

UNL psychologist claims TV violence drugs viewer

By Mary Jo Pitzl

Splat! Crunch! Pow! Holy shades of anti-social behavior, Batman! Not only is television showing us daily displays of violence and crime, but it is increasing our tolerance for these forces of evil! To the Batmobile at once!

The Caped Crusaders may righteously lament such callous attitudes, but their violent crime-fighting activities are part of the reason these attitudes exist. Their sphere of influence is not limited to Gotham City citizens, but includes all Americans feeding themselves with a steady daily diet of the boob tube.

Studies have indicated that television violence may be anesthetizing society's views of violence, making violence and aggression more accepted and tolerated.

Exposure to television violence definitely causes a greater tolerance for aggression, according to Richard Dientsbier, chairman of the UNL psychology department.

Dientsbier's study of media influences, entitled "Sex and Violence: Can Research Have it Both Ways?" was published in the *Journal of Communication* earlier this year. In his study, Dientsbier discussed two national reports that examined the effects of sex and violence on society.

Callous attitude

Some of the repercussions of constant exposure to television violence include a more aggressive attitude, a fear of the world and a callous attitude toward the victims of aggression, Dientsbier said. Positive benefits are few, if any, he said, adding that the only one he could recall is that displays of violence keep people entertained.

"Most people are aware of it (television violence), but most people just plain like it," Dientsbier said.

Violence is a main ingredient in most television adventure shows and viewers seem to relish it, he said.

"When you do violence to somebody else, you're exercising as much power as possible on someone," Dientsbier said.

Effects of seeing such shows are manifested in all age groups, according to Dientsbier. Children especially may be left with a high tolerance for aggression, which could be reflected in their behavior, he said.

Dientsbier said it is apparent from studies that the most aggressive behavior is found in the younger age groups. However, television violence cannot take the entire blame for aggressive actions, he added.

The recent case of a 15-year-old Florida boy who claimed he was influenced by televised displays of violence when he killed an 83-year-old woman is such an example, Dientsbier said.

Contributing factor

"It's entirely possible that watching violence on TV could be a contributing factor," he said, "but to suggest it would be the whole reason it is nonsense."

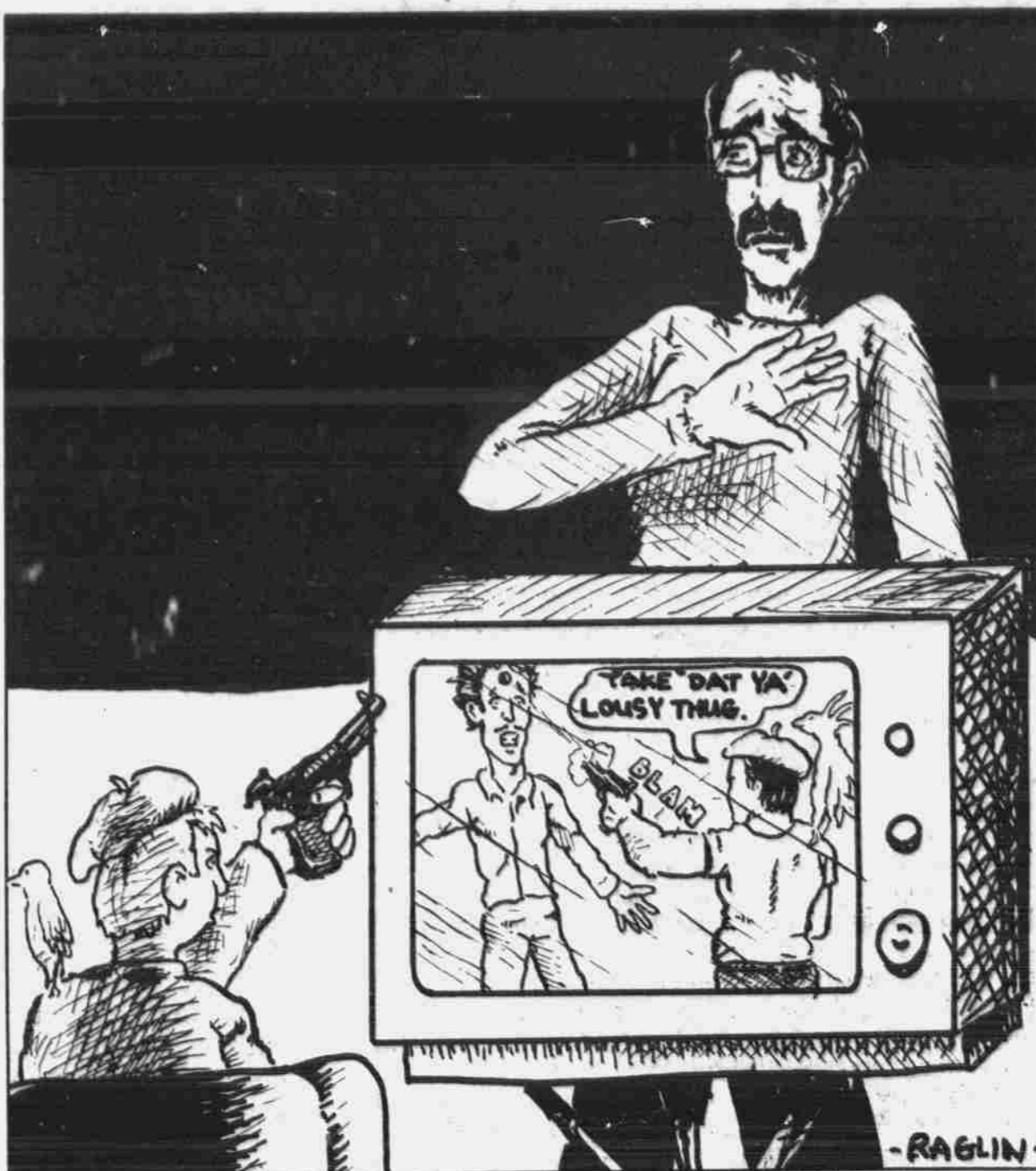
Dientsbier said television violence could foster aggressive actions because it gives a detached view of violence.

"Television exposes you to violence in a way that the feelings get removed from the victim," Dientsbier said.

Television programs do not present all aspects of reality, he said, pointing out that programs rarely show funeral scenes or the grief violent actions cause.

This detachment can cause a more callous attitude toward violence, he said. Although children mainly seem to be the subject of concern in complaints of television violence, adults are not exempt from such influences, Dientsbier said.

Adults often feel more threatened by the world after constant exposure to tele-



vised violence, he said.

A study concentrating on the 19-year-old age group has indicated that there is no correlation between violence on television and aggression in young adults, Dientsbier said.

However, as a generation of Americans who have been brought up in front of the television reach adulthood, it will be interesting to study how exposure to television violence may affect their decision, Dientsbier said.

Already proven

The idea that viewers come away with a higher tolerance for aggression already is being shown in society, he said.

"For example, legislation to help the victims of violence is generally unsuccessful," Dientsbier said. "We forget about the victim of the crime and worry about punishing the perpetrator. That's very, very callous."

Dientsbier said television violence should be protested on an individual level by the public. If viewers do not want so much violence on television they should boycott programs and their sponsors.

"The producers only make shows the public wants," Dientsbier said. He added that if Americans want less televised violence, they should use their influence as consumers to curtail it.

**Have a PAP test.
It can save your life.**

American Cancer Society.

THIS SPACE CONTRIBUTED BY THE PUBLISHER AS A PUBLIC SERVICE

2-FERS



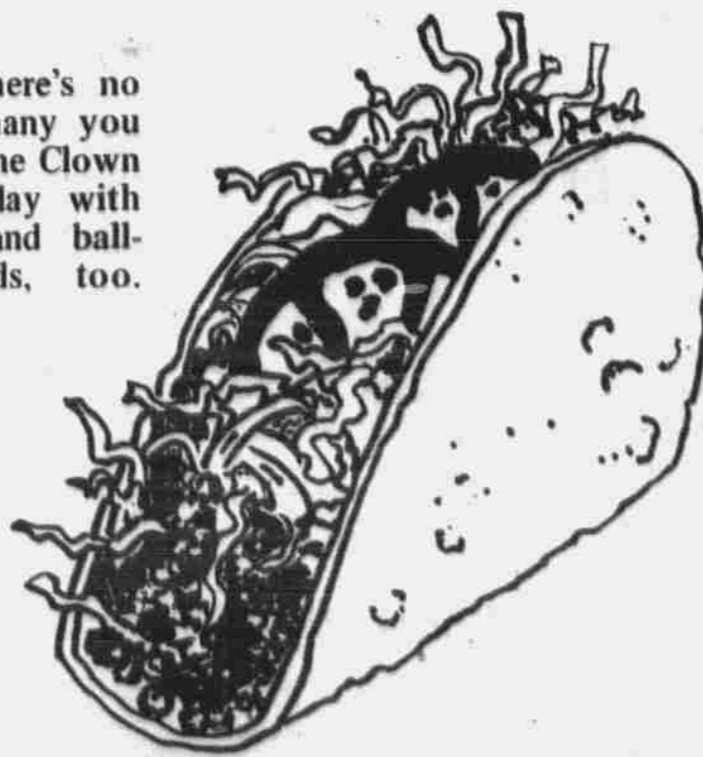
All day Thursday and Friday at the Union North Crib.
Present this Coupon and receive two small drinks for the price of one.



---COUPON---
2 Small Drinks For
The Price Of One
Nov. 17 and 18 Only
At The Union North Crib
---COUPON---

22¢ tacos.

That's 44% off! There's no limit, so see how many you can eat! Jelly Bean the Clown will be there all day with free bubble gum and balloons for the kids, too. Tacoholics unite!



**This Saturday Nov. 19
10 a.m. to 2 a.m.**



**TACO
INN**

1245 R Street