[FR] Identification of violent programmes

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Mareike Stieghorst
Institute of European Media Law (EMR), Saarbrücken/Brussels

Since 18 November 1996, for the protection of minors, it has been obligatory to identify films which contain violent or erotic material. Agreement was reached between the CSA (Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel) , the French regulatory body for the media, and the national terrestial TV channels TF1, France 2, France 3 and M6. Five categories have been established in all: programmes are classified according to their compatibility with the spiritual, moral and mental development of children and young people. The classification, to be done by the above-mentioned broadcasters themselves, applies to all films, made-for-television films, series, cartoons and documentaries. The agreed symbols, which allow parents to judge whether or not a programme poses a threat to young people, are flashed on screen (before or during the programme) and are also shown in television listings magazines. The first category includes all unobjectionable programmes, in respect of which no restrictions whatsoever are planned. The second comprises programmes and films which contain some violent scenes. A green circle appears on screen before the programme, along with the warning "parental consent desirable".

The third category covers films and programmes which children under 12 are forbidden to watch, or which are harmful to the spiritual and mental development of children by reason of their violent content on a regular basis. Such programmes may not be broadcast shortly before or after children's programmes. An orange triangle appears before the programme, along with the warning "parental consent essential", or "not for children under 12". The fourth category comprises films which young people under 16 are forbidden to watch and programmes which contain a lot of violence and/or are of an erotic nature. They are identified by a red square visible both before and during the film, and may be broadcast only after 10.30 pm.

Films which are pornographic in nature or contain scenes of extreme violence fall into the fifth category, that of films which may not be broadcast at all.

Since its inception, the pay-TV channel Canal+ has operated its own system for protecting children and young people from television violence. This is a symbol on screen, which varies from light green to violet in colour, depending on the level of violence.

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“La lettre du CSA”, no.86, novembre 1996, pp 1-3.

La lettre du CSA, No.86, November 1996, pp 1-3.

”La signalétique pour la Protection de l’enfance et de l’adolescence à la télévision”, 23 octobre 1996, et texte de la présentation de M. Hervé Bourges, Directeur général du CSA.

“A visual system for Protecting Younger Television Viewers” of 23 October 1996, and speech of Mr.Hervé Bourges, the Director General of the CSA.

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