[PT] Violence on National Television Surpasses that in the US

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Violence on Portuguese terrestrial channels is particularly acute on entertainment programmes, reveals the first in-depth study concerning the representation of violence on Portuguese television, sponsored by the Alta Autoridade para a Comunicaçao Social (High Authority for the Media) and published in March 1999.

Violence in entertainment programming is very high in terms of presence (number of programmes which have at least one violent interaction), frequency (average of violent interactions in a given programme) and density (duration of violent interactions in a given programme). Indeed, violence is present in 85 % of the entertainment programmes sampled. In each entertainment programme, the average number of violent interactions is 14.4, the frequency being particularly high in movies and cartoons. The density of violence corresponds to an average of 7 % of the entertainment programmes duration. The density of violence is higher on children's entertainment programmes (10 %) than in entertainment programming targeting adults (4 %). Commercials have a low level of representation of violence but in information programmes violent content is often present (6 % of information time is occupied with violent interactions).

The study Avaliaçao da Violência na Televisao Portuguesa - with a representative sample of 438 programming hours - attempts to evaluate the level of violence depicted in the four national terrestrial channels (RTP1, RTP2, SIC and TVI). This project defines violence according to two intention criteria: aggression and accident. Aggression is a type of behaviour targeting the aggressor him/herself or others (persons or objects) with the intent to cause physical or psychological harm; an accident is an unintentional event which causes harm to persons or objects. In addition to the evaluation of levels of violence on national television, this study establishes a comparative analysis with other international studies using comparable research methodologies. Therefore, the study indicates that the percentage of programmes with physical violence and the percentage of justified violent interactions is higher in Portugal than in the US (comparing with the National Television Violence Study).

The High Authority for the Media study concludes that justified and inconsequent violence might facilitate the absorption of aggressive types of behaviour and admits that the level of violent content in entertainment programming in Portugal is potentially more negative than in the US.

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Vala, Jorge, Luísa Lima und Rita Jerónimo (1999): Avaliaçao da Violência na Televisao Portuguesa, Alta Autoridade para a Comunicaçao Social.

Vala, Jorge, Luísa Lima and Rita Jerónimo (1999) Avaliaçao da Violência na Televisao Portuguesa (The Evaluation of Violence on Portuguese Television), Lisbon, Alta Autoridade para a Comunicaçao Social (High Authority for the Media).

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