possible that unrealistic portrayals of violence are ignored because they cannot be imitated by the viewers. It has been suggested that the degree to which viewers perceive the violent act as realistic will determine whether they consider it violent (Kirsh, 2005, p. 550).

Smith et al. (1998) found that "blood and gore are rarely shown [14%] in scenes of violence" and are most often shown on premium cable and in movies (p. 109). They also found that most shows display a realistic portrayal of violence, with the exception of children's programming which displays fantasy violence or events that could not happen in real life (p. 109). Additionally they looked at gun use in violent interactions. They found that guns were used in 26% of violent interactions, but mostly within the reality-based dramatic genre (p. 108).

An often ignored form of violence prevalent in children's programming is indirect aggression. Discussions on violence often center on physical violence but such acts as indirect aggression should not be completely dismissed as they can lead to future aggressive behavior. Indirect aggression includes non-physical acts that are aimed at hurting another's feelings such as "gossiping, ignoring, dirty looks, (and) socially excluding others from a conversation or group" (Coyne & Whitehead, 2008, p. 384). Coyne and Whitehead find evidence of social exclusion, malicious humor, and peer pressure in their study of Disney films (2008, P. 391).

Context of Violence

When the average person hears about violence in the media they do not automatically picture cartoons. That is why it is shocking to hear statistics that quote how much violence is contained in children's programming. How is it that parents do not notice the extreme amount of violence in the shows their kids are watching? One suggestion is that because the shows are primarily directed at kids, they are largely ignored by adults and therefore free to show what they wish (Bruce, 2001, p. 230). Another explanation for this phenomenon is that the lack of graphic violence such as serious injury and death makes it easy to forget that there is violence at all (Kirsh, 2005, p. 550). Perhaps the best explanation comes from Potter and Warren (1998) who believe that violence is largely ignored in children's programming because it is masked by humor.

Humor Masking Violence

One of the best ways to ensure laughter is through slapstick comedy, such as characters falling, running into things, or facing other minor tribulations. There has even been debate as to whether these slapstick incidents should be considered acts of violence at all. Violence is

generally used for dramatic effect whereas slapstick violence is used for comedic purposes.

Not all forms of violence can be masked by humor. It may be easy to laugh at a character being slapped, however such acts as rape and murder will stand out as violent and will likely not be viewed as funny (Potter & Warren, 1998, p. 43). Viewers do not see slapstick incidents as violent because they have developed a schema for comedy. It is embedded in the viewer's mind that a character being hit in the face with a pie is hilarious, not violent.

Potter and Warren (1998) found that comedy programs include large amounts of violence, yet viewers consider these shows comedic rather than violent. They argue that this is because the programs show so many acts of minor violence coupled with humor which trivializes the violence (p. 54). Kirsh's (2003) study echoes these findings and adds that the humor signals to viewers that the violence should be downplayed, and a situation that might otherwise be 'grave' becomes 'whimsical' (p. 549). It has also been shown that violent cartoons are less about good and evil and more about absurdity (Bruce, 2001, p. 243). Smith et al. (1998) found that humor appears in 42% of all violent

scenes, and occurs substantially more in children's programs and comedy programs (p. 97).

Status of Offender

Virtually all television shows have a protagonist as well as an antagonist, the hero versus the villain. It is common knowledge that the hero is always the 'good guy' who is fighting for the good cause, and the villain is the 'bad guy' who is evil and must be stopped at all costs.

However, this message starts becoming somewhat ambiguous when the hero is behaving just as violently as the villain.

Often times the protagonist can actually behave more violently than the antagonist. Potter and Warren (1998) found that heroes were associated with 44.4% of violent acts in comedy programs (p. 52). These are the same heroes that children adore and try to model themselves after. These heroes often carry weapons, exhibit questionable behavior, and will stop at nothing to stop the villain.

In the case of 'The Road Runner' the main character is Wile E Coyote who is considered the absurd hero (Bruce, 2001, p. 235). This hero spends each episode plotting and trying to kill the roadrunner. The antagonist is the roadrunner, yet most of the violent acts that occur in this show can be attributed to Wile. Watching violent heroes on

television can lead children to act out as a way of imitating their heroes. Krcmar and Cooke (2001) found that when violence was portrayed as justified or morally accepted, viewers were more likely to imitate that behavior (p. 301). It is easy to admonish acts of violence when authorities (in this case TV) tell the public these acts are wrong, but it is also easy to praise these acts when the same authorities extol and reward the same behavior when performed by heroes.

The actions of the protagonist as well as the consequences they receive play an important role in how children will view violence. Coyne and Whitehead (2008) point out the tendency of children to imitate heroes while shunning the behavior of villains. Their study of Disney films revealed that they "portray a fairly negative view of indirect aggression, making it less likely to be imitated on a vast scale" (2008, p. 393).

It would be nice to believe that all heroes exhibit only good and honorable qualities while all villains are evil and violent. Unfortunately in 'TV land' this is not true. The heroes in children's programming are often just as violent, if not more so than the villains they are fighting. This sends the message to kids that certain acts

of violence are wrong while other acts are not only okay but even heroic. Parents must keep in mind that it is not necessarily the despicable acts committed by criminals that need to raise concern, but rather the violence perpetrated by the characters that kids idolize and hope to emulate (Huesmann et al., 2003, p. 218).

Rafter (2007) discusses the confusion that has become prevalent as to who is the bad guy and who is the good guy. While some shows make these differences obvious, others have begun to blur the line. She points out that some programs employ the villain that everyone loves to hate, while other shows portray a more sympathetic version of an antagonist (p. 409). If the viewers see the 'bad guy' as a vigilante or a sympathetic, misunderstood character it might also change their views on the violence committed by that character. When the traditional 'bad guy' is portrayed with such qualities as being attractive, smart, and cunning the viewers may stop viewing him as the 'bad guy'. Tzanelli et al. (2005) found that when the 'bad guy' is given some good qualities viewers begin rooting for them, even if their goals are criminal. Smith et al. (1998) agree, pointing out that when a perpetrator of

violence is attractive or engaging they are more likely to serve as a role model for viewers (p. 14).

Rewards and Punishment for Violence

According to Krcmar and Cooke (2001) "the justification of a violent act was found to be among the strongest mediating factors predicting viewers' tendency to act aggressively themselves" (p. 300). When violence is justified, whether it be by the perpetrator, verbally by others, or with material rewards, it encourages others to accept the violence as well. Krcmar and Cooke (2001) found that children rely on cues such as rewards and punishments to judge whether or not acts are acceptable.

Likewise, Potter and Warren (1998) found that when minor acts of violence go unpunished it sends the message to viewers that the acts are not actually violent (p. 54). Smith et al. (1998) found that 54% of violent acts are neither punished nor rewarded, while 20% are explicitly punished, and 17% rewarded (p. 87). By ignoring, or worse, rewarding violent acts programs send the message to viewers that their violent acts will often go unpunished.

Conclusions

The violence and media debate has gone on for so long in part because it is hard to obtain tangible evidence proving or disproving the link. While most studies focus on the effects that media can have on attitudes and behaviors, Murray (2008) took it one step further and focused on the effects it is having on the brain. He concludes that "TV violence viewing appears to activate brain areas involved in arousal and attention, detection of threat, episodic memory encoding and retrieval and motor programming" (p. 1224). The subjects of his experiment were processing and storing violent images which Murray compared to the storage process used by sufferers of post traumatic stress disorder (p. 1225). There are probably few surprised by this link, but now that the link is tangible it is time to act on the evidence. The debate should be shifted from 'is there violence, and is there a link?' to 'what must be done about this violence and its effects?'

Research Questions

A link between violent cartoons and aggressive behaviors and attitudes has already been established. It is not entirely clear whether cartoons with excessive amounts of violence cause the aggression or whether children with these aggressive tendencies just prefer violent cartoons. Unfortunately, studies on violent cartoons tend to use older cartoons as their basis of analysis. Many of the cartoons used for these studies, such as 'The Road Runner', 'Tom and Jerry', and 'Woody Woodpecker' were created in the 1940s and are not current. Research on these older cartoons is important to consider, however it is equally important to assess the amount of violence present in more modern cartoons as well.

Research Question #1: How does the amount of violence present in older cartoons compare with modern cartoons?

Times have changed, and so has cartoon violence. In the past violence in cartoons was typified by characters performing unrealistic feats in order to harm their opponents. These feats included such acts as; flattening, blowing up, and trapping their opponents. One common feature of these older cartoons is that no matter how severe a character is harmed they never seem to be

permanently affected. Characters in these cartoons can withstand excessive amounts of punishment without blood, broken bones, or death. Newer cartoons have saturated the screens with blood and gore. It is no longer uncommon to see scenes with excessive blood, horrific fights, and even death. It is important to recognize the various forms of violence present in modern cartoons and how they can affect the viewer.

Research Question #2: How does the type of violence present in older cartoons compare with modern cartoons?

Violence in cartoons can be interpreted in many different ways depending on the context of that violence. A death can be interpreted as horrendous if it is perpetrated by a cold blooded serial killer or honorable if it is by a police officer who is protecting innocent citizens. Violence can also be dismissed by viewers if it is done for the sake of humor. Additionally, whether the violence is rewarded or punished can affect how viewers perceive it. Factors that affect a viewer's perception of violence include; the status of the character committing the violence, The motive of the offender, and whether the violence is punished or rewarded.

Research Question #3: How does the context of violence in older cartoons compare with modern cartoons?

Studies of cartoon violence are dated and have lost much of their relevance. It is important to examine more modern cartoons in an effort to help advance discussions on violence in cartoons. To assess the impact that cartoon violence is currently having on children, and society as a whole, an effort must be made to analyze current cartoons.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Studies of cartoon violence have been around for quite awhile, yet most of these studies analyze very outdated cartoons. Although there has been extensive research on cartoon violence, this study was somewhat exploratory. The interest in modern cartoons required a new approach to the study of violence and cartoons. Terms concerning violence were conceptualized at length. The framework for the study was reminiscent of older studies, but modern cartoons are very complex and an extensive analysis was essential.

Units of Analysis

The units of analysis being examined in this study are social artifacts. One benefit of analyzing social artifacts is their stability. There is no risk of maturation because the content being analyzed could not change from the beginning of the analysis to the end.

This study analyzed the animated television series "The Flintstones", "The Jetsons", "The Simpsons", and "Family Guy". After these shows were analyzed the content was coded in order to determine the amount, type, and

context of violence present in each show. By comparing the data a better understanding of how cartoon violence has evolved was reached.

The samplings of cartoons were chosen based on the era they were introduced, their popularity, and their similarities. All four shows are classified as family shows and similarly feature families as they face everyday life. All of the shows had a major impact on American viewers as evident through the merchandise that followed the series as well as the awards and acclaims each show earned.

The Flintstones is an innovative series that paved the way for future cartoons. The series was created after "a survey revealed that more than half of Huckleberry Hound's audience was comprised of adults" (Mullen, 2009). While the series was not created for children it is often remembered that way due in large part to the reruns which ran in the Saturday morning cartoon lineup, as well as the extensive merchandising aimed at children. Although The Flintstones was not a children's series it faced criticisms based on its sponsorship by Winston cigarettes. The main characters could be seen enjoying cigarettes in several episodes as well as in advertisements produced for Winston

cigarettes. This show consistently appears on popularity polls; it claimed the #11 spot on channel 4's lists of the 100 greatest cartoons (The 100 Greatest, 2009) and #9 on IGN's list of the top 100 animated series (IGN, 2009). The series ran from 1960 to 1966 for six seasons and a total of 167 episodes (IMDB, 2009). Reruns air regularly on the Boomerang network and several websites offer full episodes available to view.

Hanna-Barbera capitalized on the success of The Flintstones by creating their space-age equals, The Jetsons. Although the series only lasted one season in 1962 it was revived from 1985 to 1987 due to its popularity among children. Similar to The Flintstones this series was not conceived as a children's series, though it is often remembered that way. A total of three seasons were aired comprised of seventy-five episodes. The Jetsons can be viewed through several online sources, as well as on the Boomerang Network.

The Simpsons tout the reputation of being the longest running cartoon on American television as well as "the single most influential program in establishing FOX as a legitimate broadcast television network" (McAllister, 2009). The Simpsons have received much attention due to

the fact that producers were unafraid to push the envelope and challenge conventional views of both cartoons as well as the American family.

Although the series has received numerous awards and much praise they have received equal amounts of criticism. The criticisms range from parents that criticize the show for being unwholesome (parentstv.org) to "U.S. President George Bush and former U.S. Secretary of Education William Bennett publicly criticiz(ing) the program for its subversive and anti-authority nature" (McAllister, 2009). The series has become an American classic and continues to receive positive praise in polls including topping channel 4's list of the 100 greatest cartoons (The 100 Greatest, 2009) and coming in #1 on IGN's list of the top 100 animated series (IGN, 2009). Current episodes of the series can be viewed on FOX, reruns air on several stations, or episodes can be viewed through several sources online including a site dedicated solely to viewing Simpson episodes (www.wtso.net).

The Simpsons use of crude humor and dysfunctional families set the trend for future controversial cartoons such as Family Guy. This groundbreaking series makes the formerly controversial Simpsons seem tame in many aspects.

Parentstv.org, a group set up to help parents decide which shows families should watch, openly criticizes the series giving it a 'red light' rating while The Simpsons only receives a 'yellow light'.

The series was originally aired in 1999 but after two seasons its cancelation was announced, however FOX picked it up for an additional season in 2003 after which it was supposed to be cancelled permanently. Due to high DVD sales of the first three seasons and its popularity on Cartoon Network the series was renewed by FOX in 2005 where it still resides. Although Family Guy has not been around long it has made a major mark on the American Public; it placed #7 on IGN's list of the top 100 animated series (IGN, 2009), and #5 on channel 4's list (The 100 Greatest, 2009). Family Guy is currently in its eighth season and recently celebrated its one hundred and fiftieth episode. Current episodes can be seen on FOX, reruns air on several stations, and the internet offers many venues to view full episodes of Family Guy.

A random sampling of episodes from each series has been analyzed and coded. The episodes were chosen through the website www.random.org. This site allows the researcher to enter a beginning and ending number and then

chooses the numbers at random. The sample consists of six episodes from each series for a total of twenty-four episodes analyzed. Each episode runs approximately 23-26 minutes. Each episode was viewed more than once in order to ensure all violent content was coded

Measures and Coding of Content

This study is considered a content analysis. The episodes were analyzed and the results were entered in a quantitative fashion. There was also a comments section where descriptions about the violent acts were added. With the use of a code book the coder was able to code: whether the violent act was a single act or a series of actions, the status of the perpetrator and the victim, the motive for the violent act, what type of violent act was shown, whether a weapon was present, the consequences of the violence, whether blood was present, and whether the offender was rewarded or punished.

A codebook conceptualizing the aforementioned variables has been created for this study (see Appendix A). A pretest was conducted using a random sample of one episode from each series. The four pretest episodes were analyzed and coded by the researcher and two peers. The

three coders were given the codebook and the definitions of the violent variables. They watched each episode twice to ensure that they do not neglect any information. These pretest episodes were watched individually by the coders so that they would not be influenced by each other. Once all coders were finished the results were compared. There was a discussion about any discrepancies in the coding and whether there were flaws present in the code book and definitions. Based on the pretest there were minor changes and additions made to some of the wording and variables in the code book.

Definitions

Before this study was undertaken it was imperative to conceptualize violence. There are various definitions of violence available. Violence was conceptualized as clearly and concisely as possible for the purposes of this study. Many of the before mentioned studies (Potter and Warren, 1998; Signorielli, 2005) used Gerbner's definition of violence as a basis for their own. Gerbner's definition of violence is "...the overt expression of physical force compelling action against one's will on pain of being hurt

or killed, or actually hurting or killing" (Gerbner et al., 1980, p. 705).

Potter (1999) gives some useful guidelines when determining which acts of violence will be coded. When coding violence it must be determined if the following incidents will count as violence: acts of nature, accidents, incidents which do not result in harm, nonphysical incidents, violence that occurs off screen, violence directed at nonhuman targets, fantasy acts of violence, and acts of violence perpetrated for the sake of comedy (p. 72). There may also be debate about the weighting of certain violent acts. For example, should someone shaking their fist in the air (a form of nonphysical violence) be counted the same as a murder? Potter points out that viewer's perception of violence can often depend on "realism of the setting, physical form of the violence, degree of harm to the victims, and physical setting of the violence" (p. 74). When a violent act resembles real life, viewers are more likely to perceive it as violent.

Using Potter's guidelines a definition of violence can begin to take form. For the purpose of this study acts of nature were coded if they resulted in any violent

consequences; an example of this might include a tree that falls on a character and breaks their bones. Likewise, all accidents that resulted in violent consequences were coded; these are a staple of most cartoons. Incidents which did not result in harm were coded as long as they met the 'violent' criteria. An example of this may include a character threatening another where nothing happens, or even a character physically assaulting another where no consequences are shown. Nonphysical incidents were coded if they had the intent of harming another, this included threatening, bullying, name calling, and violent outbursts. Violence that occurred off screen was coded if violent consequences were shown or if the violence was implied. An example of this might include a character going off screen and returning back onscreen with a black eye. Violence directed at nonhuman targets, as well as perpetrated by nonhumans was counted. This was necessary since many cartoons personify nonhumans including animals and robots. Fantasy consequences tend to be shown more than fantasy acts of violence so fantasy consequences as well as fantasy weapons were coded. An example of fantasy consequences might include stars or birds flying above a characters head, a character turning blue, or steam emitting from a

characters head. Lastly, all acts of violence perpetrated for the sake of comedy were coded; most acts of cartoon violence are committed for just that reason.

In addition to determining the amount, type, and context of violence in the cartoons studied, a system was used to separate the variables by severity. Violent acts, consequences, and motives can range in severity so it was necessary to categorize the variables to get a better idea of the violence present in these cartoons. The violent acts as well as the consequences were separated into code 1 (more severe), code 2 (less severe), accidents, and other. Likewise the motives were separated to determine whether the perpetrator acted for no reason, for negative reasons, or for more admirable reasons.

The definition of violence for the purpose of this study was:

Any overt expression (physical, verbal, or otherwise) performed by a character that has the intended effect of harming one's self, another, or an object; or any violent consequences shown, where violence was implied.

There is bound to be some disagreement in regards to the definition of violence. Violence is a tricky subject to tackle since violent acts in cartoons tend to be regarded as latent content. While some violent acts such as shooting, stabbing, and hitting are easy to identify as violent, other violent acts are much more subtle. Violence can be interpreted in many different ways which is why the definition for this study is considered subjective. The researcher has catalogued all acts of violence contained in the selected episodes; including physical, nonphysical, and implied violence.

Validity and Reliability

This study presents some strong areas of internal validity. Many of the actions being coded such as hitting, shooting, and stabbing are clear indicators of violence which would give the study face validity. However more ambiguous signs of violence such as nonphysical and implied violence may not conform to commonly accepted conceptions of violence. By coding all types of violence, the content validity of the study is stronger. The construct validity is also strong since the actions coded accurately measure violence.

The external validity of the study has some strong points but also some faults. Since this study only analyzed four cartoons the results cannot be generalized to all cartoons. However, the cartoons should be considered representative of popular cartoons of their respective eras since they were picked in part for this reason. In order to make the results more generalizable a future study could examine a variety of cartoons classified as non violent, somewhat violent, and extremely violent.

The internal reliability of this study poses some problems. According to Babbie "reliability is a concern every time a single observer is the source of data, because we have no certain guard against the impact of that observer's subjectivity" (2002, p. 137). The same researcher who conceptualized violence for this study was also the only coder for all of the episodes. The aforementioned pretest should serve to minimize subjectivity by ensuring that the coder views the same violent acts as two other people watching the same episodes. Another way that subjectivity was decreased was through the coder watching each episode multiple times.

One benefit to having a single coder is that there should be little variance between definitions among the selected episodes. This is important since many acts of violence can be subjective. For example, one person may view the phrase "why I oughta!" as threats or bullying, while another person may argue that there is no violence present. By using a single coder the subjectivity of definitions decreases. This leads to an increase in consistency within the study.

The external reliability of this study is also strong since a codebook as well as a definition of violence has been tailored for this study. If another researcher took the definitions provided and the codebook they should be able to view the cartoons and code the information the same way as the current researcher. Much detail has been put into conceptualizing violence as well as conceptualizing the related variables. This ensures that the definitions are as clear cut as possible. The pretest that was conducted is also a testament to the external reliability since persons other than the researcher had to use the definitions and codebook to code the data.

Limitations

One flaw of this study is that it is not generalizable to all cartoons since a small sample of cartoons is being analyzed. This type of study is considered inductive since the study hopes to make general statements based on the content analysis of only four cartoons. This study hopes that by analyzing the violence in the selected sample a broader statement can be made about violence in modern cartoons.

As mentioned, another issue that might present problems is the fact that there was only one coder for this study. Viewer bias and rater bias may be seen as the chief limitation. There may also be concerns with some of the terms and definitions used. Since there is a lot of subjectivity in this study it may not be considered reliable or valid if others do not agree with the definitions and terms of the study. Efforts have been made to assure that this study is as unproblematic as possible, but there will always be limitations on any study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Presentation of Findings

After all episodes were watched and coded the data was analyzed to determine the amount of violence, the type of violence, and the context of the violence presented. This was accomplished through cataloguing the data as well as running a T-test and an ANOVA using SPSS software. The results will be discussed in the following sections. For a list of; how all variables scored see Appendix B, the significant T-Test results see Appendix C, and the significant ANOVA results see Appendix D.

Amount of Violence

The purpose of the first research question was to compare the amount of violence in older cartoons with modern cartoons. This study found that the two modern cartoons contained more violent acts than the two older cartoons. A graph displaying the amount of violence in each series follows.

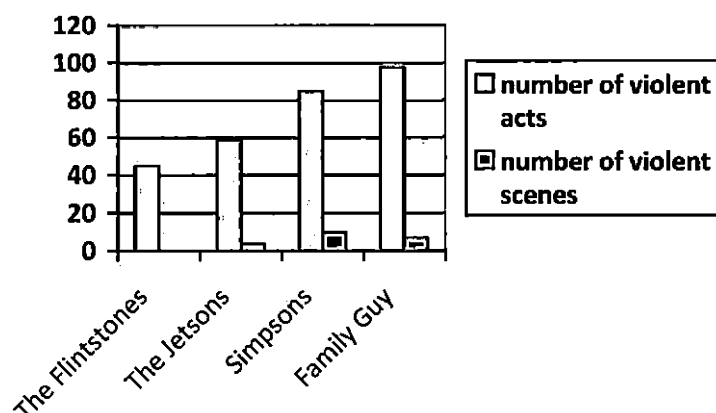


Figure 1. Amount of Violence

The six episodes of The Flintstones contained 45 violent acts, while The Jetsons had 59 violent acts. The Simpsons showed 85 violent acts and Family Guy had the most violent acts with 98. The study also separated violent scenes which often included extended scenes of violence such as rampages, tirades, and fights or scuffles that involved multiple victims. The Flintstones had no violent scenes, The Jetsons had 4, The Simpsons contained 10 of these scenes, and Family Guy had 7.

Type of Violence

The second research question was designed to assess the difference between older and newer cartoons in terms of the type of violence present. To determine the type of violence present in the cartoons the following variables were analyzed: the type of violent act, the presence of weapons, the amount of blood shown, and the consequences of the violence.

The first variable analyzed was the type of violent acts present in the cartoons. The violent acts were separated into several categories; code 1 violent acts, code 2 violent acts, accidents, and other violent acts. Code 1 violent acts are more serious acts and include punching, shooting, choking, and throwing objects. Code 2 violent acts represent less violent acts including threats and bullying, implied violence, attempted violence, and crashing (a full list of variables and their codes can be seen in Appendix A). Accidents are staples of cartoon violence and most often depict such acts as characters falling, bumping their heads, or running into things. The category of other violent acts accommodates those acts that did not fit into the rest of the violent categories. It should also be mentioned that while the majority of

incidents involved only one violent act, multiple violent acts did occur occasionally. Figure 2 shows the variance amongst the series in reference to the types of violent acts being displayed.

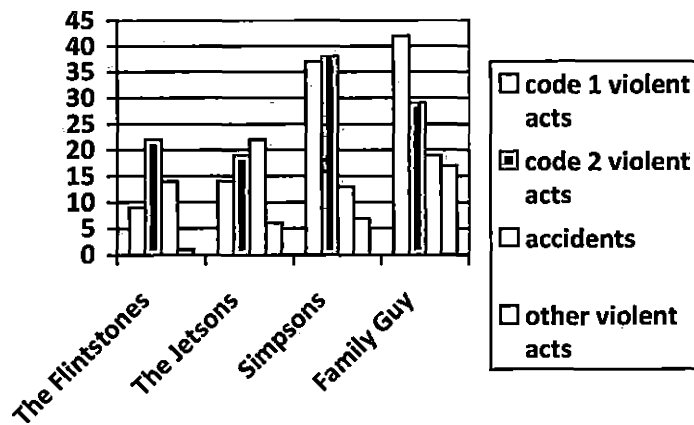


Figure 2. Type of Violent Acts

Weapons were the second variable analyzed to determine the type of violence present. The categories for weapons are real weapons, fantasy weapons, and other weapons. Real weapons include such weapons as: guns, knives, and blunt objects. Fantasy weapons include any type of weapon that exists only in cartoon world. These types of weapons include ray guns, guns that emit fire, and futuristic

weapons. Other weapons would encompass any real weapons that did not fit into one of the categories available. Figure 3 shows the types of weapons present in each of the series.

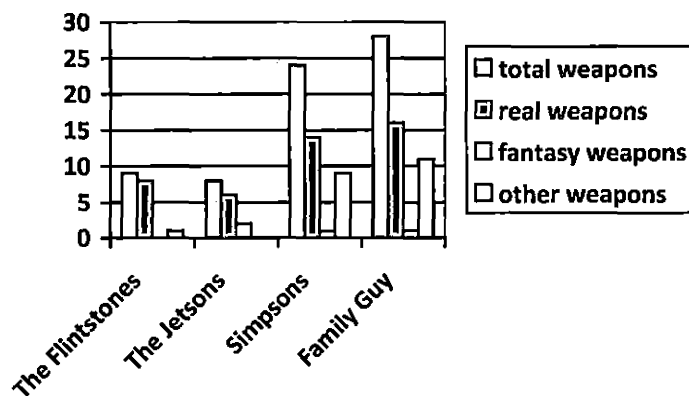


Figure 3. Weapons

The third variable used to determine the type of violence present in each cartoon was whether blood was shown. When blood was present it was coded as either a small, medium, or large amount of blood. A small amount of blood would include blood seen on cuts, or small blood drips. A medium amount of blood would be a small pool of blood or a small amount of blood oozing or dribbling out of

a wound. A large amount of blood would be coded when blood was seen gushing, or large pools of blood were present. A graph displaying the amount of blood present in each series shows the discrepancy between the old and new series.

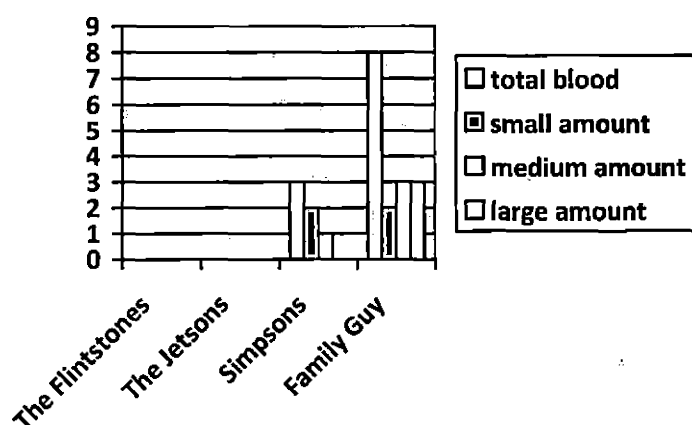


Figure 4. Amount of Blood

The final, and one of the most important variables when analyzing type of violence are the consequences shown for the violent act. The categories were separated into; no consequences, fantasy consequences, code 1 consequences, code 2 consequences, and other consequences. No consequences was used when a violent act occurred and the victim expressed no pain and showed no signs of injury.

The category 'fantasy consequences' was used when the consequences were not realistic. This might include birds or stars circling a victim's head, a victim turning blue, etc. Code 1 consequences were considered most severe; these included bullet wounds, twisted limbs, and death or implied death. Code 2 consequences were not quite as severe and included such scenes as the victim falling, damaged property, and the victim expressing pain but showing no physical symptoms. The category of 'other consequences' was used when the consequences did not fit into any of the other categories. Figure 5 shows how each series scored in terms of consequences.

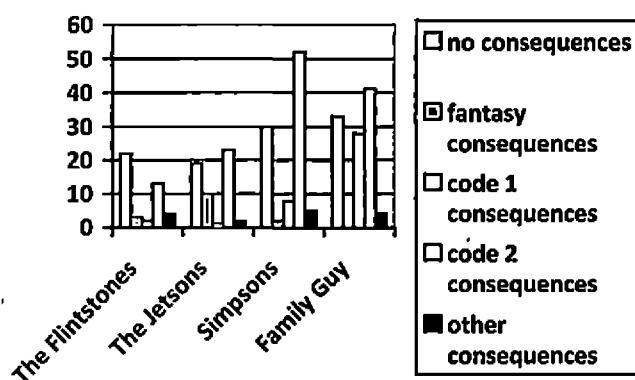


Figure 5. Consequences

The Flintstones series contained the following violent acts: 9 code 1 acts, 22 code 2 acts, 14 accidents, and 1 other violent acts. The violent category used most often was code 2 acts (49%), with the most prevalent offense being threats and bullying. There were 9 weapons used in the 6 episodes viewed. Eight of these weapons were real weapons, there were no fantasy weapons, and there was one other weapon. There was no blood present in any of the episodes watched.

The consequences present were: 22 incidents with no consequences, 3 fantasy consequences, 2 code 1 consequences, 16 code 2 consequences, and 4 other consequences. Forty nine percent of the incidents resulted in no consequences at all. The category seen least was code 1 consequences (4%), and the two 2 consequences were both for marks, welts, or bruises.

The Jetsons episodes contained: 14 code 1 acts, 20 code 2 acts, 22 accidents, and 5 other violent acts. The category seen most in this series was accidents (37%); these accidents most often involved characters falling or bumping into things. There were 8 weapons throughout the episodes. Six of the weapons were real and two were

fantasy weapons. There was no blood shown in the six episodes viewed.

The consequences viewed in the episodes were: 18 incidents with no consequences, 9 fantasy consequences, 1 code 1 consequences, 34 code 2 consequences, and 2 other consequences. The category with the most entries was code 2 consequences (58%); over half of which were the variable 'victim falls'. Similar to The Flintstones, the category with the least entries was code 1 consequences with the only entry being a mark, welt, or bruise.

The violent acts coded for The Simpsons were: 37 code 1 acts, 37 code 2 acts, 13 accidents, and 7 other violent acts. Code 1 and code 2 consequences each comprised 44% of the violent acts present in the episodes. There were 24 weapons used in the episodes viewed; 15 were real weapons, 9 other weapons, and 1 fantasy weapon was used. There was blood present in 3 of the violent acts. Two of these incidents involved a small amount of blood and one showed a medium amount of blood.

The consequences present in the episodes were: 31 incidents with no consequences, 2 fantasy consequences, 8 code 1 consequences, 52 code 2 consequences, and 5 other consequences. The consequences most often seen were code 2

consequences (61%). Of these consequences, 20 were coded as 'victim expresses pain, but no physical symptoms'. The category with the least entries was fantasy consequences which had only 2 entries.

Family Guy had the most violent acts out of all of the series. There were: 42 code 1 acts, 29 code 2 acts, 19 accidents, and 17 other violent acts. Code 1 acts comprised 43% of all violent acts shown. Of the code 1 acts the most common was punching, and striking with objects. There were 28 weapons used in the episodes viewed; 16 were real weapons, 1 was a fantasy weapon, and 11 were classified as other. There were 8 scenes involving blood; 2 with a small amount, 3 with a medium amount, and 3 with a large amount of blood.

Consequences in the series were as follows: 33 incidents involving no consequences, no fantasy consequences, 28 code 1 consequences, 40 code 2 consequences, and 4 other consequences. The largest category was code 2 incidents (41%), with the most common consequence being 'victim falls'. The consequence seen least in this series was fantasy consequence with no entries. Although a body count was not considered when this study was created, Family Guy made it necessary to at

least comment on it. In the six episodes viewed, there were fourteen scenes that showed either dead characters, implied death of characters, or showed the characters being killed.

Context of Violence

The last research question was posed to determine how the context of violence in older cartoons compares with modern cartoons. In order to determine how the context of violence has changed in cartoons the variables analyzed will be the status of the perpetrator, motive of the perpetrator, and whether the violence was rewarded or punished.

The first variable looked at for context is the status of the offenders. Categories analyzed for the perpetrator are broken into various categories; primary characters, secondary characters, and other characters. Primary characters are the main characters of each series; this usually consists of the household members of each family. It can also include pets if they play a major role in the series, such as Brian in Family Guy. In The Flintstones Betty and Barney Rubble are primary characters as well since they appear in all episodes and play a large role in the series. Secondary characters are reoccurring

characters that are usually known by name. Examples of this include neighbors, coworkers, and friends of the primary characters. The category of 'other' encompasses all other characters in each series. This includes non-reoccurring unnamed characters, multiple characters, and situations where there is no specific perpetrator. The following graph will display the status of the characters committing the violent acts in each television show.

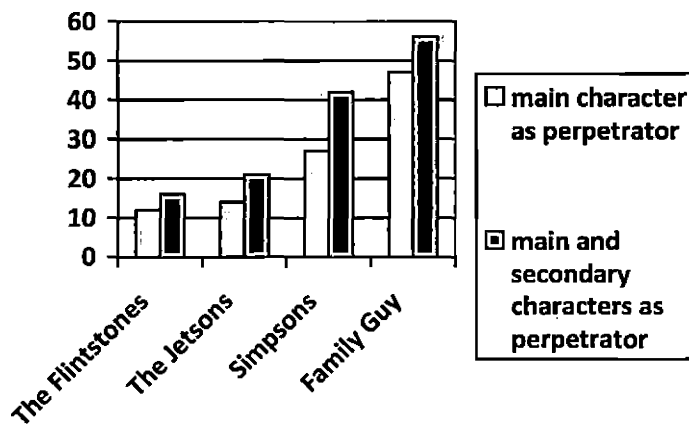


Figure 6. Status of Perpetrator

The motive of the perpetrator is the second variable analyzed for context. The categories analyzed for motive are broken down into: no motive, accident, code 1 motive,

code 2 motive, and other motive. No motive is coded when the perpetrator acts for no apparent reason, and there is nothing leading up to the violence. Accident was coded when there was no motive and the violent act was portrayed as an accident. Code 1 motives are coded when the perpetrator is acting for negative reasons. Some of examples of code 1 motives include acting out of anger, for retaliation, and out of greed. Code 2 acts are more admirable; these motives occur when the perpetrator acts to justly punish another, to defend them self, or to defend another. Other motives are coded when the perpetrator is following directions or when there is motive that does not fit into other categories.

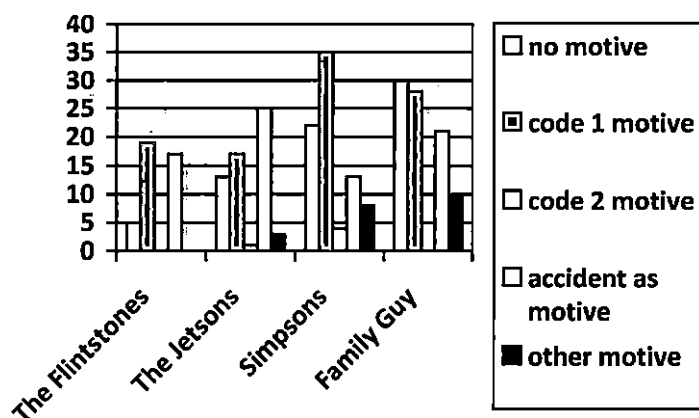


Figure 7. Motive of Perpetrator

The last variable looked at for context is whether the perpetrator was rewarded or punished for their violence. This variable was split into three categories; violence not acknowledged (neither rewarded nor punished), violence rewarded, and violence punished. The first category is exactly as it sounds, the violent act was either ignored completely or no rewards or punishments were present. The category of violence rewarded was coded when other characters reacted positively to the violent act. This includes verbally, physically, with a look or gesture, with laughter, or with gifts or money. Likewise, violence punished is coded when the perpetrator was punished verbally, physically, with looks or gestures, with the loss of something, or punished by the system. The rewards and punishments received by the offender can be seen in Figure 8.

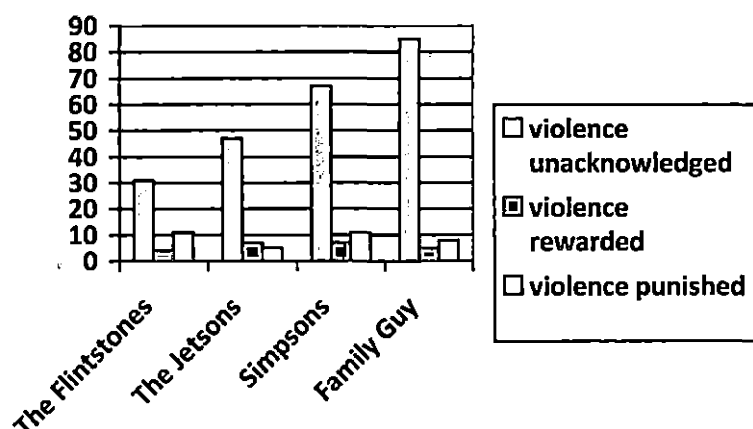


Figure 8. Rewards and Punishments

Viewing The Flintstones for context revealed that 12 of the 45 violent acts were perpetrated by the main characters and the number jumps up 18 when secondary characters were included. This means that 40% of the violent acts present in the series were perpetrated by main and secondary characters. When motives were looked at there were 5 no motive, 19 code 1, 0 code 2, 17 accidents, and 0 other. The category seen most often was code 1 (42%), with the most prevalent motive being 'perpetrator acted out of anger'. When rewards and punished were looked at there were 31 acts not acknowledged, 4 acts rewarded,

and 10 acts punished. The most common entry was violence not acknowledged (69%).

In The Jetsons series 19 of the 59 violent acts were perpetrated by the main and secondary characters (32.3%). Viewing the motives showed there were 13 violent acts with no motive, 16 code 1 motives, 1 code 2 motive, 25 accidents, and 3 other motives. Accidents were seen most often in this series, accounting for (42%) of all motives. In 50 out of the 59 acts, violence was not acknowledged, 4 acts were rewarded, and 5 acts were punished. Of all the violent acts committed, 85% went unacknowledged.

In The Simpsons 48% of violent acts were committed by the main and secondary characters. When motives were examined there were 22 no motive, 35 code 1, 4 code 2, 13 accidents, and 8 other. The category seen most often was code 1 motive (41%), with the most cited motive being 'perpetrator acted out of anger'. When rewards and punished were considered there were 67 acts not acknowledged, 7 acts rewarded, and 11 acts punished. The most common entry was violence not acknowledged (79%).

Family Guy had the most violent acts committed by main characters with 47% and the number went up to 56% when secondary characters were added. There were 30 acts with

no motive, 32 code 1 acts, 5 code 2 acts, 21 accidents, and 4 other. The category cited most often was code 1 motive (33%), with the most common motive being 'perpetrator acted out of anger'. Eighty-five of the acts were neither rewarded nor punished, 5 of the acts were rewarded, and 8 were punished. The most common entry in this series was unacknowledged violence (87%).

Discussion of Findings

The T-Test as well as the ANOVA revealed many significant findings. For a list of all significant findings and key figures found in the T-test and ANOVA see Appendices C and D. The amount of violence is the most tested variable in discussions concerning cartoon violence. Unsurprisingly, the amount of violence in the modern cartoons has increased a significant amount. There were a total of 104 violent acts in the two old cartoons and a total of 183 violent acts in the two current cartoons which is a 76% increase in violence.

The T-test revealed that the old cartoons had an average of 8.67 violent acts per episode compared to the modern cartoons which had an average of 15.25 acts per episode and the significance level(sig) was .077. The

ANOVA showed an overall sig of .003 between the older and newer cartoons and an F of 6.359. When The Flintstones were compared to the other series there was a sig of .097 for The Simpsons, and a sig of .026 for Family Guy.

Cartoons of past and present both use violence to elicit humor; modern cartoons just use it more excessively than in the past. Older cartoons proved that violence was an effective way to gain an audience. Modern cartoons have taken the same formula and just increased the amount of violence and gore.

The type of violence present in cartoons is perhaps the most shocking contrast between old and modern cartoons. In order to amuse audiences and gain laughter a character used to fall or sustain minor injuries due to accidents. Modern cartoons have not abandoned this formula but have taken it to the next level. The degree of violence has evolved and the violent acts have become much more severe.

While many studies report the amount of violence, there is often no differentiation between the acts of violence. There should be a distinction made between a character bullying someone and a character shooting someone, so this study separated the violent acts into accidents, code 1 (more violent acts), code 2 (less violent

acts), and other violent acts. Thirty five percent of all of violent acts in the older cartoons were accidents while accidents only accounted for 17% of the violent acts in the modern cartoons. Twenty two percent of the violent acts in the older cartoons were code 1 acts; that number was nearly doubled for the modern cartoons (43%). Forty percent of the violent acts in older cartoons were code 2 while code 2 acts accounted for 36% of violent acts in modern cartoons. Other violent acts accounted for 6% of older cartoons and 13% of modern cartoons.

It was evident from watching each series that the type of violence has changed drastically. In an episode of The Flintstones Dino is excited to see Fred and rushes the door, crashes through it and squishes Fred. In an episode of The Jetsons, Elroy turns off his anti-gravity belt and falls to the ground. These types of incidents are prevalent throughout the series and account for a large portion of the violent acts in older cartoons. Using this type of violence for humor is typical of aged cartoons.

Modern cartoons employ a lot of the same violent formulas as older cartoons including accidents, characters falling, and the smashing of items. In addition to the traditional violent acts of the past, modern cartoons use

realistic acts such as shooting, assaulting, and even dismemberment. In an episode of The Simpsons Lisa pushes and then chokes a girl in an attempt to get a doll. In an episode of Family Guy Peter attempts to shave a cat and accidentally slices it, blood spurts out, and he keeps going until he is told to stop and cat dies, limbs are also shown being cut off. These types of violent acts are not rare to find in modern cartoons.

The only variable of violence that proved significant in the T-test was other violence (sig.027). The older cartoons had a mean score of .58 other violent acts per episode while the modern cartoons had a mean score of 2 other violent acts per episode. It is also important to note that while the category of accidents did not show significant findings it was the only violent category in which the old cartoons saw more entries than the current cartoons.

The Anova revealed a sig of .002 and an F of 6.932 in the category of code 1 violent acts, and a sig of .006 and an F of 5.650 in the category of other violence. When The Flintstones was analyzed for code 1 acts the sig was .003 compared to The Simpsons and when The Jetsons was looked at for the same variable a sig of .067 was found compared to

The Simpsons. In the category of other violence a significant difference was revealed for Family Guy compared to The Flintstones (.050).

When testing the variable 'weapon' the two older cartoons had 17 weapons present, representing 16% of all violent acts. The modern cartoons had a total of 52 weapons, so 28% of all the violent acts involved a weapon. There were few weapons in the older cartoons, weapons were shown and used more casually in the modern cartoons. This is important since the presence of a weapon often indicates that an act is more extreme than an act without a weapon.

The T-test only detected a significant difference in the presence of weapons between older cartoons and modern cartoons in the category 'other weapon' (sig of .000). The older cartoons had a mean of .08 other weapons per episode while the newer cartoons reported a mean score of 1.67. The ANOVA revealed a significant difference in the categories 'total weapons' (sig of .008 and F of 5.285) and 'other weapons' (sig of .004 and F of 6.003). Specifically when compared to Family Guy, The Flintstones had a sig of .063 for total weapons. The Jetsons saw a sig of .033 for total weapons compared to Family Guy, and .099 for other weapons when compared to The Simpsons.

The variable 'blood' was also used to test the type of violence present. The two older cartoons showed no blood at all, while the modern cartoons had 11 scenes where blood was shown. This variable was used to show how the graphicness of cartoons has changed. Although there were not many scenes where blood was shown some of the scenes contained excessive amounts of blood.

Both the T-test and ANOVA reveal a significant difference in all categories for the amount of blood in older versus newer cartoons. The T-Test revealed a sig of .000 for the old cartoons in all categories of blood. The mean scores for the modern cartoons were: total blood(.92), small amount(.33), medium amount(.33), and large amount(.25). The ANOVA revealed Family Guy had the most entries for blood in each category with a sig of .000 and an F of 9.828. The significance levels compared to the other series for total blood are .060 for both The Flintstones and The Jetsons.

In the older cartoons there was no blood present in any scenes, the modern cartoons had minimal blood but the scenes involving blood were quite gory. An episode of The Simpsons shows a scene where Itchy breaks a bottle and stabs Scratchy who falls to ground presumably dead, Itchy

then steals his TV and runs off. A scene with even more blood was portrayed in an episode of Family Guy where Lois goes on a rampage; punching and kicking Stewie, putting his head through glass, and breaking his back over her leg, as he bleeds and shards of glass protrude from his face.

Consequences are vital in determining how cartoon violence is perceived. Often viewers determine how violent an incident is not only by the violent act but also by the consequences that the victim suffers. Since there is a huge discrepancy between consequences a victim can suffer, this study separated the consequences into the following categories; no consequences, code 1 consequences which are more severe, code 2 consequences which are less severe, fantasy consequences, and other consequences.

The older cartoons experienced no consequences in 38% of violent incidents compared to 35% in modern cartoons. Older cartoons had a much higher rate of fantasy consequences with 12% compared to modern cartoons which had 1%. The T-test exposed a sig of .034 in this category; the older cartoons had a mean score of 1.08 while the modern cartoons scored .17 for fantasy consequences. The largest discrepancy in consequences between the older and modern cartoons was code 1 consequences. The older cartoons only

experienced 3% of violent incidents which resulted in code 1 consequences while code 1 consequences accounted for 20% of modern cartoons. The T-test identified a significance of .006 in this category; the old cartoons had a mean score of .25 while the modern cartoon's mean score was 3. The Anova further revealed that many of the series had significant differences in code 1 consequences (sig of .000 and F of 9.580) as well as code 2 consequences (sig of .000 and F of 5.289). When code 1 consequences were compared for The Jetsons versus Family Guy a sig of .089 was shown. For code 2 consequence The Simpsons had a sig of .019 compared to The Flintstones and a sig of .095 compared to The Jetsons.

The consequence cited most often for both older (48%) and modern (50%) cartoons was code 2 consequences. The T-Test showed a significance level of .072 in this category; the older cartoons had a mean score of 3 while the newer cartoons had a mean score of 7.75. Older cartoons had 6% of other consequences and modern cartoons had 5% of other consequences. The T-test revealed a significance of .047 for this variable with old cartoons receiving a mean score of .50 and modern cartoons a mean score of .75.

The consequences of violence have increased in modern cartoons. When there were consequences in the older cartoons they were minimal such as a character falling, expressing minor pain, or getting stars over their head. The consequences in modern cartoons were much more severe. Unlike the older cartoons, characters in modern cartoons could be seen suffering from cuts, twisted and missing limbs, electrocution, and even death. In an episode of Family Guy Stewie is driving around with his friends in the car and Mother Teresa overdoses, when his friends ask what they should do Stewie's response is "Push the bitch out"; she is subsequently pushed out of the car and presumably dies.

Showing gory and excessive consequences could be viewed as both positive and negative. Showing consequences for violent behavior could serve to deter kids from performing the violent acts. Old cartoons might show a man getting hit on the head and stars would appear over his head while modern cartoons showing the same scenario might show the man bleeding or even dying. A child watching the old cartoon would likely laugh at the scene, however if they watched the modern cartoon they might be more affected by it. This could however have the opposite effect and

desensitize the child, causing confusion about serious consequences and death.

It was important to look at whether the main and secondary characters were committing violent acts since the viewers relate more closely to them than they would a random character. The analysis revealed that 36% of violent acts in older cartoons were committed by main and secondary characters while the percentage for modern cartoons was 52%. Both numbers were fairly high but the modern cartoons showed an increase in violence perpetrated by main characters. Although the characters in the series that were coded were not marketed as superheroes or role models they will still likely have an influence on those who watch them.

The T-Test revealed no significant difference between the older and newer series with relation to which characters were perpetrating the violent acts. The ANOVA however revealed a significant difference between aged and modern cartoons when looking at violence perpetrated by the main and secondary characters. When this category was looked at for Family Guy and the other series the results revealed sig of .001 for The Flintstones and .020 for The Jetsons. The Simpsons compared to The Flintstones had a

sig of .039. The ANOVA also showed a significant difference in violence perpetrated by main characters in Family Guy compared to The Flintstones(.002) and The Jetsons(.027).

The motive of a perpetrator can help the viewer decide whether a violent act was justified or unwarranted. This study split motives into categories of no motive, accident, code 1 motive (negative), code 2 motive (more admirable), and other. In 17% of the older cartoons there was no motive present, while 28% of the modern cartoons showed no motive. Code 1 motives accounted for 34% of the motives in older cartoons and 65% in modern cartoons. In older cartoons 1% of the motives were code 2 and in modern cartoons the number was 5%. Accidents accounted for 40% of the motives in older cartoons and 19% in modern cartoons. The category of 'other' represented 3% of older cartoons and 7% of modern cartoons.

The T-test saw a .008 significance for code 2 motives and a .006 significance for other motives. The older cartoons had a mean score of .08 for code 2 motives and the modern cartoons scored a .75 in this category. The older cartoons scored .25 for other motives while the newer cartoons had 1.5 other motives per episode. The ANOVA also

revealed a significant difference in no motive (sig of .024 and an F of 3.883), code 2 motives (sig of .027 and an F of 3.778), and other motives (sig of .025 and an F of 3.838). For no motive The Flintstones had a sig of .087 compared to The Simpsons. For code 1 motives and other motive the Tamhane didn't reveal further significance between the series.

As cartoons have evolved so have the motives and intentions of the characters. The most common motive in the past was accidents; the perpetrator did not intend to harm anyone, the act was the result of an accident. In modern cartoons the most common motives were code 1 motives. These perpetrators were acting for negative reasons such as anger, greed, or to elicit laughter. In an episode of Family Guy, Bill Gates gets mad and punches Peter in the face, and later in the episode he begins smashing mailboxes in order to amuse his friends. In modern cartoons there are more violent acts perpetrated for negative reasons.

It is also important to examine how characters are being punished for their misdeeds. Whether a person is punished or rewarded for violence could determine whether a viewer deems that act worth repeating. Just as punishment

could serve to deter others from repeating bad behavior, rewards could encourage the behavior. When punishment was looked at the results were overwhelmingly skewed towards 'violence not acknowledged/neither rewarded nor punished' in both the older cartoons(78%) as well as the modern cartoons(83%). Violence acts were punished in 14% of the older cartoons and in only 10% of the modern cartoons. Violence was rarely rewarded; the older cartoons showed 8% while the modern cartoons showed 7%. The T-Test showed no significant difference in rewards or punishments between the older and newer series. The ANOVA revealed a difference in the category 'violence unacknowledged' (sig of .004 and F of 6.037. The significance lied between The Flintstones and the modern cartoons; The Simpsons(sig of .072) and Family Guy(sig of .020). It is encouraging to see that violence is rarely rewarded, but conversely discouraging to see that the vast majority of violent acts also went unpunished.

This study showed that the overwhelming response to violence in both sets of cartoons was to ignore the violence and neither reward nor punish it. The few instances of perpetrators being rewarded was often the result of other characters laughing at their violent acts.

When violence was punished it was most often not by the system but simply by another character scolding or yelling at them. Overall, the message being relayed by cartoons is that if a character commits a violent act it will most often go unpunished.

Based on the findings of this research it can be concluded that modern cartoons are more violent than older cartoons. The amount of violence has increased, the type of violence has gotten more harsh and gruesome, and the context of violence has changed for the worse. Cartoons have grown up and they have graduated from entertaining children to entertaining viewers of all ages. With this comes more adult content which includes an increase in violence.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study was conducted in order to continue current discussions on the topic of violence in cartoons. Its aim was to help develop an understanding of cartoon violence in this generation. Four cartoons were examined in order to determine the extent of violence, type of violence, and the context of violence in both dated and modern cartoons.

A content analysis of 'The Flintstones', 'The Jetsons', 'The Simpsons' and 'Family Guy' was performed. These shows were chosen based on their likeness in popularity, classification as family programming, and the influence they have had on American culture. Six episodes of each series were viewed and coded in order to gain a better understanding of how violence in older cartoons compared to violence in modern cartoons.

The results of this study were analyzed to better answer the three research questions that were present in the study. The research questions were developed to determine how the amount, type, and context of violence in older cartoons compares with modern cartoons.

As expected the modern cartoons had more violent acts, they exhibited more gruesome violence than in the past, and the context of violence has shifted to conform to a more violent culture. Additionally, new issues presented themselves that should be looked at to further understand modern cartoons. These issues included sex, coarse language, sexism, racism, homosexuality, and religiosity.

Conclusions

This study set out to compare the violence present in older cartoons with modern cartoons; but there is hardly a comparison. As expected, Family Guy and The Simpsons proved to be significantly worse than The Flintstones and The Jetsons. The negative results for the modern cartoons were shown across the board; there were more instances of violence, the types of acts portrayed were more severe, there were more weapons and blood, the consequences were far more brutal, the main and secondary characters were more likely to be the perpetrators, the incidence of negative motive were more prevalent, and while the older cartoons experienced a 1% percent lead in rewarding violent

acts, the newer cartoons had more instances of the perpetrators actions gaining no acknowledgment at all.

Recommendations

The aim of this study was to compare the violence present in cartoons of the past and present. This study did not intend to condemn the cartoons analyzed or any other modern cartoons. However, it is revealing to see how cartoons have changed over the last several decades. It is evident that cartoons are filled with violence along with new issues not seen in the past.

Cartoons are not alone in their shift towards increased violence. The increase in violence can be seen in all forms of media including non-animated television series, movies, music, video games, books, magazines, and the internet. Cartoons are merely keeping up with society in terms of violence.

There are several options for those who wish to shield themselves or their children from shows such as Family Guy and The Simpsons. The simplest solution is to avoid shows that are deemed inappropriate. These shows can be blocked or parents can monitor their children's viewing habits. For those who wish to take a more proactive response to

violence, there are many websites available online that allow parents a better understanding of what television shows are appropriate for various age ranges. There are even avenues for parents wishing to lodge complaints about the content of television shows.

It is also important for parents to monitor the shows their children are watching and create dialogue about them if necessary. Regardless of how hard parents try to protect their children, at some point they will be exposed to the violence that is present in today's world. Parents should at least attempt to be aware of what their kids are watching. It is also imperative that parents create a framework for their children so they know right from wrong and fantasy from reality.

Regardless of the excessive violence that has been indicated in these shows, they are gaining huge audiences. Although modern cartoons may be increasingly violent they have found a way to amuse viewers of all ages. The violence is unlikely to decrease in coming years, as is the appeal of cartoon families. The shows discussed are considered family programming, and although the modern cartoons are more appropriate for adults they still appeal and are viewed by children. Violent cartoons will likely

be around for generations to come and it is nearly impossible to prevent children from exposure to these shows. The responsibility lies with the parents to talk with their kids about violence and monitor their television viewing if they feel it is necessary.

Future Research

Traditionally the subject of violence has dominated arguments concerned with what children are viewing on television. As times have changed so has the subject matter of cartoons. Cartoons are still rife with violence, but while examining cartoons for their violent content a myriad of other issues also surfaced. These new topics include: sex, language, sexism, racism, and homosexuality. While these issues were not coded for this study they are worth looking at in a future study. Some of these topics have been addressed in research concerned with television viewing in general, but cartoons have managed to escape any major scrutiny on these topics.

One of the most prominent features of modern cartoons is the presence of sex. In the 1960's 'The Flintstones' choice to show Fred and Wilma sharing a bed was considered risqué. While watching The Flintstones and The Jetsons it

was apparent that sex played a very minor role in each series. The only sexual content viewed was the exchange of a few kisses and robots that were curvy and sexy. Now sex is used to elicit laughter and there are no limits as to what sexual scenarios are used.

Family Guy is perhaps most infamous for its unforgiving portrayal of sex in the series. In one of the viewed episodes of Family Guy there is not only overt sex shown but also many references; Peter's friend Quagmire is at Meg's seventeenth birthday party and asks her friends "so which one of you wants to lose your virginity?" In the same episode Brian can be seen grabbing Lois's breast. This type of sexual depiction and talk is not uncommon in the series. In fact it is hard to find an episode that does not utilize sex in some form. The sexual scenarios are endless including scenes of incest, masturbation, bestiality, pedophilia, rape, and necrophilia.

Parentstv.org condemns Family Guy for its use of violence, explicit language, nudity, sexual content, and its criticism of the family and church. While all of these factors are present in the series, the main criticism is of the sexual content. There is even a link that allows the reader to file a complaint with the FCC for Fox's

toleration of the shows foul content. Parentstv.org asks the readers "Should a Sunday night cartoon show YOUR children bestiality, gay orgies and babies eating sperm? Fox thinks so" (Parentstv.org, 2009).

The Simpsons used to face a lot of criticism for using sex in the series, but now that cartoons like Family Guy have surfaced it is considered tame in comparison. The sexual content in The Simpsons was not as overt as Family Guy, there were merely scenes with mild nudity and several subtle jokes. The fact that The Simpsons is now considered tame shows how this issue has progressed in a short period of time.

The language being used in cartoons was another issue that presented itself during this study. The older series contained such offensive language as 'fatso', 'knothead', and 'tubby aluminum head'. The Simpsons ups the ante by calling characters 'idiots', 'stupid', and 'jerkass'. Family Guy is in its own category when it comes to language. It should be noted that when Family Guy is aired on the Fox Network it is censored but still vulgar, the series gets a little more leeway on Cartoon Network, and on the DVD's there is no censorship. The language that can be heard on television includes 'bitch', 'bastard', 'whore',

'queer', and 'dumbass'. If a one year old cartoon character is spouting out these phrases it is worth looking at in a future study.

Sexism is one of the issues that appeared in both older and current cartoons. In an episode of The Flintstones Fred commented that they brought their wives to do all of the housework. Likewise, the Jetson's opening sequence shows Jane taking money out of George's wallet. Throughout the series women are often seen as submissive, sexy, and forgiving as long as there is money or gifts involved.

Sexism still plays a role in modern cartoons, but women are also shown in more positive roles than the past. In The Simpsons Homer can be heard referring to Marge as 'the bringer of beer', but at the same time he is portrayed as a lazy, incompetent oaf. Although Lisa Simpson is only ten years old she plays the role of a strong, smart, independent woman who speaks her mind and stands up for various causes. Family Guy objectifies women throughout the series and various sexist comments can be heard in almost every episode. Similar to The Simpsons however, Peter is portrayed as an idiot and Lois is often shown as the smart parent who is really in control.

Racism is not often associated with cartoons, in fact it is still very taboo in many non-animated series. Racism did not appear in the older series, however there was very little diversity shown in these cartoons. Racism was not viewed in the episodes of The Simpsons, but racism was a common feature in Family Guy. The jokes range from subtle; a black man in the theater standing up saying "Excuse me I have to go do some black guy stuff". They get more offensive such as a portrayal of Michael Eisner saying "We're ethnically cleansing the small world ride". In the six episodes watched for this study racist comments were observed concerning Blacks, Asians, Hispanics, Irish, and Native Americans.

Homosexuality is another issue that was not prevalent in past cartoons but has surfaced in modern cartoons. No comments on homosexuality, positive or negative, were viewed in the older cartoons. Two references were viewed on The Simpsons neither was particularly positive or negative. Family Guy references homosexuality both positively and negative. There are many jokes that could be considered offensive, but at the same time Stewie Griffin is portrayed as ambiguous about his sexuality. There are also many gay secondary characters in the series.

Although violence has been the star of most studies on cartoons, these new issues are worth looking at as well. Sex, coarse language, sexism, racism, and homosexuality are topics that merit new research for the same reasons violence in cartoons has gained so much attention. As children see cartoon characters grappling with these topics, they are more likely to start asking questions and imitating behavior.

APPENDIX A
CODEBOOK

CODE	VARIABLE	COMMENTS
	Perpetrator / Victim	
	Flintstones Characters	
	Fred	main character (mc) father
	Wilma	mc-wife
	Pebbles	mc-daughter
	Barney	mc-neighbor
	Betty	mc-neighbor
	Bam Bam	mc-neighbor's son
	Flintstones Secondary Character	any reoccurring character, usually known by name
	Flintstones Random Character	non reoccurring characters usually not known by name
	Multiple characters/mob	any group of characters
	No specific	when there is no vic/perp, or vic/perp is unknown
	Flintstones other	DESCRIBE
	Jetsons Characters	
	George	mc-father
	Jane	mc-wife
	Judy	mc-daughter
	Elroy	mc-son
	Rosie	mc-maid
	Astro	mc-pet
	Jetsons Secondary Character	any reoccurring character, usually known by name
	Jetsons Random Character	non reoccurring characters usually not known by name
	Multiple characters/mob	any group of characters
	No specific	when there is no vic/perp, or vic/perp is unknown
	Jetsons other	DESCRIBE
	Simpsons Characters	
	Homer	mc-father
	Marge	mc-wife
	Lisa	mc-daughter
	Bart	mc-son
	Maggie	mc-daughter

	Simpsons Secondary Character	any reoccurring character, usually known by name
	Simpsons Random Character	non reoccurring characters usually not known by name
	Multiple characters/mob	any group of characters
	No specific	when there is no vic/perp, or vic/perp is unknown
	Simpsons other	DESCRIBE
	Family Guy Characters	
	Peter	mc-father
	Lois	mc-wife
	Chris	mc-son
	Meg	mc-daughter
	Stewie	mc-son
	Brian	mc-pet
	Family Guy Secondary Character	any reoccurring character, usually known by name
	Family Guy Random Character	non reoccurring characters usually not known by name
	Multiple characters/mob	any group of characters
	No specific	when there is no vic/perp, or vic/perp is unknown
	Family Guy other	DESCRIBE
	AMOUNT: SINGLE/MULTIPLE	
	single act of violence	includes, one hit, shot, stab, etc
	multiple acts of violence	scuffle/fight with more than one act of violence, perp, or victim. These should be coded according to the perp, and all factors should be coded .
	MOTIVES	
1	No apparent motive	
1	Perp acted out of anger	Perp was upset
1	Perp acted out of revenge/retaliation	Perp acted because they felt wronged by victim
2	Perp acted in self defense	Perp acted to defend themselves
2	Perp acted to defend another	Perp acted to defend another
1	Perp acted for humor	Perp used violence to get a humorous response
	Perp was following directions	Perp acted on instructions of another
	Accident	The violence was a result of an accident
2	Perp acted to justly punish another	Includes death penalty, spanking, etc

	Other motive	DESCRIBE
	WEAPONS USED	
	no weapon used	
	gun	any gun; handgun, rifle, oozie, etc
	knife	any knife; kitchen knife, pocket knife, sword, etc
	blunt object	any object used to hit; club, bat, 2x4
	fantasy weapon	lasers, ray guns, etc
	weapon used to stab other than knife	can include; shank, piece of glass, etc
	rope	rope used as weapon; to hang, tie up, etc
	bomb, dynamite	any bomb, tnt, dynamite, etc
	BLOOD	
	no blood	
	small amount of blood	this includes blood seen on cuts, or small blood drips
	medium amount of blood	small pool of blood,
	large amount of blood	blood gushing, large pools of blood,
	ACTS OF VIOLENCE	entry according to each perp
1	punching (closed fist)	hitting with closed fist
1	slapping (open hand)	hitting with open hand
1	kicking	
1	pushing	
1	wrestling	scuffles, fighting and tussling
1	stomping	
1	biting	
1	shooting	
1	stabbing/cutting	
1	hiting/striking w/ objects	striking with objects other than hands/fists
1	blowing up	
1	setting on fire	
1	choking	
1	sexual assault	any form of unwanted sexual scenarios; sex, fondeling,etc
1	throwing objects	
2	attempted violence	characters intends to act but is unsuccessful
2	implied violence	act was not shown, but results were shown

2	threats/bullying	any valid threat of violence
2	put downs	any name calling (eg; 'you're stupid', 'slut', 'bitch', 'retard', etc)
2	violent outbursts	lashing out with aggressive speech
	accident	consequences result from an unintentional accident
2	scratching	
2	tying up/ restraining	
2	crashing	crashing vehicles, or crashing into people
	violence other	DESCRIBE
	consequences of violence	
	no consequence	victim expresses and shows no sign of pain
	fantasy expression of pain/ consequences	includes; birds and stars over head, victim flying up in air,etc
1	bullet wound	
1	mark, welt or bruise	
1	cut	
1	twisted limbs	
1	missing limbs	
1	broken bones	
1	death/implied death	
1	electrocution	
2	victim vomits	
2	victim falls	
2	victim cries	
2	damaged property	
2	victim expresses pain, but no physical symptoms	screams, says ouch, grabs afflicted spot, etc
2	implied consequences	consequences aren't shown but implied

APPENDIX B

RESULTS FOR ALL VARIABLES

series	The Flintstones	The Jetsons	Simpsons	Family Guy
amount	45	59	85	98
total weapons	9	8	24	28
real weapons	8	6	14	16
fantasy weapons	0	2	1	1
other weapons	1	0	9	11
total blood	0	0	3	8
small	0	0	2	2
medium	0	0	1	3
large	0	0	0	3
accidents	14	22	13	19
code 1	9	14	37	42
code2	22	19	38	29
other violence	1	6	7	17
no consequence	22	19	30	33
fantasy consequence	3	10	2	0
code 1	2	1	8	28
code2	13	23	52	41
consequence other	4	2	5	4
main perp	12	14	27	47
main and secondary perp	16	21	42	56
no motive	5	13	22	30
code 1	19	17	35	28
code2	0	1	4	5
accidents	17	25	13	21
motive other	0	3	8	10
unacknowledged	31	47	67	85
rewarded	4	7	7	5
punished	11	5	11	8

APPENDIX C
T-TEST RESULTS

variable	means	f	Sig	t	sig(2 tailed)
amount	old-8.67 new-15.25	3.45	0.077	-4.133	0.001
other weapon	old-.08 new-1.67	17.866	0	-4.338	0.001
total blood	old-.00 new-.92	20.243	0	-4.005	0.002
small blood	old-.00 new-.33	19.8	0	-1.773	0.104
medium blood	old-.00 new-.33	88	0	-2.354	0.039
large blood	old-.00 new-.25	33	0	-1.195	0.082
other violence	old-.58 new-2.00	5.61	0.027	-2.769	0.017
fantasy consequence	old-1.08 new-.17	5.13	0.034	1.791	0.098
code 1 consequence	old-.25 new-3.00	9.039	0.006	-3.363	0.006
code 2 consequence	old-3.00 new-7.75	3.566	0.072	-3.746	0.002
other consequence	old-.50 new-.75	4.435	0.047	-0.314	0.763
code 2 motive	old-.08 new-.75	8.436	0.008	-3.37	0.004
other motive	old-.25 new-1.50	9.27	0.006	-3.273	0.006

APPENDIX D
ANOVA RESULTS

variable	f	sig	series 1 compared to others	series 2 compared to others	series 3 compared to others	series 4 compared to others
amount	6.359	0.003	3).008 4).001	4).009	1).008	1).001 2).009
total weapons	5.285	0.008	3).027 4).007	3).020 4).005	1).027 2).020	1).007 2).005
other weapon	6.003	0.004	3).022 4).005	3).011 4).003	1).022 2).011	1).005 3).003
medium blood			4).020	4).020		1).020 2).020
total blood	9.828	0	4).000	4).000	4).008	1).000 2).000 3).008
large blood	5	0.01	4).005	4).005	4).005	1).005 2).005 3).005
code 1 violence			3).005 4).001	3).017 4).005	1).005 3).017	1).001 2).005
other violence	5.65	0.006	4).012	4).012	4).021	1).001 2).012 3).021
fantasy consequences				4).029		2).029
code 1 consequence	9.58	0	4).000	4).000	4).002	1).000 2).000 3).002
code 2 consequence	5.289	0.008	3).002 4).017	3).014	1).002 2).014	1).017
no motive	3.883	0.024	3).041 4).004	4).041	1).041	1).004 2).041
code 2 motive	3.778	0.027	3).032 4).009	4).032	1).032	1).009 2).032
other motive	3.838	0.025	3).025 4).007	4).047	1).025	1).007 2).047
violence unacknowledged	6.037	0.004	3).015 4).001	4).011	1).015	1).001 2).011
main perp	8.503	0.001	4).000	4).000	4).019	1).000 2).000 3).019

main and secondary perp	10.892	0	3).004 4).000	3).016 4).000	1).004 2).016	1).000 2).000
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