A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF VIOLENCE IN MUSIC VIDEOS

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This content analysis study of music videos answered questions concerning the amount and severity of violence content during different time periods of the day. A system of classifying violence content as nonviolent, mostly light, neither light nor serious, mostly serious, and extremely serious was used to evaluate music videos from MTV. One hour from each day was randomly selected for evaluation for a period of thirty days. During this time, there were 313 occurrences of music videos which were aired and subsequently evaluated. The results indicated the majority of these music videos contained mostly light or no violence content. This study also revealed that the most likely time of day a viewer would see videos with violence would be from midnight until eight in the morning.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background

Within the past decade, television audiences have been witnessing the birth of a new form of video entertainment. Music videos have emerged and have so saturated the media that they can be found on cable, network, and local stations.

The cable MTV channel began in August, 1981, and as of July 2, 1985, was seen by 26.2 million subscribers (9). Yet it is difficult to say exactly when the first music video was produced. As early as the 1930s viewers showed a preference for music and sound to accompany films. Many theatres had sound systems by 1936 and the most popular type of films were those containing vaudeville acts (6, p. 247). By 1940, "Talk-A-Vision" machines were available. These allowed a person to view a short musical movie for a nominal price (6, p. 391). Twenty years ago a musical group would appear on a television show for the purpose of exposure, yet today that same appearance may be included on a music video television show as part of the "classics" portion of the show. Suffice it to say these types of shows provide a form of publicity and exposure which led many music entertainers to make music videos. However, the

first such videos were rather simplistic as they did little more than spotlight the actual musical act.

But as video technology developed, so did the creativity in music videos. Special effects were used and a story line was developed to go along with the lyrics of the song. Sometimes, people other than the musicians were used to act out this story line. As this new form of entertainment continued to grow, it demanded a better outlet than what it previously had, and thus came the creation of music video television shows, such as MTV, which is twenty-four hour cable music videos.

Soon it seemed everyone could put a story line to their lyrics or create special effects. As a result, many music videos appeared similiar to each other. To counterattack this similiarity, creative tactics were used to capture viewer attention, one of which was violence.

Looking at any of George Gerbners' <u>Violence Profiles</u> <u>Number 6</u> through <u>Number 11</u> as an indicator of the amount, aspects, and effects of violence on television, it has been relatively stable over the years despite a few minor fluctuations (2, p. 11). These reports began in 1967 to provide a basis for estimating the content of violence on television. By 1976, it was reported "that there has been no siginificant reduction in the overall Violence Index despite some fluctuations in the specific measures and a definite drop in 'family hour' violence..." (2, p. 3). That year the studies

analyzing all programming in prime time, late evening, and weekend network schedules indicated "the percentage of characters involved in violence and killings rose to the second highest point on record" (3, p. 2).

From 1976 through 1979, this trend continued as violence remained in seventy per cent of all programs (4, p. 13). This high percentage may have a subconscious effect on viewers as they continue to watch so much television that it becomes their only source of what is going on in the outside world (4, p. 14). Thus it may be feared "the more time one spends 'living' in the world of television, the more likely one is to report perceptions of social reality which can be traced to (or are congruent with) television's most persistent representations of like and society" (4, p. 14).

So from these indicators, we may safely assume violence in television shows does have some effect on viewers and that the networks are going to continue to use violence in programs. The same may hold true for music videos as well, as violence continues to capture attention.

The Problem

As of yet, little research has been done on the subject of violence in music videos, despite the fact violence may be increasing in this new form of entertainment. From a sample of videos analyzed, more than half of them were categorized as having some violence content (5). This has been documented on more than one occasion by Thomas Radecki of the National Coalition on Television Violence. However, in his reports, he failed to reveal any information on the time of day during which it is more likely for music videos containing violence to be aired. The problem then, consists of determining exactly what time during the day the most violent music videos are aired. This perhaps will serve as a guide to parents, who may be concerned about the violence content of music videos and are reluctant to allow their children to watch.

The Purpose

The purpose of this study is to determine the amount of violence in music videos and to analyze these videos regarding their frequency and severity of violence content. In addition, this study will seek to determine what time of day is the most common for music videos with violence content to be aired.

Recent and Related Research

There have been many articles written about various aspects of music videos as well as many articles written about violence content on network television. However, little research has been done about violence content in music videos. Additionally, no thesis or dissertation has been written dealing with this topic.

A study conducted by the National Coalition on Television Violence examined over 900 videos last year and found 17.9

occurrences of violence each hour. Thomas Radecki, a member of the board of directors of the Coalition and a psychiatrist at the University of Illinois School of Medicine, directed the study and placed the videos into the categories of "Violent Music Videos" or "Music Videos Using Violence with Possible or Probable Educational Impact." Following this classification, the video was labeled with either a "V" for "educational use of violence," a "V*" for "sexually related violence," or "V**" for "sadistic, usually sexually sadistic violence." An example of "V" was Cyndi Lauper for "Girls Just Want to Have Fun," while "Thriller" by Michael Jackson got a "V**" (7).

Another survey of over 200 videos in a six week period indicated over half of them contained violence or strongly suggested the use of violence. Here, the videos were separated into four groups: violent, intermediate (violence), nonviolent, and pro-social (5). Overall, 35 per cent of the videos highlighted sexual violence in one form or another. Radecki believed MTV shouldered most of the blame for this situation as "it has taken a giant step in the direction of transforming music from nonviolent entertainment into an increasingly violent art form" (5).

The <u>Journal of Broadcasting</u> published several articles on the violence seen on television, but only regarding prime time shows. Articles in <u>Journal of Communication</u> and <u>Broad</u>-<u>caster</u> referred to the technological aspects of this growing

industry. Several dissertations limited themselves to music and the possibilities of provoking violence in children, but did not explore the ways children receive the music as their source.

Justification

This study is significant because violence content in music videos is a relatively new topic which has not been fully analyzed. While recent reports indicate the frequency of violence in the musics videos, these same reports fail to tell the time of day these videos will most likely be aired. Music videos are new to the viewer, but they show the possible creative trend of the future. Yet there are those who question the path music videos seem to be taking. Various articles in Parents Magazine point to the possible effects of violence in music videos on young children. One article mentioned a study examining the effect of violence on 758 children and concluded "not only that viewing violence causes aggressive behavior but also that it has a cumulative effect" (8, p. 56). New research, such as that by Aletha Huston-Stein, co-director of the Center for Research on the Influence of Television on Children, "suggests that certain TV production techniques such as loud music and sound effects, visual special effects, rapid changes of scene, and sheer sensory bombardment may contribute heavily to subsequent aggression in children's play" (8, p. 56).

From these reports, it is obvious researchers and parents are concerned about the violence content of music videos. This study was needed to make the viewing public aware of the amount, severity, and airplay time of these music videos containing violence.

Definition of Terms

Violence

Gerbner defined violence as .

the overt expression of physical force (with or without weapon against self or others) compelling action against one's will on pain of being hurt and or killed or threatened to be so victimized as part of the plot. Idle threats, verbal abuse, or gestures without credible violent consequences are not coded as violence. However, "accidental" and "natural" violence (always purposeful dramatic actions that do victimize certain characters) are of course, included. (1, p. A5)

Violent Action

For our purposes, a violent action was considered "a scene of some violence confined to the same agents. Even if the scene is interrupted by a flashback, etc., as long as it continues in 'real time' it is the same act. However, if new agent(s) enter the scene, it becomes another act" (1, p. C1).

Limitations

This study was limited to analyzing only those rock videos on MTV, because MTV offered the widest range of various music videos and was accessible on a twenty-four hour basis. Programs such as <u>Friday Night Videos</u> and <u>Night Flight</u> were not included because many of the same videos are seen on these shows as well as on MTV.

Methodology

In order to study and analyze the violence content of music videos, the Gerbner definition of violence was utilized to decide which music videos contained violence. By watching various hours of MTV, the videos classified as having violence were rated according to the following scale:

0 = cannot code 1 = nonviolent 2 = mostly light, comic, humorous 3 = neither light nor serious 4 = mostly serious (1, p. Cl) 5 = extremely serious

A systematic random sample was incorporated to determine which hours of MTV would be watched. The twenty-four hour day was divided into three parts:

1)	Late night/Early morning	12	a.m.	 8	a.m.
2)	Daytime	8	a.m.	 4	p.m.
3)	Prime time	4	p.m.	 12	a.m.

On the first day, one hour from the first daypart was watched and categorized. On the second day, one hour from the second daypart was watched and categorized, followed by the same procedure for the third day and the third daypart. This rotation continued from one daypart to the next every day for a period of thirty days, resulting in a total of ten hours watched and categorized from each daypart. A random sample was made of the hour during each daypart selected, based on a random number falling between one through eight in accordance with each daypart having eight hours. From the classification of the various videos, several tables were constructed to show how many of each type were shown during each time period. By looking at these results, some overall general conclusions were gathered about the extent of violence in music videos and the relationship it has to the time of day for airplay.

Format

In this study, Chapter I presents an introduction to this content analysis. Recent and related research is presented in Chapter II, followed by an explanation of the methodology in Chapter III. The results of this study are presented in Chapter IV. The final section, Chapter V contains the conclusions reached as a result of this study and analysis.

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CHAPTER II

RECENT AND RELATED RESEARCH

Television entertainment has included many tyes of programs in the past forty years. Drama, comedy, daytime serials, and cartoons are just a few. Yet today, a new form of entertainment is appearing. Television shows devoted to music videos are becoming very popular. While in the beginning music video programs appeared on a limited basis, now entire networks have formed around the idea of providing a twenty-four hour music video channel. The most popular of the channels, MTV, has received much criticism in the past few years. One reason for criticism has been due to excessive amounts of violence in the videos. Though MTV is relatively new, the criticism is not, and as this survey of related research will show, violence on television has long been a subject of concern to social researchers.

An ERIC search revealed a vast amount of literature on the topic of children, television, and violence. Because a summary covering this huge amount of material is impossible, only major researchers will be highlighted. Two major types of research appeared in researcher's attempts to associate children, television, and violence. The first type, experimental research, involves a control group and an experimental group of children. By exposing the experimental group to a

stimulus and then observing the subsequent behavior, researchers hoped to make a connection. The second type, field research, uses both surveys and content analysis studies of violence on television. Coupling these statistics with reports on aggressive behavior of children, researchers advocate that violence on television does have an effect on children. In this brief survey, both of these research methods are further explored.

In 1951, the National Association of Educational Broadcasters released data indicating 10 per cent of all programming time on our networks was devoted to crime stories (12, p. 114). Following this,

The first congressional hearing on television programming took place in 1952, when the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce investigated television entertainment to ascertain if it was excessively violent and sexually provocative and if it had pernicious effects. (10, p. 36)

In 1956, a senate subcommittee on the causes of juvenile delinquency reported television violence may be harmful to young viewers (12, p. 114). Though data indicated an increase in network programming of shows with violence, the senate subcommittee report failed to prove any real connection between children and violence content on television. In 1961, Clara Logan, president of the National Association for Better Broadcasting reported,

For a single week in November, 1960 we witnessed the following: 144 murders, 143 attempted murders, 52 justified killings, 14 cases of drugging, 12 jail breaks, 36 robberies, 6 thefts, 13 kidnappings, 6 burglaries, 7 cases of torture, 6 extortion cases, 5 cases of blackmail, 11 planned murders, 4 attempted lynchings, and 1 massacre with hundreds killed. (9, p. 110)

Himmelwert, Vince, and Oppenheim did a study in 1958 involving 1800 children. They concluded crime stories dominated the viewing time of these children but did not seem to make them more aggressive (12, p. 114). Schramm, Lyle, and Parker conducted a study in 1961 on the effects of television violence on children. Their results indicated if a child knew the difference between violence on television and violence in reality, then television violence would not provoke aggression in the child (12, p. 114). In 1964, Maccoby researched the difference between indirect effects and direct effects of watching television. Indirect effects included other activities (such as reading or bicycle riding) being given up in favor of watching television. Direct effects were emotional reactions of excitement, boredom, or daydreaming of the child while watching television and immediately thereafter (8). Also in 1964, Hartley conducted an experiment to determine if a child would act aggressively after watching a film containing aggression. Children were divided into two groups, one which watched the aggressive film while the other did not. His results indicated the group who watched the aggressive film subsequently showed signs of aggressive behavior when allowed to play in another room with various toys. At the time these studies were done, it was estimated

that an average week contained 200 hours of crime scenes with more than 500 killings. These statistics meant the violence content on television had increased 90 per cent since 1952 and 20 per cent since 1958 (5).

In 1968, Klapper did a review of past and present literature on the effects of mass media violence on children. He concluded that viewing television violence does not normally cause children to behave aggressively. However, if a child is maladjusted, then the television violence may have an effect (7). Nicholas Johnson, when serving as a Commissioner on the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence stated, "By the time the average child enters kindergarten he has already spent more hours learning about this world from television than the hours he would spend in a college classroom earning a BA degree" (1, p. 111). As a result of studies such as this and a growing concern among parents about what their children were watching, ACT was formed. Action for Children's Television was started by parents in Newton, Massachusetts, in January, 1968, to discuss the poor quality of television for children. They decided violence content on television was cause for alarm, but because action on the subject could lead to censorship, the group opted to discuss advertising appeals directed toward children. Since then, ACT has grown larger and branches of the organization have focused on different issues related to television (12, p. 121). Then in 1969,

the Eisenhower Commission was launched to determine the effect of television on violence. Their conclusion indicated violent behavior could be learned by watching violence on television (12, p. 115).

John Pastore, a member of the United States Senate, also became interested in the violence content on television. He asked the Surgeon General to organize a committee of scientists to research and report on what effects television violence had on children. Results were available in early 1972 and indicated there was a relationship between television violence and aggressive behavior in children. Part of this investigation "contributed several surveys in which prior viewing of violent programming was positively correlated with actual aggressiveness among young adolescents" (12, p. 132). From surveys and similiar research, "the experiments and the survey evidence in conjunction lead to the conclusion, tentative as always in matters scientific, that television violence actually does increase aggressiveness in real life" (12, p. 134). Not satisfied with the amount of emphasis being put on this subject, the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence issued a report indicating the increase of violence on television and the possible effect of a viewer actually imitiating those same acts (10, p. 36).

By this time, the three networks decided to become involved in the issue. ABC, CBS, and NBC conducted their own

studies, yet the conclusions reached were the same. They found there was a connection between television viewing and aggressive behavior. The study by ABC involved 10,000 children from age eight to fourteen. This study was to determine the child's desire to behave aggressively after watching various violent scenes on television. The CBS study involved more than 1500 male adolescents in the London area, resulting in "another positive association between violence viewing and seriously harmful attacks against property and other persons" (12, p. 137). A study sponsored by NBC included both high school and elementary school children in two separate cities. This was designed to last no longer than five years and "aggressiveness was measured by peer report, exposure to violence, by the programming the respondents said they viewed, weighted by a program-by-program measure of violent content" (12, p. 136).

Individual researchers also revealed results of studies they had undertaken. Albert Bandura of Stanford University conducted an experiment using a Bobo doll. Bandura had one group of children watch a film in which an adult hit a lifesize Bobo doll with a rubber mallet. When allowed to play later, many of the children imitated the aggressive behavior they had seen. Thus this experiment would indicate children can learn aggression from watching television. Bandura believed children learn through observation of others, and, if a child sees an aggressive act being rewarded on television,

he may be inclined to behave in a similiar manner (9, p. 122). However, there is a possibility that watching a lot of television with violence will make children more receptive to violence. Thus, the child will act according to what he considers appropriate and therefore behave aggressively (10, p. 39). A final possibility links children who are naturally aggressive with a preference for shows with violent content (10, p. 40). Regardless of which possibility a researcher supports, "the evidence accumulated in the 1970s seems overwhelming that televised violence and aggression are positively correlated in children" (10, p. 38).

Seymour Feshbach is another noted researcher in this field. He believes there are three possible effects television violence may have on children. First, violence content encourages children to behave aggressively. This results from watching violent behavior on television, which produces an arousing effect or possible identification with the character performing the violent act. At this point, the child no longer has any fear of acting out his own violence. Second, violence content acts as a catharsis upon the child. The child watches a fantasy character on television perform a violent act and simultaneously substitutes himself for that character in his imagination. Thus the child pretends he has just done the violent act, which provides internal satisfaction and eliminates the child's desire to act aggressively in the real world. Finally, violence content has no effect on

children at all. However, this has not received much support (3, p. 33). Feshbach further identified two types of aggression. Instrumental aggression occurred when "injury to others is carried out chiefly for the purpose of obtaining some other end" (3, p. 20). On the other hand, hostile aggression was "injury done to some persons or group of people" (3, p. 20) simply for the pleasure of doing it.

One major experiment was designed to measure the effects of watching televised violence over a period of six weeks. Α total of 395 boys living in a preparatory school, military academy, or other such place where viewing habits could be strictly guided were involved. Boys placed in a control group did not watch any television programs with violence, while boys placed in an experimental group did. Each boy watched at least six hours of television each week, followed by a written evaluation of their opinion of each program. Measurements taken at the end of the six week period included a behavior rating scale, personality inventory, a fantasy aggression measure, an aggressive activity preference scale, a situation test, a viewing habits measure, an aggressive value scale, and a peer rating measure. The behavior rating scale was a list of twenty-six activities, of which nineteen were considered aggressive. Results indicated that exposure to aggressive or nonaggressive television had more effect on boys in detention homes than those in private schools. Also, "the significant decline in aggression toward peers in the

boys exposed to aggressive content in television and the increase in aggression in the boys exposed to the control diet constitute the most important finding in this study (3, p. 81). Personality attributes were also considered important to aid explaining why television violence would have different effects upon different boys. One hypothesis was "children low in initial aggressive tendencies were more likely to show an increase in aggressive behavior" (3, p. 90). The results proved the validity of this hypothesis and Feshback concluded:

First, exposure to aggressive content in television does not lead to an increase in aggressive behavior. Second, exposure to aggressive content in television seems to reduce or control the expression: of aggression in aggressive boys from relatively low socioeconomic backgrounds. (3, p. 145)

Thus this experiment would tend to support the second position indicating violence content acts as a catharsis upon the child.

This review of related research would not be complete without a discussion of field research. Beginning in 1967, a group consisting of George Gerbner, Larry Gross, Nancy Signorielli, Michael Morgan, and Marilyn Jackson-Beeck began conducting surveys designed to measure the amount of violence on television. These surveys have continued on a yearly basis producing the television Violence Index and have expanded into a research project, known as Cultural Indicators. This project studies not only network trends in programming but also the possible viewer conceptions of social reality based on those trends. One reason these studies began was because "the sheer amount of children's potential exposure to televised violence, we worry that children will become jaded, desensitized, and inured to violence not only on television, but in real life as well" (12, p. 154). Results indicated heavy television viewers regarded personal injury through violence a probable event, while light viewers did not. This "confirmed that violence-laden television not only cultivated aggressive tendencies...but, perhaps more importantly, also generates a pervasive and exaggerated sense of danger and mistrust" (12, p. 157).

In 1979, Gerbner and Gross conducted another survey with Questionnaires were distributed to a group similiar results. of New Jersey seventh and eighth grade students in a public school and to a group of fifth through twelvth graders in a New York City private school. The questions were designed to obtain responses in four areas: chances for involvement in violence, fear of walking alone at night, perceived activities of the police, and general mistrust. Students could chose one answer which reflected true facts and figures or another answer reflecting television facts. Results revealed heavy viewers in both groups overestimated the number of people involved in serious crimes and the danger of walking alone at night. Though in this last respect, females were more fearful than males, and younger students were more fearful than older ones. "These two groups also showed the strongest relationship between the amount of television viewing and the fear of walking alone in one's own neighborhood" (12, p. 159).

Perceived activities of the police were also affected by the amount of television viewing. Heavy viewers among the New Jersey students believed the police often use force and violence when responding to a call and heavy viewers in the New York group revealed a "positive relationship between amount of viewing and the perception of how many times a day a policeman pulls out a gun" (12, p. 159). In the last area of general mistrust, heavy viewers again expressed greater mistrust in others than did the light viewers. Gerbner and Gross concluded, "These findings provide considerable support for the conclusion that heavy television viewers perceive social reality differently from light television viewers, even when other factors are held constant" (12, p. 159).

The Foundation of Child Development surveyed 2,200 children between age seven and eleven. Results showed a relationship between television viewing and fears related to violence, and overall, "assumptions about the chances of encountering violence, and images of police activities can be traced in part to television portrayals" (12, p. 160). Gerbner and Gross support this conclusion through statistics accumulated over the years. In dramatic television, 46 per cent of major characters commit violent acts and 55 per cent of major characters are victims, with many included in both groups. The overall risk ratio was 1.2, meaning ten people will commit a total of twelve violent acts. Women, especially nonwhite women and older women, had the highest risk of being

a victim. From such statistics Gerbner and Gross theorized, "It appears to be a justifiable fear that viewing televised violence will make people, children in particular, somewhat more likely to commit acts of violence themselves" (12, p. 154).

Though researchers may disagree on the type of effect violence on television has on children, all agree that viewing violence will have some effect. However, "the majority of social scientists agree that children who watch televised aggression are subsequently more aggressive" (11, p. 132). Berkowitz claimed viewers became more aggressive after watching violence on television. His studies concluded, "Overall, exposure to media violence rouses aggressive drive in viewers" (11, p. 132). Comstock and Rubinstein state, "The more television a child watches the more accepting is the child's attitude toward aggressive behavior" (12, p. 174). When television viewing becomes a major element in a child's life, some conception of social reality will be based on what the child observes on television. Thus, acts of violence may be regarded as normal. "An attitude of acceptance towards aggression and violence can increase the likelihood of aggression and violence being displayed" (12, p. 175).

These various studies by social researchers did not go unnoticed by law-makers. Since 1954, Congressional studies had researched the subject of violence content on television. These reports were partially responsible for the Surgeon General's interest in the issue, resulting in the 1972 Surgeon

General's <u>Report on Television and Social Behavior</u>. Congress urged the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) to take action. A joint effort by Congress and the FCC resulted in the "Family viewing hour." However, this was later declared a violation of the First Amendment and thus unconstitutional. Though the ruling was no longer enforced, some networks continued it on their own. Prior to 1975 most violence on television was seen after 9 p.m. Since then the amount of violence on television has remained fairly constant, as indicated by the yearly Gerbner Violence Profiles.

It appears, then, that the violence on television that began back in the 1950s has continued. There have been a few changes and fluctuations, but, in general, television, despite the concerns of congressmen and citizens' groups, remains a violent form of entertainment. (10, p. 37)

Recently, a few researchers have turned their attention to the new form of entertainment on television--the music video. This too has received criticism based on the violence content of some of the videos. In response to the amount of violence, groups and coalitions of concerned people joined forces to promote public awareness of the situation.

One such group is the National Coalition on Television Violence, which began in 1980 and is under the direction of Thomas Radecki. Radecki, a psychiatristeat the University of Illinois School of Medicine, conducted a number of studies on the frequency of violence on MTV. Radecki divided the videos into groups of either "Violent Music Videos" or "Music Videos Using Violence with Possible or Probable

Educational Impact." Radecki stated, "It wasn't anger we were looking at, but actual violence: the intentional or hostile use of force, or surrealistic fantasies with weapons, or people imprisoned in chains" (6).

One study in 1983 analyzed more than 200 MTV videos during a six week period. A similiar study in 1984 monitored more than 900 MTV videos. The results of these studies indicated "more than half the MTV videos studied featured violence or strongly suggested violence" (4) with an average of 17.9 occurrences of violence each hour. The "Thriller" video by Michael Jackson was considered extremely violent, and Radecki remarked,

You have to start to have a great concern when you have a young lad with a wonderful public image, a real leader and hero, using very intense pictures of sadistic violence between men and women. That's having a definite harmful effect on young viewers. (6)

Other groups the coalition considered violent included The Rolling Stones, Billy Idol, Kiss, the Kinks, Joan Jett, Iron Maiden, Duran Duran, ZZ Top, Devo, and Cyndi Lauper.

However, problems may exist with the classification system used by Radecki. One system divided the videos into categories of violent, intermediate (violence), nonviolent, and pro-social. A problem arises in determining criteria with which to separate the videos. Violent words in the lyrics to the song "Crumbling Down" by John Cougar placed the video in the violent category, while violent actions in the video "Say, Say, Say" by Paul McCartney and Michael Jackson, placed this video in the violent category also. This may indicate a discrepancy in the classification system when two different aspects of the video result in common categorization. In a recent interview on the CBN channel, Radecki stated,

Aggressive researchers we've spoken to say that there's no doubt in their mind that the violent music videos, the ones with degrading sexuality and violence between men and women, and violence just between people, especially the sadistic variety, are almost certain to have harmful desensitizing effects. (13)

In response to criticism against MTV, executive vicepresident, Bob Pittman defended the videos MTV airs as simply being a form of expression for pop artists to utilize. On a recent 20/20 program, Pittman claimed,

We spend everyday looking at what is acceptable, what isn't acceptable... We do represent change. There are going to be some people who find MTV objectionable and will apply whatever label they can to it... We will always change, we will always be moving. (2)

MTV does set controls and censors music videos before they are broadcast. MTV will not air nudity and refused videos by The Rolling Stones, David Bowie, and Devo until they were altered to acceptable standards.

MTV has no written policy regarding sex and violence. Basically, we adopted a policy of reflecting community standards... Because we're national, we tend to be more conservative than New York or Los Angeles, maybe a little more radical than Kentucky. Basically, the judgement we try and place on everything is: 'Does this fit within the community standards of the cable affiliates that we have?' And the standard we apply is that videos should be pro-social or have a pro-social message, without any gratuitous sex or violence or anything for exploitive reasons. (4) Still, Radecki contends MTV "has taken a giant step in the direction of transforming music from nonviolent entertainment into an increasingly violent art form" (4). Radecki is not the only one with this view. RCA Records' video division marketing director Laura Foti commented,

Right now there's a lot of pressure on video makers to come up with the most visually stimulating videos possible. I just hope that kids have the intelligence to understand that this isn't the way real life is. (4)

Jo Bergman of Warner Brothers Records agreed and remarked that videos eliminate ambiguities of the lyrics (4). Record companies try to dissuade the production of videos with gratuitous sex or violence but "acknowledge that it is virtually impossible to police every new project, which they often approve when the videos are still in sketch or story-board form" (4).

MTV has been making recent changes in their broadcasting of music videos with violence content. John Sykes, vicepresident of MTV, claimed one change is the reduction in the broadcasting of videos of heavy metal groups. "We have been cutting back on heavy metal on MTV because we found that our viewers just didn't like it. They were getting a little too much of it" (2). Before this decision, heavy metal videos comprised one-third of airplay time. Now, only one heavy metal video airs during each hour. Pittman emphasized this change occurred because heavy metal groups are not as popular as The Police or Mick Jagger. But if a heavy metal group has a big selling record, the video will be put on the MTV playlist. Another source of pressure has come from middle-of-the-road

pop artists who advocate they have not been given enough airplay on MTV. Pittman agreed and indicated videos by those pop artists were going to appear more often in the future.

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CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The methodology used in this study to analyze the violence content of music videos relied upon the definition of violence and violent action as defined by George Gerbner in his evaluations of violence in network programs. He defined violence

as

the overt expression of physical force (with or without weapon against self or others) compelling action against one's will on pain of being hurt and or killed or threatened to be so victimized as part of the plot. Idle threats, verbal abuse, or gestures without credible violent consequence are not coded as violent. However, 'accidental' and natural violence (always purposeful dramatic actions that do vicitimize certain characters) are, of course, included. (2, p. A5)

With this in mind, a violent action for our purposes, will be considered

a scene of some violence confined to the same agents. Even if the scene is interrupted by a flashback, etc., as long as it continues in 'real time' it is the same act. However, if new agent(s) enter the scene, it becomes another act. (2, p. C1)

Using these definitions, music videos from MTV were viewed and analyzed to determine the amount of violence they contained. One hour of MTV was analyzed every day for thirty consecutive days, beginning March 16, 1985 and ending April 12, 1985. Each day was divided into three dayparts of eight hours each as follows on the next page.

1)	Late night/Early morning	12	a.m.	 8.	a.m.
2)	Daytime	8	a.m.	 4	p.m.
3)	Prime time	4	p.m.	 12	a.m.

On the first day of this study, one hour from the Late night/ Early morning daypart was viewed and analyzed for violence content. On the second day, one hour from the Daytime daypart was viewed and analyzed for violence content. Then on the third day, one hour from the Prime time daypart was viewed and analyzed for violence content. This rotation procedure was followed for the entire thirty day period, resulting in a total of ten hours viewed and analyzed for each daypart.

To determine which hour during each daypart was to be analyzed, two procedures were followed simultaneously. First, each hour of each daypart was assigned a number from one through eight based on when each hour fell in relationship to the other hours in the daypart. Such a schedule is illustrated below in Table I.

TABLE I

ASSIGNMENT OF DAYPART HOURS

		Dayparts	
Random Number	Late night/ Early Morning	🖺 Daytime	Prime time
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	$\begin{array}{rrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr$	8 a.m 9 a.m. 9 a.m 10 a.m. 10 a.m 11 a.m. 11 a.m 12 p.m. 12 p.m 1 p.m. 1 p.m 2 p.m. 2 p.m 3 p.m. 3 p.m 4 p.m.	4 p.m 5 p.m. 5 p.m 6 p.m. 6 p.m 7 p.m. 7 p.m 8 p.m. 8 p.m 9 p.m. 9 p.m 10 p.m. 10 p.m 11 p.m. 11 p.m 12 a.m.

Second, a table of Random Numbers (1, p. 496) was used to assign each of the thirty days a number to determine which hour of the appropriate daypart was to be analyzed. Table II illustrates the hours which were viewed and analyzed.

TABLE II

SCHEDULE OF HOURS VIEWED AND ANALYZED

Day		Daypart	Random Number	1			
•	1985 1985	12 a.m 8 a.m. 8 a.m 4 p.m.	3 2	2 a.m 3 a.m. 9 a.m 10 a.m.			
March 18,	1985	4 p.m 12 a.m.	3	6 p.m 7 p.m.			
	1985	12 a.m 8 a.m.	1	12 a.m 1 a.m.			
•	1985	8 a.m 4 p.m.	1	8 a.m 9 a.m.			
•	1985	4 p.m 12 a.m.	6	9 a.m 10 a.m.			
•	1985	12 a.m 8 a.m.	1	12 a.m. – 1 a.m.			
•	1985	8 a.m 4 p.m.	6 7	1 p.m. – 2 p.m.			
•	1985	4 p.m 12 a.m.		10 p.m 11 p.m.			
•	1985	12 a.m. – 8 a.m.	6 1	5 a.m. – 6 a.m. 8 a.m. – 9 a.m.			
•	1985 1985	8 a.m 4 p.m. 4 p.m 12 a.m.	1 5				
•	1985	4 p.m 12 a.m. 12 a.m 8 a.m.	6	8 p.m. – 9 p.m. 5 a.m. – 6 a.m.			
•	1985	8 a.m 4 p.m.	1	8 a.m 9 a.m.			
	1985	4 p.m 12 a.m.	1 7	10 p.m 11 p.m.			
	1985	12 a.m. – 8 a.m.	6	5 a.m 6 a.m.			
	1985	8 a.m 4 p.m.	8	3 p.m 4 p.m.			
	1985	4 p.m 12 a.m.	4	7 p.m 8 p.m.			
	1985	12 a.m 8 a.m.	4	3 a.m. – 4 a.m.			
·	1985	8 a.m 4 p.m.	5	12 p.m 1 p.m.			
	1985	4 p.m 12 a.m.	5	8 p.m. – 9 p.m.			
	1985	12 a.m 8 a.m.	8	7 a.m. – 8 a.m.			
	1985	8 a.m 4 p.m.	2	9 a.m 10 a.m.			
April 8,	1985	4 p.m 12 a.m.	1	4 p.m 5 p.m.			
April 9, 1	1985	12 a.m 8 a.m.	3	2 a.m. – 3 a.m.			
	1985	8 a.m 4 p.m.	2 3	9 a.m 10 a.m.			
÷ .	1985	4 p.m 12 a.m.		6 p.m 7 p.m.			
÷. •	1985	12 a.m 8 a.m.	2	1 a.m. – 2 a.m.			
	1985	8 a.m 4 p.m.	2	9 a.m 10 a.m.			
April 14,	1985	4 p.m 12 a.m.	6	9 p.m 10 p.m.			

An arbitrary starting point was chosen on the Random Numbers table as the tenth column, the fourteenth row, the middle number. Thus, for the Day One--Late night/Early morning daypart, the number was a three. Looking at Table I, random number three in the Late night/Early morning category indicates the hour to be analyzed was the 2 to 3 a.m. hour. The second random number under the three was a nine. However, because this was outside the needed range, it was omitted and the next appropriate random number was used instead for Day Two--Daytime. This procedure was followed everyday for the entire thirty day period.

After each music video was viewed, it was given a score from zero through five based on the amount and severity of violence it contained. The scale was broken down into the following descriptions:

0 = cannot code 1 = nonviolent 2 = mostly light, comic, humorous 3 = neither light nor serious 4 = mostly serious (2, p. Cl) 5 = extremely serious

To analyze the music videos better, a "checklist" was designed. This checklist contained a description of several types of violence content expected to be seen. During the evaluation, reference was made to this checklist to aid the two analyzers who viewed the music videos. The first analyzer viewed and scored every music video in isolation from outside elements, i.e. without comments from the second analyzer. Following this, the second analyzer viewed and scored various hours as selected by the first analyzer. Those hours selected were the ones in which the first analyzer found the most diversity of amount and severity of violence content, and as such, were more prone to analyzer bias. If the first and second analyzer disagreed on the score given to a particular video, each analyzer then presented an oral defense of the score. If an agreement could not be reached on a score, the music video was viewed again and re-evaluated so that an agreement could be reached.

The checklist upon which to evaluate the music videos included the following types of violence:

a) one person using one inanimate object as a weapon against another person but no physical harm to the other person---occurring no more than once---score 2

b) one person using one or more inanimate objects as a weapon against one or more other people but no physical harm to the other person(s)---occurring more than once--score 2

c) one or more persons using one or more inanimate objects as a weapon against one or more other people but no physical harm to the other person(s)---occurring more than once---score 3

d) one person using one inanimate object as a weapon against another person such that physical harm is inflicted ---occurring no more than once---score 3, 4 or 5, depending on the severity

e) one person using one or more inanimate objects as a weapon against one or more other people such that physical

harm is inflicted---occurring more than once---score 3, 4, or 5, depending on the severity

f) one or more persons using one or more inanimate objects against one or more other people such that physical harm is inflicted---occurring more than once---score 4 or 5, depending on the severity

g) one person physically touching another person such that the second person receives a threat of possible physical harm---e.g. pushing, shoving---score 2

 h) one or more persons physically touching one or more other people such that the second person(s) receives a threat of possible physical harm---score 2

i) one person physically touching another person such that the second person suffers physical injury---score 3, 4, or 5, depending on the severity

j) one or more persons physically touching one or more other people such that the other person(s) suffers physical injury---score 4 or 5, depending on the severity

k) one or more persons causing the physical death to another one or more persons---score 5.

As this checklist was prepared as a guide to aid the analyzers, it was not considered to be exhaustive. As evaluation began, this became apparent when certain acts of violence did not fall neatly into a specific category on the above list. However, this did not affect the evaluation process as those acts of violence simply created a new category in which other music videos could later be placed also. In addition, it was not assumed that each music video would contain only one type of violence listed on the checklist. It was a common occurrence for the music video to include several of the elements on the checklist, and as such, the overall severity increased.

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CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The results of the analysis of music videos on MTV for the thirty day period indicated the amount of violence and the severity of violence was rather low. The results also indicated the daypart of "Late evening/Early morning" was the period in which music videos with greater severity of violence content were more likely to be aired. In addition, it was revealed that "Prime time" was the period in which it was most likely to have music videos which contained no violence. Between the extremes of "nonviolent" and "extremely serious" violence, variations occurred as to which daypart would be the most likely one for viewing the different violence severity categories used in this analysis.

The category of "nonviolent" was exemplified with music videos such as "We Are the World" by U.S.A. For Africa. In this video, more than thirty singers joined together in a studio. Some of the singers had solo pieces or sang a duet with another person. At the end, all the singers joined hands while singing the chorus in a unified group. Music videos like this one, when done in a studio setting, typically did not contain any violence. An example of a music video placed in the category "mostly light, comic, humorous" violence content was "Don't Answer Me" by the Alan Parsons Project.

In this music video, comic strip characters acted out the various scenes. The characters did not move on their own, but only changed positions as each cartoon frame advanced. In the few scenes with violence, one cartoon figure would appear to have hit another, with the word "POW" put at the place where the physical contact occurred.

The next category was "neither light nor serious." An example of a music video placed in this category was "The Heat Is On" by Glen Frey. This video included both the singer on stage and various film clips from the movie "The Beverly Hills Cop." Some of the film clips showed the main character, played by Eddie Murphy, aiming a gun, being knocked backwards through a glass window, and being in several car crashes. These film clips were evaluated as part of the total music video, yet they were often placed at random in the video and usually failed to relate to the general meaning of the singer. Because of this, the overall atmosphere of the video was not as serious as it otherwise might have been.

The category "mostly serious" was reserved for those music videos in which the general concept of the video was to present serious violence content. An example of this was found in the music video "Don't Come Around Here No More" by Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers. This video was a spoof of the children's tale "Alice in Wonderland." However, in this version of the tale, Alice was knocked over backwards and sent flying down stairs. She was pushed out of her own chair and

sent twirling backwards. Then in the last scene, she was seen as a birthday cake on a table. Petty then proceeded to cut her up into pieces and served her to the other guests. There was nothing light or humorous about this music video, but instead presented a normally "safe" nursery tale as a sinister conspiracy against Alice.

The final category of "extremely serious" was exemplified by only one music video, which was "Undercover of the Night" by The Rolling Stones. In this video, a storyline was carried out to the lyrics of the song, which dramatized a political assassination in surroundings representing Central America. A man with his hands tied behind his back and a sack placed over his head was forceably dragged onto a swinging wooden-plank and vine bridge. There he was repeatedly shot in the back by two men. He collapsed and lay sprawled out over the bridge. In addition, this video contained many other shootings, blood, death, and car crashes. This was the only music video in which such explicit consequences to the victims were seen in such realistic detail.

There were a total of 192 different music videos aired during the hours observed. Out of this total figure, 129 of the music videos were aired only once. However, 63 of the music videos were aired more than once, which resulted in the total number of occurrences reaching 313. The table illustrating the number of music videos occurring on one or more occasions appears on the following page.

TABLE III

Number of	Number of	Tota1
Occurrences	Videos	Occurrences
1	129	129
2	37	74
3	11	33
4	3	12
5	9	45
6	2	12
8	1	8
Total	192	313

OCCURRENCES OF MUSIC VIDEOS

In the daypart "Late evening/Early morning," which included the hours from 12 a.m. to 8 a.m., there were 89 different music videos which were aired. Out of this figure, 14 were repeated twice and 3 were repeated 3 times. Thus the total occurrences of music videos reached 109. Table IV illustrates the distribution of videos for this daypart.

TABLE IV

LATE EVENING/EARLY MORNING DISTRIBUTION

Hours in the Daypart	<u>Viol</u>	Violence Content Category					
12 a.m 1 a.m. 1 a.m 2 a.m. 2 a.m 3 a.m. 3 a.m 4 a.m. 4 a.m 5 a.m. 5 a.m 6 a.m. 6 a.m 7 a.m. 7 a.m 8 a.m.	14 7 15 7 21 9	4 1 5 3 10 2	· · · 1 · · · 1 · · · 1 · · ·	··· 2 1 1 ··· 1 ···	· · · · · · · 1 · ·	2 1 2 1 3 1	
Total	73	28	2	5	1	10	

Most of the music videos in this daypart received the score of 1 for being nonviolent. However, in this daypart, there was also 11 video which received the score of 5 for being extremely serious in its violence content. As was mentioned earlier, this music video was "Undercover of the Night" by The Rolling Stones.

Breaking down this Distribution Table into hourly averages, Table V was derived. This indicates there was a fairly even proportion of music videos with little or no violence content (categories one and two) throughout the daypart.

TABLE V

Hours in	Viole	ence Co	Average			
the Daypart	1	2	Per Hour**			
12 a.m 1 a.m. 1 a.m 2 a.m. 2 a.m 3 a.m. 3 a.m 4 a.m. 4 a.m 5 a.m. 5 a.m 6 a.m. 6 a.m 7 a.m. 7 a.m 8 a.m. Total***	7 7.5 7 7 	3.5 1 2.5 3 3.3 2.8	••• •5 •• •3 •• •2	2 .5 1 .3 	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	10.5 10 11 11 11 11.2 10.9

LAST EVENING/EARLY MORNING HOURLY AVERAGE PER VIDEO

*Computation: Number of occurrences per category divided by number of hours (from the Distribution Table)

**Computation: Sum of categories 1 through 5

***Computation: Total from Distribution Table divided by number of hours

Beginning at 1 a.m., the table indicates music videos with greater severity of violence content were more likely to be aired, with the most violent video appearing in the 5 to 6 a.m. hour.

Breaking down this Hourly Average Per Video Table into hourly percentages, Table VI was derived. This indicates the percentage of time per hour devoted to each violence content category.

TABLE VI

Hours in	Vi	olence Co	ontent (Category*	
the Daypart	1	2	3	4	5
12 a.m 1 a.m. 1 a.m 2 a.m. 2 a.m 3 a.m. 3 a.m 4 a.m. 4 a.m 5 a.m. 5 a.m 6 a.m. 6 a.m 7 a.m. 7 a.m 8 a.m.	66.7% 70.0% 68.2% 63.6% 62.5%	33.3% 10.0% 22.7% 27.3% 29.4%	4.6% 2.7%	20.0% 4.6% 9.1% 2.7%	 2.7%
Total**	67.0%	25.7%	1.8%	4.6%	• 9%

LATE EVENING/EARLY MORNING HOURLY PERCENTAGE

*Computation: 100% divided by average per hour (from the Hourly Average Per Video Table) multiplied by average occurrences (from the Hourly Average Per Video Table)

**Computation: 100% divided by 109 (total amount of occurrence for this daypart) multiplied by total from Hourly Average Per Video Table

Taking into consideration only the totals, the sum of categories four and five equals 5.5 per cent, which is the largest sum for these two categories when compared with the same sum in the other two dayparts. This comparison may readily be seen in Table XV, OVERALL PERCENTAGE PER DAYPART, at the end of this section. In addition, the sum of categories one and two equal 92.7 per cent. This is not the largest sum for these two categories; however, it is a high percentage, and indicates that the majority of the time from 12 a.m. to 8 a.m. is relatively free from violence content.

In the second daypart of "Daytime," which included the hours from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., there were 91 different music videos which were aired. Out of this total figure, 15 were repeated twice, 2 were repeated 4 times, and 1 was repeated 5 times. Thus the total occurrences of music videos reached 116. Table VII illustrates the distribution of videos for this daypart.

TABLE VII

Hours in the Daypart	Viole	ence (Number of Hours			
8 a.m 9 a.m. 9 a.m 10 a.m. 10 a.m 11 a.m. 11 a.m 12 p.m. 12 p.m 1 p.m. 1 p.m 2 p.m. 2 p.m 3 p.m. 3 p.m 4 p.m.	22 32 9 8 	7 16 2 2 	3 •• •1 ••	1 1 	• • • • • • • • • • • •	3 4 •• 1 1 ••
Total	78	31	5	2	• •	10

DAYTIME DISTRIBUTION

Most of the music videos in this daypart received the score of 1 for being nonviolent. No video received the score of 5 and only 2 videos received the score of 4. This was the lowest total for this violence content category when compared with the same totals in the other two dayparts.

Breaking down this Distribution Table into hourly averages, Table VIII was derived. This indicates there was a fairly even proportion of music videos in all categories for the entire daypart.

TABLE VIII

Hours in the Daypart	<u>Vio1</u> 1	ence (2	Content 3	- Cated 4	ory 5	Average per Hour
8 a.m 9 a.m. 9 a.m 10 a.m. 10 a.m 11 a.m. 11 a.m 12 p.m. 12 p.m 1 p.m. 1 p.m 2 p.m. 2 p.m 3 p.m. 3 p.m 4 p.m.	7.3 8 9 8 7	2.3 4 2 2 4	1 ••• 1 ••• 1	.3 1 	• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •	10.9 12 12 11 12
Total	7.8	3.1	• 5	.2	• • •	11.6

DAYTIME HOURLY AVERAGE PER VIDEO

Breaking down this Hourly Average Per Video Table into hourly percentages, Table IX was derived. The statistics revealed that this daypart had the least overall violence content as compared against the other two dayparts. Here the sum of categories four and five equals 1.7 per cent, which is the smallest sum for these two categories as compared with the others.

TABLE IX

Hours in	V	iolence (Content	Catego	
the Daypart	1	2	3	4	5
8 a.m 9 a.m. 9 a.m 10 a.m. 10 a.m 11 a.m. 11 a.m 12 p.m. 12 p.m 1 p.m. 1 p.m 2 p.m. 2 p.m 3 p.m. 3 p.m 4 p.m.	67.0% 66.7% 75 % 72.7% 58.3%	21.0% 33.3% 16.7% 18.2% 33.3%	9.0% 8.3% 8.3%	3.0% 9.1%	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
Total	67.2%	26.7%	4.3%	1.7%	• • • •

DAYTIME HOURLY PERCENTAGE

In addition, the sum of categories one and two equals 94 per cent, which is the largest sum of these two categories. Again, these comparisons may readily be seen by reference to Table XV, OVERALL PERCENTAGE PER DAYPART, at the end of this section.

In the final daypart of "Prime time," which included the hours from 4 p.m. to 12 a.m., there were 73 different music videos which were aired. Out of this total figure, 10 were repeated twice, 1 was repeated 3 times, and 1 was repeated 4 times. Thus the total occurrences of music videos reached 88. Table X illustrates the distribution of videos for this daypart. Most of the music videos in this daypart received the score of 1 for being nonviolent, however, this particular figure was the lowest of all the three dayparts for this category. In addition, a total of 4 videos received the score of 4, which was the second highest for this category.

TABLE X

Hours in	v	iolen	ce Coi	ntent	Cated	gory	Number
the Daypart	0	1	2	3	4	5	of Hours
4 p.m 5 p.m. 5 p.m 6 p.m. 6 p.m 7 p.m. 7 p.m 8 p.m. 8 p.m 9 p.m.	 	7 15 8 16	$\begin{array}{c}1\\ \cdot \\ 3\\ 2\\ 2\end{array}$	2 1 1 4	··· 2 ··	 	$\begin{array}{c}1\\ \\ \\2\\ \\1\\ \\2\end{array}$
9 p.m 10 p.m. 10 p.m 11 p.m. 11 p.m 12 p.m.	2* ••	12 3	4 •• ••	2 1 ••	2	•••	2 2
Total	2	61	12	11	4	••	10

PRIME TIME DISTRIBUTION

*On two separate occasions, MTV aired a special concert of the week which lasted between 30 and 60 minutes. Due to this length, the concert did not possess the same time characteristic as the individual videos, and as such, were excluded from the analysis.

Then breaking down this final Distribution Table into hourly averages, Table XI was derived.

TABLE XI

PRIME TIME HOURLY AVERAGE PER VIDEO

Hours in the Daypart	Violence 0 1	Average per Hour		
4 p.m 5 p.m. 5 p.m 6 p.m. 6 p.m 7 p.m. 7 p.m 8 p.m. 8 p.m 9 p.m. 9 p.m 10 p.m. 10 p.m 11 p.m. 11 p.m 12 p.m.	7 7.5 8 6 1 1.5	$ \begin{array}{cccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	1 1 1 1	10 10.5 11 11 10 3
Total	.2 6.1	1.2 1.1	.4	9

This table indicates, once again, that there was a fairly even proportion of violence content throughout the daypart. The only exception to this was in the 10 to 11 p.m. hour, when MTV aired their special concerts. As a result of this, the amount of videos aired following the concert was slim.

The final breakdown for this daypart, into hourly percentages, resulted in Table XII. This revealed the greatest amount of time for the nonviolent category, as compared with the same percentage in the other dayparts. In addition, the statistic of 12.5 per cent for category three was the highest figure for this particular category.

TABLE XII

Hours in		Violence Content Category								
the Daypart	0	1.	2	3	4	5				
4 p.m 5 p.m. 5 p.m 6 p.m. 6 p.m 7 p.m. 7 p.m 8 p.m. 8 p.m 9 p.m. 9 p.m 10 p.m. 10 p.m 11 p.m. 11 p.m 12 a.m.	 33.3%	70.0% 71.4% 72.7% 72.7% 60 % 50	10.0% 14.3% 18.2% 9.1% 20 %		9.5% 10 %	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·				
Tota1	2.2%	69.3%	13.6%	12.5%	4.6%	• • •				

PRIME TIME HOURLY PERCENTAGE

To bring all of these tables and their meanings into perspective, Tables XIII, XIV, and XV summarize totals from all the previous ones.

TABLE XIII

Dayparts	V	lolenc	e Cont	cent (Catego	ory	Total
Dayparts	0	1	2	3	4	5	Videos
Late Evening/ Early Morning	• •	73	28	2	5	- 1	109
Daytime	•••	78	31	5	2	••	116
Prime time	2	61	12	11	4	••	88
Total	2	212	71	18	11	1	313

OVERALL DISTRIBUTION

These Distribution, Frequency (Average), and Percentage Tables indicate that 212 of all the music videos aired contained no violence, for daypart averages of 7.1 occurrences and 67.8 per cent daypart time.

TABLE XIV

OVERALL FREQUENCY (AVERAGE)

Dayparts	Vi	Violence Content Category								
Dayparcs	0	1	2	3	4	5	Videos			
Late Evening/ Early Morning		7.3	2.8	.2	.5	.1	10.9			
Daytime		7.8	3.1	.5	• 2	••	11.6			
Prime time	• 2	6.1	1.2	1.1	.4	••	9			
Average	.06	7.1	2.4	.6	.4	.03	10.5			

Category Two of "mostly light, comic, humorous" violence content was found in a total of 71 music videos, for daypart averages of 2.4 occurrences and 22 per cent of daypart time. Category Three of "neither light nor serious" violence content was found in 18 music videos, for daypart averages of .6 occurrences and 6.2 per cent of daypart time.

TABLE XV

OVERALL PERCENTAGE PER DAYPART

Dayparts	Violence Content Category					
	0	1	2	3	4	5
Late Evening/ Early Morning		67.0%	25.7%	1.8%	4.6%	.9%
Daytime		67.2%	26.7%	4.3%	1.7%	
Prime time	2.2%	69.3%	13.6%	12.5%	4.6%	• • • •
Average	. 7%	67.8%	22 %	6.2%	3.6%	.3%

Category Four of "mostly serious" violence content was found in 11 music videos, for daypart averages of .36 occurrences and 3.6 per cent of daypart time. Finally, Category Five of "extremely serious" violence content was found in only 1 music video, for daypart averages of .03 occurrences and .3 per cent of daypart time.

The final analysis of these music videos is based on the percentage of distribution in relationship to the total amount of all the music videos viewed, as illustrated in Table XVI. The sum of categories four and five equals 3.8 per cent, indicating that 3.8 per cent of all the music videos were analyzed as either "mostly serious" or "extremely serious."

The sum of categories three, four, and five equals 9.6 per cent, indicating that 9.6 per cent of all the music videos were analyzed as having some form of violence content which parents might be reluctant to allow their children to watch.

TABLE XVI

Category	Number of Videos	Percentage of all Videos
1 2 3 4 5	212 71 18 11 1	67.7% 22.7% 5.8% 3.5% .3%
Tota1	313	100 %

OVERALL PERCENTAGE PER VIDEO

The sum of categories one and two equals 90.4 per cent, indicating that out of all the music videos analyzed, the majority of them contained little or no violence.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

When MTV began in 1981, it represented a new form of entertainment. It was the first channel to offer music videos on a twenty-four hour basis. Since then, other channels have appeared offering variations of this idea. MTV airs a wide range of music videos which in some cases, have virtually started the careers of unknown groups. Yet MTV has also been criticized for the amount of violence content in some of the videos it airs. This analysis of violence content in music videos on MTV provided answers to questions of amount of violence and the most likely daypart in which violence may be viewed.

The analysis of music videos on MTV indicates a minimal amount of violence content, as illustrated by the various tables. There were 313 music videos aired during the 30 day period. Of this figure, 212 videos were analyzed as being "nonviolent," which comprised 67 per cent of all the videos. Of the remaining 101 videos placed in one of the violence content categories, 71 were placed in the "mostly light, comic, humorous" category. This represented 70.3 per cent of the 101 videos with violence content. Because these figures indicate the majority of the videos contained no violence and the majority of videos with violence were of a light or comic

nature, this analysis concludes MTV was fairly "safe" for children and adolescents to view. Many of those videos evaluated as "nonviolent" included stage performances of the group combined with short acting scenes by the band members. These scenes usually displayed actions to match the lyrics of the song and thus better convey the general meaning of the song. Many other videos in the "nonviolent" category relied solely on band members' acting ability to create a short "play." In this case, the scenes often represented the lead singer's thoughts as he sang. These thoughts, likewise, usually followed the lyrics of the song and therefore the viewer becomes better aware of the message the performer is trying to get across.

In comparison, this research found the videos containing some degree of violence content to include scenes which some parents might not wish their children to view. In instances of "mostly light, comic, humorous" violence content, some common scenes included the use of comic strip characters to act out the violence, cream pies thrown in people's faces, a pillow fight by a couple imitating Lucy and Ricky from the <u>I</u> <u>Love Lucy</u> show, "fake" savages throwing spears at an "Indiana Jones" impersonator, and occasions of one person hitting or pushing another person once. The total videos placed in this category was 71, which was 22.7 per cent of all videos analyzed. While there may not be much cause for concern among these music videos, such may not be the case for the remainder. A total

of 18 videos were placed in the category "neither light nor serious," 11 were placed in the category "mostly serious," and only 1 was placed in the category "extremely serious." Videos placed in these categories displayed a greater frequency of violent acts and with a greater severity. Incidences of street gang leaders fighting, minor "fender benders" with a car, and movie clips of various wars were common among videos analyzed as "neither light nor serious." Videos placed in the category "mostly serious" often contained scenes of guns being aimed at others, cars running over people, fights between police and people in custody, and people appearing to shake apart prison bars to attack those inside. The final category, "extremely serious," had only 1 video placed in it, but this one contained the greatest amount of violence. It contained "hit men," shootings, blood, multiple car crashes, explosions, death of several people, kidnappings, fist fights, and destruction of property.

While this description may seem harsh, it must be remembered that they appeared infrequently. An analysis of the individual dayparts showed when a viewer would be more likely to see violence content in the videos. The "Prime time" daypart contained a total of 88 videos. Of this amount, 61 videos were analyzed as "nonviolent." This represented 69.3 per cent of the hours from 4 p.m. to 12 a.m. and thus was the greatest percentage of time for this "nonviolent" category. There were 12 videos representing 13.6 per cent of the time

in the "mostly light, comic, humorous" category. In the "neither light nor serious" category there were 11 videos, which comprised 12.5 per cent of the time. Just 4 videos were analyzed as "mostly serious" to represent 4.6 per cent of the time. None of the videos were evaluated as "extremely serious."

The "Daytime" daypart contained 116 music videos. Here, 78 videos were analyzed as "nonviolent," which indicated 67.2 per cent of the hours from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. A total of 31 music videos were analyzed as having "mostly light, comic, humorous" violence content, representing 26.7 per cent of the time. There were 5 videos in the "neither light nor serious" category and 2 videos in the "mostly serious" category, indicating 4.3 per cent and 1.7 per cent of the daypart time, respectively. Once again, none of the videos were evaluated as "extremely serious."

Finally, the "Late evening/Early morning" daypart of the hours from 12 a.m. to 8 a.m. contained 109 music videos. In the "nonviolent" category there were 73 videos representing 67 per cent of the daypart time, which was the least amount for this category. In the "mostly light, comic, humorous" category, there were 28 videos comprising 25.7 per cent of the time. Only 2 videos were analyzed as being "neither light nor serious," to represent 1.8 per cent of the daypart. Then, with a total of 5 videos, was the largest number for the category "mostly serious," to comprise 4.6 per cent of the time.

Also, this daypart had 1 video in the "extremely serious" category. Though this represented only .9 of the daypart time, it was the only daypart to have a video placed in this category.

Thus, this analysis revealed the "Late evening/Early morning" daypart from 12 a.m. to 8 a.m. was the one in which a viewer would be more likely to see violence content in music This daypart devoted the least amount of time to "nonvideos. violent" videos and had the greatest number of videos in the "mostly serious" category. Perhaps of greatest importance, however, was the fact this daypart included a video placed in the "extremely violent" category. The "Prime time" daypart from 4 p.m. to 12 a.m. could possible be labeled as "least violent" because it devoted more time to videos in the "nonviolent" category. It also devoted an almost equal amount of time to videos in the "mostly light, comic, humorous" category and the "neither light nor serious" category. The "Daytime" daypart also devoted a large proportion of time to videos in the "nonviolent" category. However, it devoted much more time to videos in the "mostly light, comic, humorous" category than it did to videos in the "neither light nor serious" category. Because this "Daytime" daypart devoted more time to videos in the "mostly light, comic, humorous" category than did the "Prime time" daypart, it could also possibly be labeled "least violent." Further analysis revealed much less time was devoted to videos in the "mostly serious" category than any other daypart. Thus this research

concluded the "Late evening/Early morning" daypart was the most likely one in which a viewer would see the greatest amount of violence content in music videos. Also, because the "Daytime" daypart devoted less time to videos in the "neither light nor serious" and "mostly serious" categories, this research concluded the "Daytime" daypart was "least violent."

A look at some of the statistics of the yearly Violence Index, (as presented in Violence Profile No. 10), showed what the trends in television violence content were for the years 1967 through 1978. The frequency (or rate) of violent actions per hour was the highest in cartoons, far surpassing the frequency found in prime time programs. In comparison, the frequency of music videos with any degree of violence content was much lower. The lowest frequency among the videos was 2.7 occurrences per hour. This was derived from the sum of all categories of violence in the "Prime time" daypart of Table XIV, OVERALL FREQUENCY. The greatest frequency among the videos was 3.8 occurrences per hour and the overall average frequency was 3.4 occurrences per hour. In comparison, the lowest frequency found in the violence profile was 3.8 occurrences per hour, which was found in the prime time hours from 9 p.m. to 11 p.m. during the 1967 to 1968 season. The greatest frequency in prime time was 6.9 occurrences during the 1975 to 1976 season, while the average frequency for prime time was 5.1 occurrences per year. Average cartoon frequencies have fluctuated from a low of 14.5 occurrences

per hour during the 1974 to 1975 season to a high of 34 occurrences per hour in the 1976 season, with an average of 21.7 occurrences during the 1967 to 1978 period. Thus, the highest average rate per hour for the music videos only equaled the lowest average rate per hour found for network programming in the Violence Profile. Therefore, this research concludes MTV videos are relatively "safer" than network programming, both prime time and cartoons.

This conclusion that MTV is relatively nonviolent differs from some of the recent research on this subject. When Thomas Radecki of the National Coalition on Television Violence conducted his studies on the violence level of MTV, he found different results. More than half of the videos analyzed in a six week period in 1983 showed signs of violence. Then another study in 1984 of more than 900 MTV videos indicated an average of 17.9 occurrences of violence each hour. However, the categories Radecki used were violent, intermediate (violence), nonviolent, and pro-social. Based on this classification system, little room was given for variations of the violence content. As a result, it is possible a video with a minimal amount of violence was placed in the intermediate category with other more violent videos. This research analyzed music videos with a classification system which allowed for violence content variations to be considered. Thus, instead of simply "violent," the categories "mostly serious" violence content and "extremely serious" violence content

Instead of simply "intermediate" violence, the were used. categories "neither light nor serious" violence content and "mostly light, comic, humorous" violence content were used. In addition, Radecki also evaluated the videos based on the words in the lyrics. Thus, a video may receive a "violent" label yet contain no visual signs of physical violence. This could lead to a higher percentage of videos being considered violent and as such may help support the conclusions Radecki reached. This could lead to the assumption "verbal" violence in music is as harmful as "physical" violence shown visually. If this is the case, then future research should reveal the possible effects of listening to the same music on the radio. However, one condition of such a study would be that the listener must understand the words of the song clearly, which is often hard to do. For this reason, this analysis avoided the category "verbal" violence. Therefore, if some of the lyrics were indiscernable, it would not affect the results.

Since Radecki released his conclusions, MTV executives have announced changes in their broadcasting schedule. In the past, heavy metal bands comprised one-third of airplay time. It is possible Radecki conducted his studies while heavy metal videos received a large share of airplay time, and subsequently found his high occurrence rates of violent acts. But this analysis, done after the announcement to cut back on heavy metal videos revealed different results. In addition, MTV constructs a video playlist based on musical trends which

are popular at the time. Because this analysis evaluated only one heavy metal video, it is safe to assume that heavy metal bands are not popular currently. This analysis reflects the current trends and indicates that a more "mellow" musical style has gained appeal. At this point in time, the amount of violence content on MTV is not high and the severity of violence is not great. This may change in the future as trends in pop music change. Parents who take the time to view a large sample of MTV programming should reach the same conclusions as this analysis, that the amount of violence content is low compared to the total videos aired and that the most likely time to view videos with violence is during the "Late evening/Early morning" daypart. Because most children are not viewing during this period, the music videos appearing during the remainder of the day may be considered relatively "safe" for children by most parents.

This present study may be replicated with an expanded classification system and a greater number of hours under evaluation to provide further research into this area of violence content of music videos. One possibility would be to obtain the MTV playlist and observing those videos as part of the analysis. Yet if this is done, the analyzer would still need to observe the time of day in which the music videos were aired.

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