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"Effects of TV on Black Children"

Portland State University

Patrick Grant

Linda Torrence

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Patrick Grant and Linda Torrence, "Effects of TV on Black Children"
Portland State University
October 29, 1977

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This discussion includes a question-and-answer period with members of the audience, whose names are not identified. Some speakers are off-microphone during parts of the conversation and are partially unintelligible.

HOST: We are fortunate to have Dr. Pat Grant from the Portland School District here with us today. We will discuss the effects of TV on Black children and... since we have relatively a small group of people, I think we can probably... Pat can give his presentation and we can enter into some dialogue and discussion. Is that alright with you, Mr.... Dr. Grant?

PATRICK GRANT: Am I going by myself?

HOST: Seems to be. You are the only one so far here. *[voices in the background]*

AUDIENCE MEMBER *[in background]*: I'll support ya.

HOST: I'll be up here with ya and give you moral support.

GRANT: The media is up here, too.

[background noise on mic]

HOST: Linda Torrence will probably come back and she will... join us at that time.

[chairs and equipment moving and scraping]

GRANT: I had not planned to do this by myself, nor do I plan to speak a long time, just really share with you some of my concerns, some of my views on how I see the media affecting the education of Blacks, and I would not like to restrict it to children because I think the effect is far-reaching. It starts with youngsters and it also affects the kinds of decisions that adults make. Let's kind of back up and define "media" for my own personal self. When I talk about the media, I like to look at moving picture as it is a forerunner to television, and would like to go into radio; but to safeguard my age, I would say that I was not around at the point in time when radio was at the zenith, when it controlled all the kinds of information that it provided to destroy Blacks. But I'm looking at moving pictures. It was said sometime during the takeover of the Castro regime in Cuba, that if you ever want to destroy a society, just make a movie. And my feeling is that that has hold true throughout the history of the visual arts.

Let's, for example, look at some of the historical kinds of moving pictures and what it has done to us. Let's look at the Tarzan series. Let's look at the Charlie Chan series. And what kind of implication did those kinds of moving pictures have on Blacks as a whole? From my perspective, the Tarzan/Charlie Chan kind of moving pictures did a great injustice to Blacks. First of all, it alienated us from ourselves by destroying us at the roots. If you spoke to Blacks about Africa during the time when everyone went to see Tarzan swinging through the trees and Blacks running around with spears and half-naked, no one wanted to be African, no one wanted to be from Africa, no one wanted to do anything about Africa because no one wanted to identify with *those* people, where the great white father would swing through the trees and save them all from the lions and the tigers and the enemies. And that in itself was a very destroying kind of influence on Blacks, because it alienated them from themselves.

The Charlie Chan kind of movie had the same effect. Whenever a Black person appeared it was always white-eyed and scared of everything and its own shadows, and I think that perpetuated the syndrome that Blacks were afraid. Blacks were afraid of the dark. Blacks were afraid of *themselves*. As we move along the continuum of the movie-making industry, we see that at any point in time that Blacks make any inroad in the total survival of themselves as a people, the moving picture always managed to somehow come up with the kind of movie that destroy us.

Let's look at what happened to us after a cultural revolution in the 60s and early 70s. The moving pictures gave us *Super Fly*, and let's look at what *Super Fly* did to Black people in their total concept. The revolution of the 60s taught us that we were proud, that we were Black, that we were important, that our hair was important, that our dress was important, that everything about it was important, and *Super Fly* in one fell swoop destroy all that. We go back now to seeing young Black kids with rollers in their hair in Fred Meyers, and that says something. We see Black kids... that the importance of existence is wearing your hair pressed down to your

shoulder with a wide brim hat, and I think *Super Fly* played a very important part in that new syndrome that destroyed all the struggles that Blacks had gone through in the 60s and the 70s.

Let's talk about movies like *The Big Mack*, which is the kind of movies that they make when we talk about predominantly Black movies.¹ You're either pimp, a whore, or something in that species, and that is a very destructive thing, because it provides the kind of role models for Blacks that talks about if you want to survive then you must be a dope addict, or a dope pusher, or a pimp, or a whore. If you want to drive a Cadillac or live in a big house. Because in our movies, these are the kinds of things that hold up as truth. These are the people that *have* as opposed to those that have not, and I think it says something to us as Blacks, adults, and it said something to us as young Blacks growing up: who are the role models? It speaks to the system as a whole. As they would give us a *Super Fly* role model to follow, they do not provide us with the principals and the teachers and the lawyers and the doctors or the opportunities for those kinds of persons in our society to become the leaders. Why it is that there's no movie about George Washington Carver and his contribution? Or Drew? Or some of those other Blacks who have gone *beyond* those kinds of things; transcend the streets and have gone on to the more creative *productive* kinds of things that make Blacks feel important and worthwhile and strive for to be. I think that the moving picture has that impact.

Let us move to television, which is a very interesting kind of media, because it brings it into your home, it give it to you 24 hours a day (depending on what state you're in), and it lays on you the kind of trip that speaks to... where we are on a day-to-day basis. So they give us the kind of television show that we're supposed to relate to. Let's, I think, back up just a little... when we started in television, I think one of the first things I saw on the tube, and this'll probably date me too, was *Amos 'n' Andy*. *Amos 'n' Andy* is the comical black situation kind of comedy that they placed on TV and had all Blacks in New York—'cause I remember growing up in New York—fighting the subway in running home to see *Amos 'n' Andy*, and one of the reasons why was because that's all there was. If you wanted to see someone Black on TV, you ran home and saw *Amos 'n' Andy*. And all *Amos 'n' Andy* did was destroy each other, destroy the whole Black race as a whole, but that show survived as one of the few... right?

Nat King Cole came on television and he lasted about half a year and then he was canned. Any Black person coming to the television that presented an image that one could deal with did not survive because the sponsor said, "This could not be shown in Mississippi, they wouldn't buy it, because Blacks don't do that," or "This couldn't be shown here or there," so it did not survive. The kinds of television shows that destroyed us... somehow or the other managed to survive. Let us look at some of the current kinds of things. Just going off the air, *That's My Mama*. Now, everyone will say, "Well, what's wrong with that? That's a good show," but let's look at the

¹ Grant may be referring to the 1973 film *The Mack*.

implications of *That's My Mama*. It says that most Black families living in the situation where the mother is a dominant figure and there's no father figure in the home. I think that's an important thing because what it says, it speaks to what it is the white folks want us to hear all these years that the Black man is lazy, he's no good, he lives in the home, he has babies and he leaves. And what it says to young Black kids growing up, that this is the kind of pattern that you can follow and you can survive in, and it's very subtle and it's nicely done and you laugh, but you gotta look at: what are you laughing at?

Let's look at *Good Times*. *Good Times* started off with the family as a unit, and within that unit the struggle of survival, of being poor in the ghetto continued to perpetuate "This is where we are and this is where we'll be," and our total survival is *not* in the world itself, but how do we survive in that ghetto we're confined to? And eventually they've gone that further step: the father disappears. Whether it's death or some other kind of thing, but it always happens that the male figure in a Black home disappears, and that says something to me. Let's look at *The Jeffersons*, right? Here's a man who has *made* it. He's at the top of the heap, right? But at all points in time the Jefferson, the man in that family, is put down by his maid, by his white neighbor, by his white brother-in-law. You see? I think one has to look at what those shows do subtly and dispel with the fact that it's supposed to be humorous. It has other kinds of implications.

And I think the final, the *triumph* of Blacks in the whole role of the television world has to be *Roots*. I think *Roots* is probably the white world's gift to us as their greatest contribution to Black folks in the area of television media. Question I ask myself is, "What do I think about *Roots*?" I think that *Roots* was good, it was well done, but I think there's some things that we need to look at. First of all, we need to look at the cast. If one looks at the cast of *Roots*—and these are people that are known by a lot of people because they are personalities: radio, television, movie stars—90% of the cast of *Roots* that were Black are living with, going with, married to whites. That says something to me, personally, and I think one oughta deal with that. When one look at the story as it compares to a television story *vis-à-vis* the book, one has to look at that as an implication. When one look at the ending of *Roots*, again, we were saved and assisted by that great white father, and it was played very clearly for us on the television that in the end, it was yes, this white boy that came to our help and saved us *again*. One oughta look at that. So I think that when one look at the media and how it addresses us and how it provides for us, one ought to ask many questions, and one ought to look *beyond* the superficial kinds of things that they do for us. I would like to stop here.

[*chairs and microphone moving around*]

HOST: Our next guest is Linda Torrence.

[voices in background]

LINDA TORRENCE: Okay, I'm Linda Torrence and I'm... right now I'm with the American Red Cross. I've been employed in broadcasting... I was for two years, I'm no longer with broadcasting. However, I am still concerned about the media and I'm more concerned about the media situation here in the state of Oregon. I worked at one of the local television stations for a while and I think I, like a lot of other Blacks, became frustrated, because it seems to me that some of the people within that station wanted to decide for me what they wanted to do with me, and I just had to tell them that I make those decisions, they don't make those decisions for me. I know what I want to do and if they can't deal with that, I'll have to deal with them in some other way. Right now I'm involved with another organization, and we are very much concerned about the media in the state of Oregon, but I'm concerned about citizens' input, in terms of programming.

I don't know an awful lot about broadcast—about the broadcasting industry because it is a very complex thing and I don't profess to know—but I'm concerned about local programs. We have been in the in the midst of monitoring some stations for the past three months and the people that I had monitoring for me really didn't do a good job, but based on some of the things that I was able to pick up, it was just terrible! Let me give you some examples. One local television station did a news story on some firm out of the state of California that was enlisting people to sign up for jobs as bus drivers. They were looking for about... over a hundred people, for bus drivers. The story involved an interview with a bus driver who was Black and the interviewee... the interviewer was a white person, and *that*, to me... when my child looked at that story, if he had saw that particular news story and say, "Hey, is that all a Black person can do, is drive a bus?" Another instance: one station, I don't recall which station it was, did an interview in the downtown area on the streets, and I can't remember what the question was, but they were dealing with: should parents inform their children if they going to be... if they're dying of a terminal disease. I think there must have been at least six people that were interviewed. Out of the six, there wasn't a single Black person. There may have been one Indian, but out of the entire six or eight people, no Blacks. No Blacks whatsoever.

There's not a single Black anchor person on the news here, I think maybe on channel 2, there may be one that's on on weekends. But here in the state of Oregon it doesn't seem like a hell of a lot is being done. You know, people watch TV and they say if they see a Black reporter, they think that, "Well, KGW or KATU is doing a real good job. They have a Black reporter," so what? Those Black reporters aren't going into the Black community. There's hardly any news on the television station here regarding the Black community. Even public affairs—I've watched a number of public affairs programs and to my knowledge, there's not a single Black or other minority that hosts a public affairs program. That's the area that we've always been shoved

into, and I'd like the community—the people in this community—to really think about it. As I said, I don't have an awful lot. What I wanted to do today was encourage some questions from you and how you've seen the television and radio stations here in the state of Oregon, and have you really stopped to think about what's really happening to this community, in terms of television programming?

HOST: We open for questions now.

AUDIENCE 1: [*in background, off mic*] I would like to ask you Doctor... your interpretation or your concept of what has happened, or what is happening, in relation to *both* the Redd Foxx show and the Richard Pryor show.

GRANT: I have happened to accidentally see one of the Richard Pryor shows. I think it was the first one. My feeling was it was a disaster. It was a situation where, again, we're utilizing our own people to destroy us. I think the word "nigger" has many connotations to many people. I think that if you build a show around that, it does something to an audience, and it legitimizes the word so that you're allowed to walk up in the street and some white boy call you a "nigger" and thinking it's okay, because Pryor does it. I think the show, Pryor's show, was badly done. But that's neither here nor there, because I don't know that much about the technical aspects about putting a television show together. But I think when you take a talent like Richard Pryor, and do what they did with it with the Richard Pryor show, it's just another example of how we effectively neutralize our young, talented people. I think the show was, in my view, was bad.

Redd Foxx' show would probably survive, in my thinking, for probably a year or two, and the reason why is because one has to look at Redd Foxx as historical performer with a lot of tricks. He has developed over the year the mechanism for survival. And so what he has done is put together a survival package for a show. I think that one need to go beyond that, and ask ourself the question, what it is that they are responsible for to Black audiences when they put these shows together. Is it to destroy us? Is it to enlighten us? Is it to provide us entertainment? Or is it a combination of all those things? And my feeling is, I am not happy with those shows, but that's personal, and I think I'm not happy with them because it's not doing the kinds of things they *can* do. They're not addressing themselves to Black kids. They're not addressing themselves to intellectual Blacks at all. They're addressing themselves to a middle-class, white audience who, again, needs to be reinforced that Black folks can get out and dance and sing and make you laugh. And that is historically the whole procedure in which Blacks broke into the theatre, and I think we've gone too far to regress.

AUDIENCE 2: How do you see the... Sidney Poitier and... [*inaudible*]?

GRANT: I think, probably, if one look at entertainment, and look at talent and genius of people, I think the only comical team that is providing entertainment for Blacks on a very pleasant level

is the Cosby team, at this point in time; because their movie addresses themselves to the sole purpose of entertainment. Doesn't deal with a lot of issues, but it doesn't destroy anyone in the process. So I think from my point of view, they're a very healthy team, and they provide the comic relief that one needs in going to motion pictures.

AUDIENCE 3: Yeah but, one thing, I think one important thing that I think takes really place in Portland shows in distorting especially African, you know, on TV, showing up African... running around with naked clothes all the time, you know, having no clothes on. Or having just... you know, just having a wrong image all the time about Africa, how do you think that this affects? In my experience, for instance, I have been asked a lot of questions saying that, when I say I'm from Ethiopia, "What is Ethiopia? African." And when you say African, first thing they look at me, some people, this is exception of course, they say, "You are an African, how come, where is the big lip? What is that nose? Where did you get... how..." [cough] They have the image of an African, what it is [...] ...what it has been showed to them from? What do you think about that?

GRANT: I think I spoke briefly to that earlier, but let me say that I think one of the things that one has to look at is why that was done, and one has to recognize that that was not an accident. That was deliberate, okay? And it was deliberate because alienation of a people is very important if you want to maintain a subservient kind of relationship. For example, if you have Blacks in the United States saying, "I do not want to identify with those people because I do not look like that," then it divides the race as a people. It divides the Black Americans from the Black Africans from Black West Indians from Blacks anywhere in the world. So the purpose of that was to divide, and in division you can conquer. It maintains slavery in the United States, it maintains slavery in Africa, and it provided us with strong grounds never to unite as a people, because, "I don't want to identify with that."

I am sure, in reverse, the education of the African people, as I know it is in the West Indies, is that Black Americans have been slaved historically and they have no motivation, they are... they do nothing but drink. They live in ghettos, and they curse, and therefore those are not the kind of people that you wanna go with. When you come to the United States as a foreigner, it is again reinforced, because as a Black foreigner in the United States, there's certain places you can go, there's certain things that you can do that Black Americans cannot do. And one feels that, "Well, gee, I must be better," but it's not because you're better, but it's because they want to widen that gap and create conflict so that when a Black American says, "I cannot relate to an African," or an African says, "I can go out with a white girl or I can go to a white folks' home and have dinner and feel comfortable, but I can't relate to my Black brothers," there's a reason for that. And the whole process behind the moving pictures and behind that kind of an indoctrination in education is to maintain the gap between us so that we're continuously struggling and fighting with each other.

HOST: *[calls on member of the audience]*

AUDIENCE 4: I had a... just a question about the point that was raised earlier to [...] the whole audience question. Seems to me that the media, television, and movies, the money behind that whole media is primarily, I would imagine, white money. So it's the money, I would think, that dictates the audience that they're, you know, developing the movies and the television programs for. I'm just wondering how you can go about breaking, then, what appears to be that kind of, you know, cyclical pattern of the money generating the audience, and if the money is white, the audience is gonna be white. Can you break that? What do you do to break it? How do you change it?

TORRENCE: I think number one in terms of programming, as long as you know that television stations and radio stations are gonna have to rely on some dollars and cents, you gonna always have advertisers who are going to buy broadcasters, because that's what makes that station operate. They are not about to let some group or some public affairs program take priority over a prime time show. So you have to look at it in terms of dollars and cents, and as far as I can tell, it's gonna always be dictated that way. Because the advertisers do, in a sense, control programming.

GRANT: But I think too, we've got to recognize, you see, that we've been told historically that we're a minority. We're only a minority in the United States. If one look at the total minority population in the United States: Blacks, Mexican Americans, Chicanos, whatever, one have to recognize that if you start off with 22 or 23 million Black people, we have an audience. We have dollars, and that is shown to us every day because now Black people start brushing their teeth. Now Black people start taking baths. Now Black people start buying these different kinds of products. So they're showing it to us, you see? So it's not that we don't control the dollars, it's that they want us to *think* that we don't control the dollars. I think we oughta recognize, at some point in time, that we've got buying power, we've got spending power, and we've got some money that has been contributed to those persons that buy TV slots, and that we oughta start recognizing that if we, in mass, protest the use of certain sponsors, then we can control some of the shows that we get. As long as we keep feeling that we don't have any power, we won't. And we need to recognize that we can utilize some of those sponsors to make some changes and some inroads in the kind of programmings that happen for us. Thanks, Linda.

AUDIENCE 5: [...] ...white people spend \$8 billion dollars a year which is greater than the economy in Canada, generally. And one of the biggest lacking that Blacks... that we've had is generally... the failure to recognize and understand the economic power because the industry understands it very well. They already know it. [...] said, if Black folks went to Kool cigarettes and said, "Do you have any Black vice presidents?" and said, "If you don't get some Blacks in those top jobs, we're gonna quit buying Kools, you're gonna go out of business," or some other

thing. But it's very big. Trouble is, it just hasn't been organized yet, even on the local scale. Like getting a Black show on, you know, they want to put out a public affairs [...] and they say, "Well, we don't have a sponsor," you know, people could... if you take a particular store or industry in a particular city, [...] or whatever it is, it has 90 percent of its volume from Black... the Black community, and have a group approach that store or company about sponsoring this show so they could get off of 6 am Sunday morning or midnight Saturday into a decent hour, and say, "Okay, why don't you sponsor us?" But there's a lot of economic power, a lotta clout, and the industry knows that. The advertisers know that. But they are trying to keep it from us.

[*voices talking at once*]

TORRENCE: Isn't *Black Journal* free?

Audience member 5: No, *Black Journal*? You have the... Pepsi-Cola backs that.

TORRENCE: Okay, that's another example. There's not a single station, television station, in the immediate area that carries that program. It's absolutely free.

AUDIENCE 6: Yeah, well that's why we got organized here and began to threaten some petitions, because not only has it been free to public broadcasting stations, but it's now available to commercial broadcasting stations as of now, so that even commercial broadcasting stations can carry it, Pepsi-Cola still funds it. But I wanted to point out something in response to what she [*referring to audience member 4*] said. The culprit, and it's a vehicle, that allows this discrimination, of course, is this rating system that TV stations and radio stations have, this rating system. And as long as they go on the basis of that rating system, and since we are fewer in numbers: Black people, Chicanos, Asians, and so forth, and white people are more in numbers, as long as they go on the basis of that rating system, then of course they're going to appeal to that majority in numbers, as far as race is concerned. So you were asking how could you change it? As far as Black people uniting, and stop buying stuff, I don't think that's hardly gonna happen. That's the millennium. That's the millennium and that's what we hope for, but there are those people who are attempting, hoping for, looking for ways (legally and otherwise) to disassemble or dismantle that rating system, because that is the system that helps them decide that they are going to go to a certain program, because a majority are looking at that program, and that's white folks, and they just in the last couple years, I think it was-- they just began Arbitron for radio, and so forth, and Nielsen for TV just began to count Black people. You know... has anybody here ever got a book sent to you? Well a few months ago, I got one. Really surprised me. Somebody must have said, "Send Marcus ... a book," or something, [*chuckles*] you know... but that's the system, and unless we change that, if that was eliminated, course they'd come with another system... let's face it.

[*voices in background*]

AUDIENCE 6: Okay, Mary.

AUDIENCE 7: Okay, yeah. Basically the media today is just an extension of minstrel shows in the 19th century. Basically the same stereotypes that were perpetuated then of us being ignorant, of us being cowardly, and so on, and so forth, are the same stereotypes that are perpetuated today. I think one of the better shows I saw on television was *Minstrel Man*, and *Minstrel Man* was trying to make the point that, “Baby, you’ve come a long way,” that things have really changed. At one time, you had to put on whiteface or blackface or what have you, and you had to make fun of each other, you know, you had to call yourselves liars and cowards and so on and so forth. And they’re trying to make the white population think that we have progressed economically, politically, and so on and so forth, that all of the sudden, now Black people have clout. And basically in doing this there has been a polarization between the races, because now white people resent us. They don’t like the idea that we may be able to go to college and take one of their places in college, this is what [...] is all about. All of this is actually perpetuated and maintained by the media to keep us battling against one another and so on and so forth, while there are a few people at the top that are reaping all the benefits.

So what basically you're talking about is a change in the entire system. I hear people talking about prison reform, okay, everybody wants to go in and make the prisons country clubs. Well, you’re still gonna have a great number of people going into prisons! Okay, you’re still going to have a great number of crimes being committed unless you begin to talk about changing the system. We’re talkin’ about now changing the media. Okay, until we can change the white supremacy culture... you know, we're still going a very racist, biased, discriminating system, you know. I'm not saying don't. I'm just saying we've got to begin to think about the baby and not just the adult, or vice versa. [*chuckles*]

AUDIENCE 8: I just wanna say they had this television program on, I think last week Sunday, about ancient civilizations in North America. And they talked about the Olmec civilization that predated the Mayan civilization, and they dug up the statues and, to me, the statues—and I had read an article, I can't remember the man that wrote it—they came before Columbus; the Black man that wrote that the statues are obviously Black people, you know. When you look at it, those are statues of Black people, but when they had their consulting professor from Yale ask, you know, “Where did these people that build these statues, that developed this accurate calendar system, come from?” he listed off *everywhere*, and at the very end he said, “Maybe even Africa.” And... [*some voices in background*] no acknowledgement that it could have been Black Africans that did it, you know, they might be willing to concede—there might have been Egyptians it came over there, but Black African civilization nobody talks about, nobody—you never see any presentations about things like that. And that... I just wanted to mention that is

another way to reinforce the notion that there is no civilization in Africa, and that Africa had no influence on the world.

HOST: Anyone gonna respond?

AUDIENCE 7: I just wanted to make a comment on what Linda was saying earlier. We do have one Black host on a public affairs show, on *Getting It Together*, and that's Herb Cawthorne. But that show is on at 9:30 or maybe 8:30 on Sunday mornings...

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yeah? Sunday mornings...

AUDIENCE 7: ...and is repeated at 6:15 in the morning on Thursdays, you know, which is really weird hours. I don't know anybody that's gonna get up and actually watch a show at that time in the morning. But one of the comments that I've heard a lot at the station I work for is that the reason we don't have more Black programming here in Oregon is because of the proportion of Blacks to the whole viewing audience in Oregon, is that it's not that great, so therefore it doesn't really deserve very much programming. And I feel like that if people called in, like we do get a lot of calls on the *Getting It Together* show, you know, if people like it, they watch it on Sundays, but it hasn't really affected the time that it's being put on. You know, a lot of people have said that the time is bad, but we haven't had any efforts to change that time, maybe to sometime in the afternoon where people are available and will be watching.

TORRENCE: They do have a fixed time period for that program now.

AUDIENCE 7: Yeah, it's not fixed, though. It's either at 8 o' clock Sundays or maybe 9:30 Sundays, it just depends, and sometimes it's pre-empted by football. And then it's on at 6:15 Thursday, and that's the only set time for it, in the morning.

[*voices talking at once*]

AUDIENCE 9: There's one problem that bothers me about that argument, the argument that we shouldn't show Black shows or have to appeal to a Black audience because of the proportion of the population. That argument bothers me because it's really odd to be saying, if you ask me, just... I mean it seems to me that the broader white community, I mean, if in fact [...], you know, it seems to me that it's important for the white community to be exposed to a more rational and more truthful image of Blacks in America, Blacks in Africa, and you know, the whole scheme of things. The proportion argument is just a bunch of baloney!

AUDIENCE 7: That's true. But what can we do about it... [interrupted by next speaker]

AUDIENCE 10: Well, because what you have to talk about is impact of Blacks and not percentages. You know, regardless to what percentage we are, we have a fantastic impact:

housing, education, everything you name! White people make a decision based on how many Black people are there, how many Black people are gonna be there, how close they live to ya, and what have you. This whole world, this whole society, you know, from the Civil War on down, has made decisions based on Black people, so our impact is what has to be considered and its effect on society. I don't let 'em run that percentage argument on me, you see, because if they're talkin' 'bout doing a movie on jails, they'll say, "Well gee, because there's a high percentage of Blacks there." So they will use whatever percentage that fits the situation, but if they're talkin' 'bout hiring jobs, then they don't even wanna deal with the SMSA! And I had... a station at San Francisco, they came up with 6.8% Black. The SMSA put out by the state of California says there's a 9.8 [percent]. They said... what they said is, "Well, we're using the number of Blacks in our recruitment area," see? So they're always looking for that lower percentage when it comes to jobs! But that higher percentage if you're talking about welfare or jails. So you have to establish your own argument that refutes that, and if you deal with impact like in San Francisco... hell, even the Chinese in San Francisco wer afraid of Black people. [laughter] Even they fought against bussing because they didn't want to go to school with Blacks. So concentrate on the whole impact we have on society. And the Chicanos... [laughter from audience] the Chicanos, they say, "Well hell, the Blacks are gettin' it, we want some!" [laughter from audience] So consequently, we impact on everybody!

AUDIENCE 11: That station, they probably won't get away with that bit about the recruiting...

AUDIENCE 10: Oh, I got it in my petition, yeah, the SMSA and so forth.

[response in background]

AUDIENCE 10: I hope they don't...

AUDIENCE 11: I wanna go back to the... [cough] go back to the programming. You know, the commission, FCC, does not get involved in timing the shows, you know? Telling 'em when to have it, because that's broadcasters' determination to make, but you see, I don't think.. 'course if you follow me like this and I'm wrong, but [chuckle]... I haven't seen a petition yet, or I think if the petition is filed and framed in the right way, it doesn't say we don't like the time slot at 6 in the morning, or we don't like it midnight, just because it's early. But if the time slot was related to the fact that we don't think that a program of this nature in this area coming out at 6 in the morning *really* is serving the public interest, you see, as opposed to just saying it comes on at a bad hour. Most of the petitions will hit and mention... the time slot. [cough] Well, we have what we call boilerplate language, where there's a sentence that you use for that: "Well, the commission does not get involved in so on and so on," to take care of that.

But, see, people might have to think about, not so much what the commission's gonna do— 'course you never know—but you wanna give yourselves some legal aid in what the court might

do... and if you frame a time slot, and have a *good enough* case—what do they call them all—a good [on] all fours [*the legal issues of the current case are identical to another case and thus appeals for same outcome*]... something might be rather unique, where you've got a [...] program that's very popular if it was on a different time, or some issues were very controversial, and they're hitting it at 6 o'clock in the morning continuously, and there's been a lot of concern about it. You say, "This station's supposed to show the public interest. It's not serving the public interest when that show is on at that time," that would create some interesting comments [...] I think. If the time was not filed just because it's *on* at 6, but you're not really serving the tastes and needs of the [...] community by putting that show on at that particular time. Now, the commission wouldn't say, "Take it off and put it on a different time." All it would take is for a one-line sentence in a 20-page commission order that says, "We do not think that that time slot is the best possible time slot," or, "We are concerned that this may not serve the public interest." It doesn't have to say anything more than that to send the signal about the time slot situation. But the situation would have to come up in the right way, and I think it'll probably come up itself. There'll be a goodie around somewhere where that's there... where you have a good example. But the argument that, "Well, we don't like the time slot," we can't do anything about the time, 'cause then we get kicked from the court for other things. But if the public interest... always keep it in the public interest, and people say, "What's that?"... well, whatever the court says it is, for the FCC.

[*chuckle from audience*]

TORRENCE: What about the particular program that Mary made reference to? They weren't even promoting the show! You know, Blacks didn't even know when the hell that program was coming on. It was subject to come on any time, they didn't... we didn't know. [voice speaking up in background] They didn't promo, they have now just began to promo and I noticed once, I think, [...] because of... King Broadcasting trying to buy this facility in California. I noticed one night when the Monday night football was on, at the top of the hour they promo-ed Herb Cawthorne's *Getting It Together*...

AUDIENCE: ...I think you oughta know that thanks to [...] really, King Broadcasting buying a station out in Hollywood, Berkeley, and a media activist buying a station... they bought. And so I talked with Linda, and you know, they came down there, and they would tell me all the good things they were doing up here, you know, treatin' Black folks nice [*laughter*] and 'course you know I got these ears when I hear that, you know? I know what it *means*. And so I asked Linda about it, I called her, and she had contacted me about it and she had mentioned a program at 9:30. So the president of King Broadcasting, Ancil Payne, who is a big man in broadcasting and all of that, came down, so he was telling me all the good things we've done, and I said, "Yeah, I understand you have a program on at 6:30 in the morning—Sunday morning—you call that

good?” And his eyes got big and so forth, and the next time I talked with Linda, and I think it was probably the next day or day after, is when they start promo-ing the program, letting people know, and evidently, it done changed its time slot. So, you know, things can be affected to a certain extent.

AUDIENCE 11: [...] a petition about the lack of Black programming. The stations won't listen. We have this programming goes on so and so times a week, et cetera. That's a... this is how good a job we're doing. See, that's how they use that.

HOST: [...] See, I'm not so sure that that is a Black program. I think there's a Black *host*, but that may not be a Black program. And, the people that own the program really don't reflect the Black viewpoint at all, it reflects a broader community issue, in terms of special issues in relation to education or some other sort of topic, and I really haven't seen a Black person... well, one Black person on that program, since it's been... so it's an exception.

[lots of people talking]

[UNIDENTIFIED]: ...it's not on a regular basis.

AUDIENCE 11: What do you do in response to a station that says, “Well, listen. Black people are gonna [...]. Black people are gonna [...]. Black people are interested in housing, and we show this show is directed towards education, housing, healthcare, everybody! Black people are included in that. So what do you fire back on that? They say, “It's a Black host,” ...but it's not a Black show. So they say if these are problems that concern Black people: health, education, housing, so that's the response the stations will get. They'll say, “Well, wait a minute. Black people aren't the only ones who need housing...”

AUDIENCE 10: Oh, I don't make that statement...

AUDIENCE 11: No, I know. *[overlap in conversation]* ...but they just throw that back and the response has to be geared to that.

AUDIENCE 10: I think we should... what I raised that issue for us is not that we need to deal with that TV show, then we need to deal with that with the host... in terms of who he selects for this program.

AUDIENCE 11: Or who selects what for him.

AUDIENCE 12: Yes, right, and not only that, [...] school district got. It tends to... it doesn't give the view of the Black community, okay? It gives the view of the people that climb over and getting their input from the Black community and go back and interpret it as they see fit. And I'm saying that I don't think it's the whole show. When you've only got one person, you don't

have a debate—two sides—it’s not a fair issue until we come on at a later time and respond to something that happened three months ago. Just doesn’t... get it.

[inaudible question in background]

[UNIDENTIFIED]: I think that's one of the problems in this state, Clarence. Blacks and other minorities really don't realize the real power of the media, and that's why broadcasters are doing these very same things that they're doing right now, because groups within the state have not applied any pressure to these broadcasts, [interruption from audience] and they can say—[speaking to audience member] ‘scuse me—they can say, “Well, we haven't been approached.” Or they can say, “When we...” or, “Marcus and I went to channel 2 and we looked through the public files,” and then you can tell right away that they were unaccustomed to some Black or some other minority coming into that station going through those files, because right away they were very defensive. Marcus and I couldn't even... [raises voice] we couldn’t work without the attention of these two men right there with us.

[inaudible response]

AUDIENCE 12: I have to disagree that Black people aren’t aware. I think that they are very much aware, to the point that there’s fear, and I think it has been demonstrated in this racist state, and in fact, the whole region is completely racist for... and it’s blatant. It used to be subtle. It’s no longer subtle; it’s blatant racism. That we know the power of the pen and the power of media. And we know that how many Black people can we afford to waste or to lose, because we do lose, and we can go back and give you a history... a historical event of activity that’s taken place or any Black person that dared to speak out in the Black community... how long will they stay around if suddenly, they’re co-opted from all kinds of pressure. I even know, too, a minister that was trying—he was trying to be censored—and I'm going to call names: Dr. Richard Hughes, because he came out in support of a Black person that was very active in saying what he thought and, you know, in views of when Black people wasn't getting their fair share, that he, you know, he represented all people: poor, but Black... He’s Black and first of all, his first concern was *Black* poor people. This minister came out and the Urban League person came out and I know for a *fact* that the... Richard Hughes from the Council Churches went to the Archbishop, you know, to do, you know, to dictate to this Black minister who had his own church.

So we do know, and that we are aware of the unfairness of the media, but how many people that... do we take a chance on losing? I think it’s a protective layer that we don't put pressures on community leaders because of the fact we know they're no longer around, and too many of them. And I'll give you examples. I'm not justifying anything about Commissioner Jordan, but I’m going to tell you what a white man told me, “Ben, you gotta realize one thing. Let’s take

example Cleveland Gilcrease and Charles Jordan. Black youth coming out of school. Which road will they take? Do they go their Jordan route, or do they go the Gilcrease route? They're both community people. They're doing some good things. One is vocal and just call a spade a spade. The other one taken work in another kinda avenue, and that image he gets to work and, you know, do his thing in a quiet way, where the other person says the wrong time, [...] and it was... it is a conspiracy, you know, we have proof and documented proof and even have a recording of a meeting that took place, okay? Where it was planned. But those are the kind of things that a lot of Black people fear. Not only... if the person doesn't fear, a lot of people that support the people that are doing the kind of things that they like to see, that we try to protect by not putting them out front. So you know, how do you deal with that? There's a lot of things that I think is very much... I don't think any of this we're talking about is new to most people.

It's what do we do about it and how do we coalesce, and what kind of support can we get and what kind of dollars can we get that are not federal dollars that can alleviate? Because when you're talkin' 'bout federal dollars, you're talkin' 'bout a lot of strings. You're talkin' 'bout suburban white community tech training and those kind of institutes that try and give you money. They give it with strings, and they have to be the controlling factor. We appreciate funds, but I think we all long ago realized that we do have some potential and we do have some expertise and we do have some knowledge. But the thing of it is getting the dollar turned loose without the connotation that every Black man steals, and the news media paints that all the time! A good example was at the Westminster church about 3 minutes... 3 weeks ago... there was two lawyers: one was working with HUD and some other kinda people, and he came out. He talked about the PMSE situation and our projected—now this was a projected dollar, we know and was authorized to spend 78 thousand dollars on a program which was a one million point five program. What it was is that if we let go, the city fought it so hard, they blocked a \$298,000 grant just to do a study for three months, okay? Most of the data was in, but it had to get the validity and all that in, it had to have that. With that, for this particular region, coming to this city, the cost of the lobby and legislation would have been a three million dollar grant a year, for the next three years, which would have been nine million dollars coming into the city of Portland. That was blocked by a screaming mayor, and you know, throwing tantrums and all, and all that kind of stuff. But what do you do?

AUDIENCE 4: You do... one of the things Marcus suggested, and one of committees that I'm a part of, we have formed a media committee. And you form those groups and you band together, and you take those problems to the broadcasters and make them aware of the fact that you're not... you're discontented with the programming, and you are discontented with those things; and if you don't get any results, then you start writing letters to the FCC and you start challenging licenses.

AUDIENCE 12: I wrote a letter, two years ago, to FCC documenting... played dumb enough to get the... dispatcher of the police department to give the name of the person that had the... communications that particular night at a certain time. I had my tape recorder because after the '69 or whatever so-called riots that we had in Portland which was no riots, okay? I learned to keep the Sony 560 going, you know with the police around, I sleep with it on, okay? And I would tape, okay? This particular night, police officer was talking about "the niggers," okay? Police officers! He did it 'bout three times in fifteen minutes. I documented that. I wrote a letter and they sent me through internal... I went through the proper channels, you know. I documented it, and I went all the way, gave me a lot of hassles. Chief Baker refused! I said, "I'll tell you what," I said, "it's not that important." I said, "It's used everyday and we use it all the time, but I just think it's wrong that we pay..." and you know taxpayers pay to get abusive kind of language on FCC. So when he told me he would not let any man say... I said [...] then let a priest, a Black minister, a rabbi, let them hear, and if they say he didn't say "nigger," I'll go, "I'll deal with it, okay?" No, no, no, I listened to the tape. So they had me come in to listen to the tape but the tape didn't work! They couldn't get it up! They had this girl, she twists and she turns, couldn't get it up! I went over and hit the right button. Boom! Just blow it away. You can hear it, you know, very good.

So rather than having anybody else listen, he said... he told me he was gonna send it to a friend of his in Berkeley, California... at Stanford University, Dr. Posa, and he specialized in voice, same as fingerprints. And he spent... I said, "Are you gonna get it free?" No, he had to pay. And he paid for an interpretation from this doctor, and when he wrote back—I got a copy of what he said, and I got it at home, I'll give you a copy of it—that it was a common Southern term, and blah blah blah blah blah, and he had it all spelled upside-down with accents, and I went and got the same dictionary and [...] and he also said that just because it was... and said it was listed in Webster's dictionary on page 562 and what edition it was, but I didn't feel that should be the only criteria for the language that we use on the FCC, on a federal communication system, and now that was the end of it. So finally, the mayor wrote a letter and said that he was gonna ask the chief to be... have his officer to be more sensitive to the needs of Black people, and that they would try and come up with a [...] word to use so there wouldn't be any confusion about whether... and I was still *confused* with Dr. Posa's explanation. I still had a chance on being confused after they paid the money, he said the man used a common word and he used it [...] and we all know what that is: "nigger," you know... that's the kind of response you get.

So what do you do? You fight the whole system. You get a few people that... I'm saying that I believe there has to be a way, I believe in what he's doing, but how do you organize without the news media—and this once again goes back to—how do you organize without the news media... so the thing that happened last weekend, I think that and basically like at the Black political conference that they had last week. That... we had a Black conference. I believe that

you give the media written statements so you can hold them accountable. That you don't let them come in and interpret and go and paint the story from *their* eyes, okay? We're speaking in terms from our eyes, and I just think it's very dangerous when somebody else can *define* our language always and set the tone, and you know, they got code words all over the United States for Black folks. "Poverty" means Black folks, you know, "urban" and "rural" that means Black and white; as far as I'm concerned, it's the code word for "nigger." When you get to talkin' 'bout urban and rural and all those of poverty and poor folks, everybody feels that everybody's poor is Black. And those are code words and I just think there's gonna have to be more... and I understand what he's doing, and I appreciate what he's doing, and I think it's a very necessary way, but I think, especially in a city like this, that there have to be some other kind of things taking place with Black people, that we are going to be held accountable to each other. That we are going to be responsive to *our* community, and then just because you get in a position doesn't make you feel if you don't like it... that's what we was told last week.

I see the story changed today, but last week we got it good. If you don't like it, then you know, I report this and I do this, but the thing—and he will be [...]—all those kind of things, we have to let people know that they have to be accountable to our community, also, and not only the white community but, you know, the Black people that's in. That can no longer afford to just get in there and sit idly back while, you know, and most of 'em that got there, got there by somebody getting their heads beat. You know, we eat in restaurants now because Martin Luther King and the people *marched* and got beat and people spat... people spittin' in their face. And we got *some* of the opportunities, like he said, NAACP and a lotta things. We might not agree with the mildness of NAACP, but they have done some things. I'm saying, there has to be places for all people and I think we need to really start pulling people in to do some of those kind of things, and hold them accountable.

AUDIENCE 1: I'd like to give a short response to a question that she asked. And the question—what she's saying—what she's saying, she wrote a letter to the FCC, she didn't get a response, so therefore, she's saying, what else can we do? Well, you haven't done the first job as it should be done yet.

AUDIENCE 12: True.

AUDIENCE 1: You see, you don't just write a letter—and that's the thing, I'm hoping that there would be some organization here—you don't just write a letter and expect that to clear the problem, ma'am. What you have to do... had you filed a petition against that station whereby they had to pay a lawyer \$5000, \$8000 to defend getting that license, I'll assure you that they would make sure that nobody else would come on that station using the word "nigger" as it was used. I will assure you that that would happen, and I think...

AUDIENCE 12: City of Portland Police--

AUDIENCE 1: ...would support that. No, what I'm talkin' about... you can't stop the policeman, the individual, from saying it, but what you can do, you can stop the radio and TV stations from legitimizing the word. That's—as a brother said—that you can do. You can do that and so you gotta use that tactic. You gotta use all those tools you *can* use, and some of these tools are available. You see what I mean?

AUDIENCE 12: I think I understand you. I think the one point that we differ... I'm talkin' 'bout a public service agency paid by the taxpayers of Oregon, paying a police officer...

AUDIENCE 1: Well, the only way you can stop that is through the ballot. Is to vote them out, you know, just like we voted Ford out, and Carter in. [*voices in background interrupting*] ...that's the only way you can stop that. Otherwise you can't... if you don't have a political party, you can't stop that.

AUDIENCE 12: Oh, but I'm still from the aspect that it was illegal to do it, okay? And I dealt with that with the doctor's...

AUDIENCE 1: Freedom of speech...

AUDIENCE 12: ...with the documentation that they went and got from Dr. Posa. I used that documentation where the chief had solicited his professional opinion, and he gave his opinion! And I sent that to the FCC, I went through the local FCC...

[*continues talking but is spoken over*]

AUDIENCE 1: No. Wait, wait. No, you... wrote a letter, and if you wrote a letter to Washington, as I say, *that*, that's not enough. Because it's the station that has the license, and you see, it's the station that carries the information, and if you attack the station where it costs them money, they're gonna think, *think*, think before they do it again. And that's a tactic you have to use.

AUDIENCE 11 [*in background*]: ...She's talking about the... shortwave communications of police officers...

AUDIENCE 12: Yeah.

AUDIENCE 11: Okay. Which is controlled by the [...] Bureau. There's nothing illegal about using the word "nigger," "kike"... any kind of racial slur you want to, over the airways. It becomes a matter of... what is tolerated and what is in good taste and bad taste. All the Communications Act talks about is obscenity—obscene remarks, obscene and profane remarks, generally. So if you hear, like, for example, when you have these CB people swearing and cussing, that is an

illegal act and it can be caught. When you get to a term of... like “nigger”, you get a letter to the commission of the Safety and Special Services Bureau, what... and you say they didn’t get back to you, well, the usual response is for them to get—send you a letter—send a letter to the... the complaint to the... Chief of Police, because the commission would license the frequency for that police operation, ambulance; they license that Safety Special Bureau. And so thing, in terms of the follow up, the one thing that sends anybody up the wall in Washington, usually, or in any staff of a senator, mayor, Congress, is for the person to call asking about a letter that was sent in a long time ago, or do another letter: “Why haven’t I been responded to,” to the top person. “Dear Chairman Wiley, I wrote a letter six months ago,” and you said they copied the letter to your congressmen, and they’ll find the letter. In case they’ve lost it, you just repeat your original charge in that second letter, then you get a response out of it. But in terms of the word itself, there’s nothing illegal, to my knowledge, about using that word on to a communication. You remember in Cleveland, in the riots, the police were using that word all the time. But the fact that you got the mayor to write a letter, solved that problem, didn’t it?

AUDIENCE 12: [off microphone, unintelligible]

HOST: Let me respond to one of the questions she raised, and I think it’s relatively important. You raised a question about the issue of fear. Fear in terms of the people in Portland itself in terms of responding sort of affirmingly to any of these actions. And some extent, I can substantiate some of that allegation, and the fact that last quarter, we did a study, at least one of my master’s students did a study on Black educators in the state of Oregon, and we did a random sample of approximately... about 10% sample of about 250 educators in the state of Oregon, and what we found out, not in terms of the response from the responders, but from their reaction, was that most people was afraid to answer a survey questionnaire. They made... wanted to make sure that their names was kept quiet. To some extent, they wouldn’t even respond to the question at all, they would run around and make excuses for not responding to this questionnaire. And it’s totally a fear for their job... it was just incredible! And to a great extent, this young lady, one youngster had to guarantee that the questionnaire would never see the light of day. The whole study would never come out and be publicized. So to that extent, I can’t make the findings of the study public because she had to guarantee the people that did agree to being respondents in this study, the study would be totally kept confidentially under my protection.

So I’m really ensuring that, but the question there’s so many responses where it’s just incredible in terms of the fear, and when you talk about Black middle class people in Portland, the city of Portland, the largest percentage of Black people in this... Black middle class in the city of Portland are educators. They are, by far, the largest population of Black middle class in the state. They have the highest proportion, I think it’s somewhere about 250 to about... out of

400... Black professionals in the state, and over 50% of them are teachers. And when you begin to talk about that population of fear, you begin to say, it have a tremendous, in fact... in terms of development and politicalization, development of any sort of potential political efforts of the community, and a whole host of negative sort of connotations in regard to Blacks in the state of Oregon. So to that extent, we really have a lot to deal with in terms of fear... 'cause Black folks here only speak among themselves in quiet dark corners, and they're afraid to come out and speak openly, and if you do, they're completely surprised. Completely surprised!

One of the things was last week, I did a couple interviews, I did, well... one week I did a TV program on the town hall and a couple weeks later, I did a radio interview in terms of talkin' 'bout the program, and I'm relatively straightforward. And people that came to me and said, "Oh, you really give 'em hell! You're always raising hell!" The only thing I was doin' was to begin to point out the problem that I was encountering, and not really trying to make any hell, it's just a fact that people in the city haven't really engaged in that endeavor before, so to a great extent, I'm raising hell because the population aren't really used to beginning to encounter and use confrontation to deal with any sort of problem in this community. And to that extent, I really feel very sort of alone, because you really don't have people that can feel free. You know, I think one of the things is, I think that Black folks was outta slavery but they still not free. So to that extent, I think we got a very serious problem in the state of Orgeon.

[inaudible comment]

HOST: I don't think so. I hope so, and I will work towards that, but I really question that they will mobilize to any extent because one of the things is that they're afraid. They're afraid.

AUDIENCE 12 [in background partly inaudible]: And some of them is right-- some of them [...] have no jobs, we don't have to... have anything to lose, so I said a lotta things and a lotta people seemed to come in and [...] but I don't care [...] a lot of people do have to make a living, and I understand that this is a vicious cycle. And... this city will go and the politicians will go to... there's no limit to what they'll do. And we... and I think people know that.

AUDIENCE 10: It happens in Berkeley, California, too, and this is significant for those people. They should be aware those are in sight too. One from a Black person... President of the NAACP in Oakland, and one from a... a Jew, who is executive director of the B'nai B'rith, I think, in San Francisco. In the case of the Black person, we confronted a cable system and they had this Black guy, and they used him to attack us, and of course he took all... the attack on the man's thing, 'cause, you know, it's owned by a white cable system, and he took it very personally. He was their great defender. Like Malcolm X said, "Boss, is we sick?" [*chuckles*] You, know, this type of thing. When the slave had been healthy and the boss was sick, [*chuckles*] you know, and so the brother... yeah, the brother's active, in fact he's treasurer of CORE, treasurer of CORE, a

national organization, and this guy was his friend from the NAACP, called me and wanted to know who was one our board of directors. The Jewish guy called me because we confronted a Westinghouse TV station and my associate, Edwin Terry, got after one of the Jews 'cause he had called a woman a "nigger bitch," and he was saying, in essence, "Look, you as a Jew, having suffered discrimination, damn it, you oughta be working with us. Not working against us." Two days later I got a call from this guy at B'nai B'rith. You know what's the question he asked? "Who's on your board of directors?" because he assumed there was some Jews on our board of directors, and they could bring their financial influence to stop things. The Black brother—I don't know what he assumed—who's on our board, but he's from NAACP, by the way, NAACP! Which has a very vested interest, and Ben Hooks recognized that in a lot of these TV stations. So you may get confrontation from even, you know, from your *cousins*, some of the people in the family, who will try to some way undermine your efforts. So I've had to do like the lady, I have no job. I haven't worked since '70. I mean, I make some money, but I haven't worked for nobody. [*lots of laughter from audience*] I survived... I survived, but I haven't worked for anybody, because you can't. They definitely will bring pressure to bear, and try to undermine you, and cut out the economic base so that you *stop* messing with 'em! And that's a fact.

AUDIENCE 12: You let them mess with you.

AUDIENCE 10: Yep.

AUDIENCE 12: Right?

AUDIENCE 10: Oh yeah, they messed with me.

HOST: There's any more questions? I think we really got into it, relatively good. If... oh, go ahead.

AUDIENCE 8: I had a... some more specific question about... on the effect of television on minority children. I just if you had any studies or surveys or just children you've talked to, in terms of... the kind of self-image that's developing or that exists now as opposed to, say, 15 years ago?

GRANT: Well, I have not studies or documentation, I think... probably one of the key issues one oughta look at is where we are today in terms of the number of televisions in the home. I remember as a child growing up in New York, we didn't have a television; today I got three. So one ought to look at that as how it relates to kids. At that point in time, growing up in New York, television wasn't an important thing for me, because I had other kinds of activities, whether it was school activities, or activities created by me with my friends, that would take the place of sitting in front of a television for four or five hours. We were talking about this earlier. Today, the television is a babysitter. You tell the kids, "Go watch TV," and no one monitors to

see what happens to that youngster spending four or five or six hours in front of the tube. No one is concerned about how important the shows that youngsters are seeing on the television influence the youngster. If you look at the television program when they're advertising a show that's coming, they'll say, "We're presenting such and such a show, and it may be harmful to kids, but it's your choice as a family whether or not the kid watches the show," and they put it on anyway, you see. So you have no control, and I would certainly think that if anyone did an in depth study, one... I'm certain we could find some kind of negative influence that the television have on all kids.

And if one look at minority kids, you basing most of your value judgement on what is good or bad for kids on the majority view of what's good or bad for kids. Because we address... or the media addresses itself to what they consider to be the majority. And in response to a question earlier, if television is not to become that vast wasteland that we talk about, then Black program or programs appearing on the television should not be limited to the number of Black persons within that community, because we are assuming that that program will educate as well as provide entertainment to *all* people. And therefore, it has a very meaningful part for a situation where it's a small percentage of Blacks or small percentage of whites. We run into that same problem in the education system when we talk about... why it is that we should not provide Black history in some of our schools, and the response is, "Well, why should we? We have no Black kids coming to this school," you see. And what they're really saying, in essence, is, "Black history is so unimportant that we need not teach it to whites," you see. And what it's not saying is that if you don't teach that Black history, or that Black concept to whites, they will maintain that stereotype, that attitude, that they've always had towards Black, and it's only when they become an adult... you know, and go out into the world and find out that that little secure environment in an all-white school is unreal, that they recognize the deficit in their total educational program.

AUDIENCE 11: Speaking about surveying kids, one of the times the Nielsen did survey Black communities, this about a year and a half ago, they found out—it was in the New York Times—that Black people spent more time watching television, on average, than do white people, white families. But even more important, for everybody, by the time any child, the average child, is 18 years old, he spent more time watching television than he has been in school. That's for all children.

AUDIENCE: [...] room for a statement, and something I wanted to mention to the sister over here because I admire, you know, her drive, and so forth and what she's doing, but I suggest this because in my bit of experience is... use the media. Use the radio and TV to organize. You're asking the question, you know, "How do you organize?" Use it to organize. You know, if you don't think it's... you have that access, then you've got to create that access where you'll use it

to organize. And to give you an example... the one person who... I heard he make that statement about a month and a half ago, and that's Ben Hooks, who was a former FCC commissioner, now head of NAACP. And he said the NAACP is going to have to use the media to get to the people and let them know what's being done, in order to get the membership so we can organize. So there's a vehicle for whatever you want to do, and you can use that vehicle, for example, establish up here what we have in California in the Berkeley area, San Francisco area, it's what we call "Free Speech Messages," FSM, where 55 minutes or so, you get on the air and make a statement, you know. You can criticize a political person, or so forth, because they are public people, and of course as long as you don't use... don't slander, or use so-called obscene words, you can make a statement, you understand? So this is one way that you can organize and that you can have political influence. The possibilities are just really fantastic. And we as Black people *must* begin to take advantage of this. We must begin to take advantage of that, because, like he said, that medium is so powerful, so powerful, that it's the way that, people, nowadays, many people are getting educated 'bout the world. [*trails off*]

[*background noise on mic*]

AUDIENCE 4: [from background] ...free speech [...] that media often turns Blacks to be a bit more vocal, sometime after January because channel 6, KOIN, is going to be doing that as a part of their new contract with the National Organization of Women. You know that was one of the stipulations, that they do have a free speech message, you know at certain times of the day, for six months, to see how it works, so I think, KGW is going to try to beat 'em to the punch in that too, and just fall in line.

AUDIENCE 11: Is NOW here?

AUDIENCE 4: [*agreement*] M-hmm.

AUDIENCE 11: The women are more concerned about their problems than minorities?

AUDIENCE 4: But now a lot of...

AUDIENCE 10: Well, the women are fighting for minorities here!

AUDIENCE 4: They got a lot of...

AUDIENCE 10: The white women are fighting [...]

AUDIENCE 4: [...] they're organized...

AUDIENCE 12: I can't... I can't agree with that.

[*unintelligible interruption*]

[laughter]

[conversation cuts off; program ends]