



The ABA has released new research results in its publication *Views on Viewing: Community views about commercial television, 1994-1996*. The ABA uses the results of this research to monitor the effectiveness of the commercial television industry code of practice.

Concern about television content stable over 3 years

One in five people said they had seen something on television in the previous week which they disliked or which concerned them, according to the new ABA publication, *Views on Viewing: Community views about commercial television, 1994-1996*.

In September 1996, the ABA commissioned the third in an annual series of national surveys of Australian views about material on television. The surveys also assess awareness of the television classification system. The 1996 survey involved face-to-face interviews with 1157 people aged 14 years and over.

The survey

The surveys contribute to the ABA's role in monitoring the effectiveness of the Commercial Television Industry Code of Practice under the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992*. The Commercial Television Industry Code of Practice was introduced in September 1993 and sets out the obligations of commercial television stations in relation to the classification



and placement of programs and commercials. The Federation of Australian Commercial Television Stations (FACTS) has conducted a review of the code and submitted changes to the code to the ABA for registration. The 1996 survey assists the assessment of the review and changes to the code.

Concern

The level of concern found in 1996 (22 per cent) was similar

to that found in 1995 (20 per cent) and 1994 (24 per cent). When the participants in the 1996 survey who were not concerned about anything they had seen in the previous week were asked about the previous nine months, a further 16 per cent expressed some concern. This gives a total of 38 per cent who had seen something during 1996 which they disliked or which concerned them.

When looking at particular areas of concern, 22 per cent

of responses given by those expressing concern about something they had seen in the previous week related to the portrayal of sex or nudity, 17 per cent to news and current affairs programs, 15 per cent to the content of advertising and 13 per cent to the screening of violence or aggression.

Concern about the portrayal of sex or nudity on television increased in 1996 compared to 1994 and 1995 and may be related to the screening of

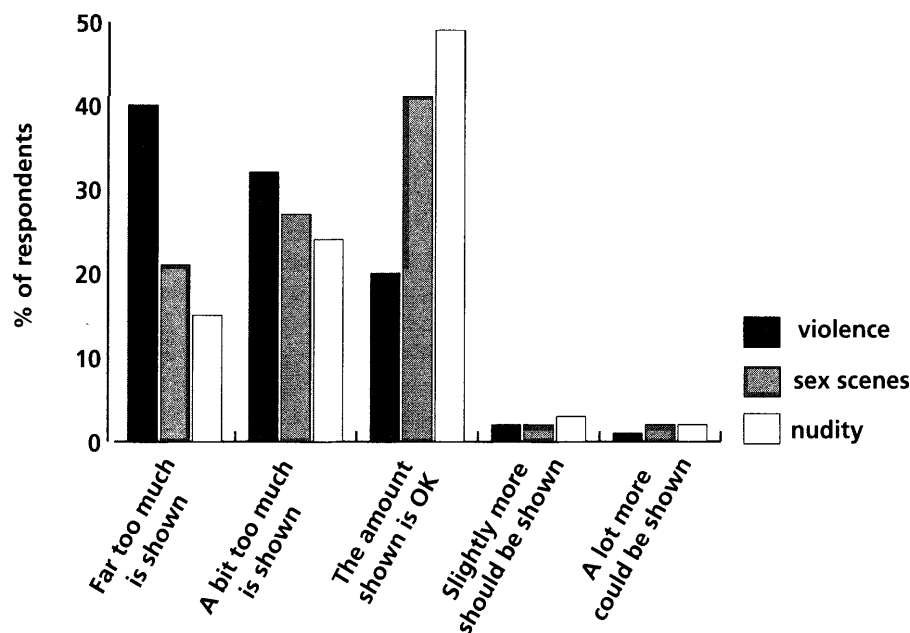


Categories of concerns	1994 % of responses	1995 % of responses	1996 % of responses
	Total responses = 381		
	Total responses = 290		
	Total responses = 312		
Sex/pornography/nudity	7	3	22
News/current affairs	26	34	17
Advertising content	9	9	15
Violence/aggression	12	6	13
Dramas/soapies	7	11	5
Cartoons	5	3	4
Sport	3	3	4
Movies	8	9	3
Comedy shows	3	5	2
Talk shows	1	3	<1
Others	18	13	13
Can't say	1	-	2

Respondents could provide multiple responses to open ended, unaided questions.

1994 n=296, 1995 n=223, 1996 n=249

Particular areas of concern about television in previous 7 days, 1994-1996



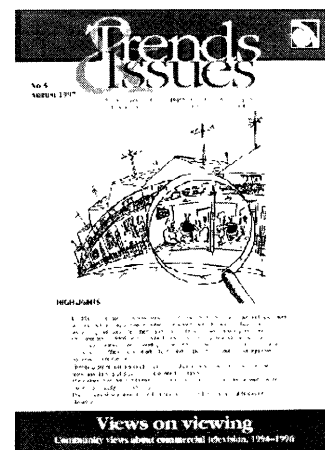
The amount of violence, nudity and sex scenes in movies starting at 8.30 p.m, 1996

lifestyle programs such as 'Sex/Life'.

The majority of participants in the 1996 survey could recall one or more of the classification symbols and the majority also displayed an understanding of the meaning of the M (Mature) and MA (Mature Adult) classification symbols.

While 75 per cent of respondents thought movies on commercial television starting at 8.30 p.m. were mostly or always suitable, there was some concern about the portrayal of violence in them. Seventy-two per cent of respondents said there was too much violence in these movies, compared with 47 per cent who said there were too many sex scenes and 31 per cent who thought there was too much nudity.

Results of the 1994 and 1995 annual studies have been published in the ABA's *Your Say: A Review of Audience Concerns about Australia's Broadcast Media, 1995 and 1996*. Some of this data was included in *Views on Viewing* for comparative purposes.



Copies can be obtained from the ABA, price \$10.

Call the ABA on (02) 9334 7700 or freecall 1 800 226 667.