

**Summary Report:  
Developing a Research Agenda for Entertainment Education  
and Multicultural Audiences**

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**HOLLYWOOD, HEALTH & SOCIETY**  
PARTNERING ENTERTAINMENT, EDUCATION AND THE CDC

## Developing a Research Agenda for Entertainment Education and Multicultural Audiences

The Hollywood, Health & Society project held a conference on the impact of health content in TV storylines on African American and Hispanic audiences in the United States. The objective of the conference was to gain a better understanding of the potential for TV shows to encourage positive health effects among African American and Hispanic audiences. This two-day conference included expert presentations, real-world examples by social marketing and entertainment industry experts and discussion groups organized to identify other examples, summarize lessons learned and develop next steps for entertainment-education research among multicultural audiences.

### Hollywood, Health & Society

Hollywood, Health & Society is a project at the Norman Lear Center that provides entertainment industry professionals with accurate and timely information for health storylines. Funded by the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** (CDC), the project recognizes the profound impact that entertainment media have on individual behavior. The Lear Center helps the CDC supply writers and producers of all types of entertainment content with accurate health information through individual briefings, special seminars and expert consultation. Visit the Web site at [www.entertainment.usc/hhs](http://www.entertainment.usc/hhs)

### Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is recognized as the lead federal agency for protecting the health and safety of people, at home and abroad, providing credible information to enhance health decisions and promoting health through strong partnerships. CDC serves as the national focus for developing and applying disease prevention and control, environmental health and health promotion and education activities designed to improve the health of the people of the United States. Located in Atlanta, the CDC is an agency of the Department of Health and Human Services.

### The Norman Lear Center

The Norman Lear Center is a multidisciplinary research center that explores the implications of the convergence of entertainment, commerce and society. From its base in the USC Annenberg School for Communication, the Lear Center builds bridges between faculty who study aspects of entertainment, media and culture. Beyond campus, it bridges the gap between the entertainment industry and academia, and between them and the public. Through scholarship and research; fellows, conferences, events and publications; and in its attempts to illuminate and repair the world, the Lear Center works to be at the forefront of discussion and practice in the field. For more information, please visit [www.learcenter.org](http://www.learcenter.org).



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## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>Pg 4</b>
<b>Surveying the Field</b>	<b>Pg 6</b>
<p>Hollywood Health &amp; Society Project and Research                  Vicki Beck, Director, Hollywood, Health &amp; Society, USC Annenberg Norman Lear Center                  International Experience                  Vibert Cambridge, Chair, African American Studies Dept., Ohio University</p>	
<b>Lessons Learned</b>	<b>Pg 8</b>
<p><b>Impact of Rap Music Video Viewing on African American Adolescents</b>                  Ralph DiClemente, Professor, Rollins School of Public Health, Emory University  <b>Impact of Mass Media Health Messages on Hispanic Audiences</b>                  Rina Alcalay, Professor, UC Davis School of Medicine/School of Communication  <b>Impact of TV Movie <i>Ms. Evers Boys</i> on African American Audiences</b>                  Vicki Freimuth, Director, CDC Office of Communication  <b>Summation of the Literature</b>                  Michael Cody, Professor, USC Annenberg School for Communication</p>	
<b>Spanish Language Telenovelas</b>	<b>Pg 11</b>
<p>Jaime Escandon, President, Renata Productions                  Alejandro Ochoa, Programming and Marketing Director of Telenovelas, TV Azteca                  Clara Olaya, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention                  Miguel Sabido, President, Instituto Mexicano de Estudios de la Comunicacion</p>	
<b>The Entertainment Industry &amp; Social Marketing</b>	<b>Pg 13</b>
<p>Tom Alfieri, Director of Program Research, NBC                  Neal Baer, Executive Producer, <i>Law and Order: SVU</i>                  Ivan Juzang, President, MEE Productions                  Martin Kaplan, Director, USC Annenberg Norman Lear Center                  Kip Konwiser, Producer/Writer/Director, Konwiser Brothers Entertainment                  Gonzalo Perez, Manager, MTV Research and Planning                  Laurie Zaks, Senior Vice President of Current Programming, UPN</p>	
<b>Research and Funding Issues</b>	<b>Pg 15</b>
<p>Vicki Freimuth, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention                  Carolina Reyes, Vice President of Evaluation and Planning, The California Endowment                  Vish Viswanath, Acting Associate Director, Behavioral Research Program, National Cancer Institute</p>	
<b>Criteria for Future EE Research</b>	<b>Pg 17</b>
<p>Facilitator: Susan Kirby</p>	
<b>Setting an Entertainment Education Agenda</b>	<b>Pg 19</b>
<p>Facilitator: Susan Kirby</p>	
<b>Next Steps</b>	<b>Pg 20</b>
<b>Appendix A: Grid of Research Questions by Audience</b>	<b>Pg 21</b>
<b>Appendix B: References</b>	<b>Pg 25</b>
<b>Appendix C: List of Participants</b>	<b>Pg 28</b>

## Summary Report: Developing a Research Agenda for Entertainment Education and Multicultural Audiences

### Introduction

#### Background and History

In May 2000, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) hosted an agenda-setting conference for Entertainment Education (EE) in Decatur, Georgia. The purpose of that meeting was to review the relevant literature on the effects of entertainment media on general audiences and to identify gaps in the extant research. While enthusiastic with respect to the potential of EE to disseminate health-related information, the expert panel of mass communication scholars expressed an urgent need for continued research on the effects, efficacy and theoretical underpinnings of entertainment education. The panel also generated and prioritized an ambitious research agenda of 63 research questions (Salmon, 2000).

Several research projects suggested at the 2000 conference that involved the tracking of health-related content and measuring the effect of such content on viewers have since been undertaken. These include: 1. a CDC and USC analysis of the Healthstyles Survey data from 1999-2002 to determine the viewing habits and effects of health storylines on daytime and primetime audiences; 2. a CDC/USC study to measure the impact of an HIV/AIDS storyline in a daytime drama storyline on viewers; 3. a study by the Harvard School of Public Health to assess the impact of a smallpox storyline on *ER* viewers; 4. a USC analysis of health-related content on primetime shows popular with general, African American and Hispanic audiences; and 5. a 2003 online survey conducted by a CDC partner organization to assess the reaction of *ER* viewers to a syphilis storyline. However, many of the research questions generated at the 2000 conference remain unanswered.

#### The 2003 Agenda-Setting Conference

The primary objective of the 2003 EE conference was to move the discussion that was initiated at the 2000 conference to another level by focusing on the effects of entertainment television on multicultural audiences within the United States.

**Why multicultural audiences?** Although our knowledge remains limited in terms of the effects of entertainment programming on general domestic audiences, it is virtually nonexistent with respect to minority audiences. (Appendix A presents a grid containing many of the research questions considered to be "high priority" at the 2000 agenda-setting conference that attempts to describe the extant research with respect to general, African American and Hispanic audiences.) Yet it is precisely these minority audiences who are most at risk for a whole host of potential health problems. For example, compared to their Caucasian counterparts, an African American is nine times and a Hispanic is four times more likely to contract HIV (CDC, 2003). In the United States, African Americans and Hispanics bear a disproportionate share of a whole host of preventable diseases (CDC, 2003). Consequently, these at-risk minority groups become an obvious focal point for research on the potential impact of entertainment education.

**Why television?** As acknowledged in the 2000 conference, the primary assumption behind the CDC's Office of Communication Entertainment Education Initiative was that "(T)he mass media in general, and television in particular, provide enormous amounts of information about health through storylines in entertainment programming. This information may be correct or incorrect, peripheral or central to characters' lives, planned or serendipitous" (Salmon, 2000, p.8). Importantly, the same at-risk groups mentioned above—African Americans and Hispanics—are also disproportionately heavy consumers of television (Nielsen Media Research, 2003). This confluence between health risk and viewership lends added urgency to the CDC's mandate to work with television writers, programmers and industry executives to enhance the quality and frequency of the health information disseminated in entertainment programming.

In recognition of this nexus, the 2003 conference was designed to build on the foundation of the 2000 agenda-setting conference with the specific intent of focusing on the effects of EE on multicultural television audiences. The collective task of conference participants over the course of the two-day conference was:

1. to assess the existing research and theory with respect to EE and multicultural audiences;
2. to identify research gaps; and
3. to propose a research agenda to better understand, anticipate and harness the effects of health-related television storylines on African American and Hispanic audiences.

To accomplish this task, a group of 26 social scientists with backgrounds in mass communication research and theory convened on May 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> in Santa Monica, California. The conference began with an overview of the CDC-funded program, Hollywood, Health & Society (HH&S) which is based at the USC Annenberg Norman Lear Center. This was followed by a review of the relevant literature. More specifically, there were five presentations, each of which focused on a different aspect of the relationship between the mass media and African American and Hispanic audiences:

- Vibert Cambridge from Ohio University spoke on international EE efforts;
- Ralph DiClemente from Emory University presented data documenting the impact of rap music videos on African American adolescents;
- Rina Alcalay from UC Davis reported on the impact of mass mediated health messages on Hispanic audiences;
- Vicki Freimuth from the CDC recounted the impact of a made for TV movie about the Tuskegee Syphilis Studies entitled *Ms. Evers Boys* on African Americans; and
- Michael Cody from USC summarized the extant literature with respect to domestic attempts at EE

The remainder of the day was devoted to two media industry panels—the first, focusing on Spanish-language telenovelas with leaders from that industry, and the second, a panel of U.S. entertainment industry and social marketing representatives. The final panel took place the following morning and addressed funding-related issues with representatives from three different funding agencies (The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, The National Cancer Institute and The California Endowment).

Each of these presentations and panel discussions informed the agenda-setting process that took place on the second day of the conference. This agenda-setting process involved three distinct tasks:

1. to determine the specific criteria that should be used to judge the merits of future EE research;
2. to generate a list of potential research questions and ensure that key research questions were not overlooked; and
3. to prioritize the potential research questions in order of perceived importance.

The remainder of this report summarizes the proceedings of the May, 2003 agenda-setting conference.

## Surveying the Field

The morning of the first day of the conference was devoted to an overview of what we know as well as what we have yet to learn about EE in the United States with respect to African American and Hispanic audiences. A brief summary of the key points made by each presenter can be found below:

### Hollywood, Health & Society Program and Research By Vicki Beck, Director, Hollywood, Health & Society

#### The history and goals of Hollywood, Health & Society

Vicki Beck began by providing a brief overview of the history and goals of the Hollywood, Health & Society (HH&S) project. As she noted, HH&S has its roots in the CDC's longstanding interest in fostering accurate health content in entertainment programming in the United States. In 2001, this interest culminated in the establishment of the Hollywood, Health & Society (HH&S) project through a cooperative agreement between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the USC Annenberg School for Communication Norman Lear Center.

The two major goals of the HH&S project are to increase the accuracy of health content in TV storylines and to encourage the inclusion of public health issues in future storyline development. To accomplish these goals, HH&S has taken a number of key steps including creating an Advisory Board, forging a working relationship to present panel discussions at the Writers Guild, administering the Sentinel for Health Award for Daytime Drama and consulting with writers and producers on future storylines. Examples of successful collaborations between HH&S and the entertainment industry include the "Tony's HIV" storyline on *The Bold and the Beautiful*, a story on heart transplantation on *As the World Turns*, plotlines dealing with infectious diseases on *Guiding Light*, *Days of Our Lives* and *General Hospital* and a plethora of health topics addressed on *ER* and other primetime shows. HH&S's outreach to daytime and primetime shows is currently expanding to include programs popular among minority audiences (e.g., daytime dramas and the UPN Monday night shows) as well as Spanish language programming. Recent examples of storylines featuring minority characters include "Raul's Diabetes" on *The Young and the Restless* and "Tony's HIV" on *The Bold and the Beautiful*.

#### Increasing the impact of health-related storylines

Health-related storylines can have an even greater impact when paired with a public service announcement (PSA) dealing with the particular issue portrayed and/or a toll-free number where viewers can seek additional information. For instance, a CDC study showed that providing an 800 number in conjunction with the airing of "Tony's HIV" resulted in the highest spike in callers to the national AIDS hotline during that calendar year. Likewise, analysis of callers from a PSA that aired following the *Young and the Restless* storyline "Ashley's Breast Cancer" showed a much higher percentage of Hispanic and African American callers than usual and a much higher rate of requests for prevention information.

#### The importance of entertainment programming for African American and Hispanic audiences

Beck then presented data on the importance of entertainment programming from three types of studies. First she reviewed some Nielsen audience research that clearly indicates that African American audiences watch a disproportionate amount of daytime drama whereas Hispanic audiences are very strong viewers of primetime programs. These ethnic differences in viewership were further supported by a second data source—the Healthstyles Survey. Data from the 1999 Healthstyles Survey revealed that these ethnic differences in viewing patterns are even more pronounced for "regular viewers" who watch programs two or more times a week. This is particularly relevant because preliminary 2001 Healthstyles data also found that as many as 60% of "regular viewers" reported having learned something about a disease or how to prevent it from watching a daytime drama in the last year and nearly 50% reported taking some action based on what

they learned. Also of interest is the finding that minority women are more likely to discuss what they have seen with others. More specifically, Hispanic women were particularly likely to discuss health issues with friends and family, especially if the topic was prevention, whereas African American women reported being more likely to call or visit a health care provider or other source for health information. Beck went on to describe preliminary results from a third data source—the TV Monitoring Project—recently launched by HH&S and faculty at the USC Annenberg School for Communication and designed to analyze the health-related content of the most popular programs among Hispanic viewers, African American viewers and the general US population. A preliminary analysis of these data indicates that a substantial number of health issues are presented on these shows: as many as 614 health issues were presented on 186 episodes. To illustrate the potential power of televised health-related portrayal, Beck presented two examples of health-related storylines that appeared in primetime—one from an episode from *The George Lopez Show*, in which the father discusses STD prevention with his daughter and a second depicting a poignant discussion of HIV and safer sex on *Girlfriends*.

In closing, she noted that new outreach opportunities are being developed at HH&S with Spanish-language networks. For example, there are currently several projects in process that focus on telenovelas, including audience research to better understand telenovela viewers, as well as ongoing consultation with writers and producers to both ensure the accuracy of medical storylines and encourage the pairing of such storylines with a relevant 800 hotline number.

## International Experience

**By Vibert Cambridge, Chair, African American Studies, Ohio University**

### Lessons learned in one cultural context may be translated to other contexts

Vibert Cambridge noted that worldwide a total of 163 EE projects have been launched and/or evaluated in recent years. Health-related themes are common in these EE projects, especially reproductive health, family planning, HIV-AIDS and preventable diseases. He stressed that the lessons learned in one cultural context can often be successfully translated and transferred to another context. More specifically, he noted that many of the programs of South Africa, Ghana and the English-speaking Caribbean are of particular interest because strategies appropriated from those locations can be instructive in reaching Black America. As he pointed out, these cultures have a great deal in common with Black America such as increased urbanization, poverty, high levels of unemployment and inadequate public healthcare. Moreover, across all of these cultures there is a high degree of cultural resonance with the unifying theme of Global Africa (referring to continental Africa and its diaspora).

### EE can affect changes at multiple levels—individual, societal and regional

Cambridge then went on to detail the success of previous EE interventions in Global Africa. At the individual level, there is evidence that regular viewers or listeners of serial dramas tend to have better recall of core messages, an increased resistance to negative social or peer pressure, manifest higher self-efficacy and report greater behavior change. At the community level, there is evidence that EE programs have stimulated community discussions that have led to the establishment of new values, norms and other actions that are supportive of the goals and objectives of the intervention. At the societal level, there is evidence that structural changes occurred, such as the rigorous implementation of laws, for example, treating perpetrators of domestic abuse as serious criminals. At the regional level, these products show "sharability" in that they are used with varying degrees of effectiveness in other countries.

Three case studies were used to illustrate the points discussed above: Ghana's *Things We Do for Love*, a television serial; *Soul City*, a primetime drama serial from South Africa; and *Apwe Plezi*, a radio soap opera from St. Lucia in the Caribbean. Following the airing of *Things We Do for Love*, a television drama that was part of an overall strategy to stop the AIDS epidemic in Ghana, 80% of men and women surveyed reported having seen the program and nearly 60% of men and 55% of women were able to identify without prompting

some slogan uniquely associated with the program. Perhaps more importantly, condom sales jumped from an average of 2.7 million for the previous six month period to 6.6 million for the six-month period ending June 1, 2001—a dramatic increase of 144%.

### Recognizing that diversity exists both between and within ethnic groups

Cambridge went on to underscore the fact that Black America is growing and is internally diverse. According to the 2000 US Census, there are nearly 32 million non-Hispanic Blacks in the United States—just over 12%. This represents an increase of 3.7 million. What is important is that 25% of this Black American growth came from immigrants from Africa and the Caribbean. During the period 1990 to 2000, the Black African population doubled from about 250,000 to half a million, and the Caribbean went from about a million to 1.5 million. There is also a growing Black Hispanic population who identify with both their African and Hispanic ancestry. The key point for health advocates who are developing a research agenda is to recognize that ethnic diversity exists both between and within ethnic categories.

## Lessons Learned

### Impact of Rap Music Video Viewing on African American Adolescents

By Ralph DiClemente, Professor, Rollins School of Public Health, Emory University

#### Heavy exposure to rap music videos is linked to a whole spectrum of risk behaviors

Ralph DiClemente reported on a recent prospective study conducted with Gina Wingood that explores the relationship between exposure to rap music videos and variety of risk behaviors in young African American women. The authors found that young (16 year old) African American girls were frequently exposed to rap music videos. In fact, 96% of the study participants had been previously exposed to rap music and the average adolescent viewed 20½ hours of rap music videos per week.

Based on cultivation theory, their hypothesis was that as exposure to rap music increases so too does health-related risk. DiClemente presented compelling data to support this claim. For example, in the twelve months following baseline, young women who reported higher exposure to rap music videos were:

- three times more likely to hit a teacher,
- 2.6 times more likely to get arrested,
- 1.6 times as likely to report using drugs and alcohol,
- twice as likely to report having multiple sex partners, and
- 60% more likely to acquire a new sexually transmitted disease (STD).

#### New, more accurate ways of measuring sexual risk are available

One of the most notable aspects of this study is its pioneering use of self-collected vaginal swabs that detect a number of sexually transmitted diseases. This technique is substantially more accurate than self report and far less intrusive than blood tests, and thus represents a major methodological advance in measuring sexual risk.

#### More research is needed

These results are provocative. These findings indicate that teens heavily exposed to rap music videos, compared to those with less exposure, were more likely to engage in a whole host of health-related risk behaviors and adverse outcomes. What is especially alarming is the fact that heavy exposure was not linked to one or two behaviors, but to a consistent constellation of negative outcomes, including violence, substance abuse, arrest and STD infections. However, as DiClemente pointed out, because this study focuses on the naturally occurring association between exposure to rap music and a variety of high risk behaviors, we cannot rule out the possibility of other potential causal or mediating factors. (For example, girls who use drugs might be substantially more likely to both listen to rap music and have unprotected sex). Consequently, DiClemente stressed the need for further research that 1.) involves diverse adolescent populations in order to be more



precise about exposure-outcome associations; 2.) further explores differences by gender, age, race, etc; and 3.) examines the effects of rap musicians like Salt 'n Pepper who have incorporated positive, pro-social messages into their music.

### **Impact of Mass Media Health Messages on Hispanic Audiences** **By Rina Alcalay, Professor, UC Davis School of Medicine/School of Communication**

#### **Television is an important medium for reaching Latinos**

Rina Alcalay began by presenting evidence that Latinos pay particularly close attention to television and tend to believe what they see. For example, a recent survey by the New California Media shows that 89% of California Latinos say they rely on Spanish-language television as their primary source for information. These findings underscore the critical role television in general and Spanish-language programming in particular play in reaching this population.

#### **Telenovelas can inform but producing behavior change is more elusive**

In the past, telenovelas such as *Cancione de la Raza* and *Que Paso?* that targeted Mexican-Americans and Cubans dealt with a number of lifestyle issues. Subsequent research documented that these programs produced a significant impact in terms of knowledge but much less so for behavior. A more recent project using a telenovela format [*Esperanza de Valle*] was likewise successful in changing beliefs about alcohol use and abuse but, once again, no changes in behavior were found.

Alcalay's own project, *Salud para su Corazón* [Health for Your Heart], was a theory-based intervention that relied on both interpersonal and media channels to prevent heart disease among Hispanics. *Salud para su Corazón* involved a significant media component: five 30-second novelitas featuring humorous stories about family members receiving advice from the grandmother on how to prevent heart disease. These novelitas were aired on Univision in several markets resulting in approximately \$4.5 million of free airtime. The many phone calls flooding the office of the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute demonstrated that the novelitas had a substantial impact on the intended audience. However, similar to the previously mentioned examples, this project also demonstrated clear gains in knowledge, but negligible changes in behavior.

#### **One must select the right format for the right context**

Alcalay also stressed that when reaching and influencing Latino audiences, one needs to determine which available format will most likely produce the desired outcome. For example, a telenovela may be the appropriate vehicle for emotionally gripping material whereas a fotonovela that allows readers to proceed through the material at their own pace may be a better choice to convey complex information. One must work with local communities to decide the best approach. Finally, Alcalay cautioned that one must understand the balance between entertainment and education, because too much entertainment may distract from the educational content and vital information may be lost.

### **Impact of TV Movie *Ms. Evers Boys* on African American Audiences** **By Vicki Freimuth, Director, CDC Office of Communication**

#### **African Americans have incomplete information about the Tuskegee Experiment and about medical research in general**

The Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Negro Male was a highly controversial medical experiment involving 600 African American males conducted in Macon County, Alabama between 1932 and 1972. As Vicki Freimuth noted, although the study ended over 30 years ago, "the legacy of this study impacts the work that we all do everyday" by continuing to cast a shadow of distrust over the public health

and medical establishments for many African Americans. Consequently, in 1997, when HBO sought to air a made-for-television movie, *Ms. Evers' Boys*, there was concern regarding how viewers, especially African American viewers, would respond.

In her presentation, Freimuth discussed a CDC study that reported on the results of eight focus groups in four different cities in which participants were asked prior to viewing the movie, "What do you know about Tuskegee?" Responses to that question revealed that people had very incomplete knowledge about what had actually taken place. The focus groups also unearthed a number of myths and stereotypes about the study that may explain its lasting negative impact. For example, many individuals believed that the US government actually gave African American men syphilis in order to study them. There was also a sense among focus group participants that what happened at Tuskegee is commonplace and could easily happen again.

#### **African Americans feel lingering anger and distrust toward the US government and medical researchers**

As Freimuth reported, the movie reinforced distrust of whites, the United States government and institutions more generally. Some participants were angered that the film focused on an African American nurse and the only African American doctor to participate in the original study. Perhaps most importantly for present purposes, the film tended to reinforce African Americans' fear of medical research.

#### **More effective communication about scientific safeguards and informed consent is necessary**

This CDC study clearly suggests that communication scholars and health care advocates need to redouble their efforts to reassure the African American community that appropriate safeguards have been put into place. More also needs to be done to improve the scientific literacy of research participants who have a very limited understanding of research terms and concepts. As Freimuth noted, many of the participants in the focus group were largely unaware of safeguards such as informed consent and institutional review boards (IRB) that have been put in place over the past 30 years to protect research participants. Unfortunately, this lack of information regarding safeguards combined with a well-founded suspicion and distrust of the medical establishment makes it extremely difficult to recruit African American and other minority participants for clinical trials, leaving these communities vulnerable to unforeseen drug interactions and side effects.

### **Summation of the Literature**

**Michael Cody, Professor, USC Annenberg School for Communication**

#### **Introduction of the grid**

Michael Cody began his presentation by raising the question, "What does the research to date tell us about EE in America, especially when applied to African American and Hispanic audiences?" As a point of departure, Cody introduced a grid (see Appendix A) containing a series of 24 questions regarding what is known and what is not yet known about EE in terms of reaching and influencing minorities within the United States. Many of these questions were adapted from those generated by participants at the CDC's 2000 EE agenda-setting conference (Salmon, 2000) and were considered to be of highest priority at that time. Similar to the structure of the questions generated in 2000, the current 24 questions were grouped into four areas: EE Outcomes, EE Content, EE Audiences and the Entertainment Industry. These categories were displayed vertically in the grid. Horizontally across the top of the grid three target audience groups (General Audiences, African American Audiences and Hispanic Audiences) were listed.

The resultant cells of the grid represent an initial attempt by Cody to list specific studies that address each question for General, African American and Hispanic audiences based on a review of the literature and feedback from colleagues. The grid focused EE attempts using television and excluded studies conducted outside of the United States and those from the 1950s through the early 1990s, which were discussed at the 2000 conference.

### Research on EE with African American and Hispanic audiences in the United States is almost nonexistent

As Cody noted, two conclusions are readily apparent from even a cursory examination of the grid. First, that although progress has been made, many of the questions previously deemed high priority remain unanswered. In fact, at the time of the conference the grid was completely empty for 17 of the 24 questions posed. Second, that when studies are conducted to address these questions they typically focus on general, as opposed to minority, audiences. Only four questions had been addressed with respect to African American audiences and only three with respect to Hispanic audiences.

### Review of existing studies provides context

Cody then focused on the questions that had received some attention. He began with the question, "What evidence exists that EE messages can significantly influence knowledge, attitudes and health-related practices?" As can be seen in the appropriate cell of the grid, a number of published articles demonstrate that members of the general audience are strongly influenced by EE messages (Beck, 2004; Brodie et al., 2001; Kennedy et al., 2002; Keller & Brown, 2002; Sharf et al., 1996; Winsten & DeJong, 2001). Fewer studies demonstrate pro-social, positive effects of EE programming on African American (Beck, 2004; Freimuth et al., 2001; Ghez, 2001—a well-conceived radio drama on domestic abuse that reached few people) and Latino audiences (Alcalay et al., 1999; Beck, 2003; Lalonde et al., 1997).

Another question that has received some attention is the question on theory. Most EE programs have relied on Social Learning Theory; the Theory of Planned Behavior/Reasoned Action; the Elaboration Likelihood Model of persuasion; the Sabido methodology; social marketing; stages of change; self-efficacy and the ecological perspective. These theories have been used in various EE programs for the general population, Hispanic audiences or African American audiences. Most of the remaining cells pertaining to minority audiences are empty, with one exception. Question 3, dealing with negative outcomes, confusion, stigmatization, etc., in EE programs. As noted earlier in the day, Freimuth and her colleagues (2001) found that African Americans view governmental actions through a lens of suspicion and distrust. Tirodkar and Jain (2003) found food consumption on African American programs to be problematic, in that high levels of fast food, snacks and candy were consumed or advertised. Ward and Rivadeneyra (1999), and other projects by Ward, indicate that entertainment viewing impacts on viewers' beliefs, expectations and behaviors about sex. Wingood and her colleagues (2003) found heavy exposure to rap music videos results in a number of problematic behaviors (as discussed previously). Many of the remaining cells are blank, leaving many questions unanswered.

### Request for additional studies

Cody ended his presentation by asking participants to submit additional articles for inclusion in the grid, and indicated there would be discussion based on the grid later in the conference.

### Spanish Language Telenovelas

**Moderator:** Clara Olaya  
**Panelists:** Jaime Escandon, President, Renata Productions;  
Alejandro Ochoa, Programming and Marketing Director of Telenovelas, TV Azteca  
Miguel Sabido, President, Instituto Mexicano de Estudios de la Comunicacion

As noted by the moderator, Clara Olaya, telenovelas produced in Latin America are translated into multiple languages and currently reach 500 million viewers. The sheer number, diversity and intense loyalty of viewers make telenovelas particularly attractive to health practitioners. The purpose of this panel was to expose conference participants to the growing phenomenon of telenovelas and to explore their potential for conveying health-related messages in the United States.

The panel included Miguel Sabido, producer of telenovelas since 1964, current president of the Instituto Mexicano de Estudios de la Comunicacion and the developer of the "Sabido methodology" (a highly structured way of integrating prosocial messages into ongoing storylines based on Bandura's Social Learning Theory); Jaime Escandon, formerly of Televisa and Univision and current president of Renata Productions; and Alejandro Ochoa, Director of Programming and Marketing of Telenovelas for TV Azteca. Each panelist was asked by the moderator, Olaya, to draw on their past experience to provide insight with respect to using the telenovela format in the United States to convey health-related messages. During the panel discussion, the following themes emerged:

#### Ratings drive decisions about content

When asked to review his prior experience with promoting health using the telenovela format, Sabido described the success of *Ven Conmigo*, a Mexican-based telenovela with adult education and family planning storylines that resulted in one million people entering adult education courses and a decrease in the Mexican birthrate from 3.7 to 2.4 per family. However, Sabido stressed that the success of such prosocial messages must not come at the expense of the entertainment and commercial value of the programming. In Mexico, as in the U.S., retaining strong viewership is of tantamount importance. This point was also strongly endorsed by both of the other panelists.

#### Infrastructure must be in place for audience response

Sabido also noted that the inclusion of health-related storylines could only lead to behavior change *if* the appropriate infrastructure was already in place to accommodate audience response. He cited the example of the adult education storyline in *Ven Conmigo* that generated such a groundswell of interest in adult education that the system was temporarily overwhelmed and unable to handle the sudden influx of new students. In other words, entertainment programming is a potentially powerful persuader, but prior to utilizing this powerful tool, we must first ensure that the appropriate infrastructure is in place (i.e., classes, clinics, social service providers, access to the Internet, sufficient staffing of hotlines, bilingual staff members, etc.).

#### Telenovelas rely on "universal" themes

Pointing to the widespread success of Spanish language telenovelas currently broadcast in China, India and Poland, Escandon concluded, "Telenovelas do send a message and the message is that ... we are all the same at the end. We are all looking for illusions and education at the same time as entertainment." This suggests that health-related storylines that draw on these universal themes such as love, jealousy, etc. may be more readily integrated into ongoing programs.

#### Timeslot dictates program content

Ochoa made the important point that the programming on Spanish language television in the US depends heavily on the timeslot. He noted that the home environment and audience needs differ as the evening schedule progresses. For instance, at 5 pm, the programming is an episodic drama or novella geared toward the needs of the woman of the house in which she can "get advice, guidance or at least relieve her pain." At 7 pm, however, the programming tends to be a novella with younger characters and family-oriented storylines reflecting the fact that the children are now at home and watching television along with their parents. The 8 pm timeslot is typically a love story. The 9 pm timeslot is filled with a real life drama, often with a sad or tragic twist. This programming is "tough, great, makes you cry every night." Knowledge of these differing audiences and their motivations for viewing would obviously play a key role in the proper positioning of a health-related message.

#### Acculturation influences viewing preferences

In general, the panelists were skeptical that Mexican immigrants, and to a lesser extent their children, will identify with primetime programming on the major US networks. As Ochoa commented, "Don't use American programming to address the Mexican or Latin

mentality. Not now... those 50 million people that are from Mexico or Latin America ... they want to hear messages from where they come from." This underscores the continuing need for special outreach efforts targeting Spanish language media here in the US.

### **The Entertainment Industry & Social Marketing**

**Moderator:** Martin Kaplan, Director, USC Annenberg Norman Lear Center  
**Panelists:** Tom Alfieri, Director of Program Research, NBC  
Neal Baer, M.D., Executive Producer, *Law and Order: SVU*  
Ivan Juzang, President, MEE Productions, Inc.  
Kip Konwiser, Producer/Writer/Director, Konwiser Brothers Entertainment  
Gonzalo Perez, Manager, MTV Research and Planning  
Laurie Zaks, Senior Vice President of Current Programming, UPN

The goal of this panel discussion was twofold: to expose conference participants to the various players in the entertainment industry including audience researchers, writers, producers and network executives and, simultaneously, to gauge the industry panelists' reactions to integrating health-related messages into entertainment programming. During a lively exchange, the following themes emerged:

#### **The entertainment industry's primary focus is profit**

As moderator Martin Kaplan noted, the idea of including prosocial messages in entertainment programming is "not native to the American entertainment tradition." As with any other business, the overriding motivation of the entertainment industry is to make money. For the entertainment industry this translates into increasing one's audience—"selling eyeballs to the advertisers is what it's all about." Mirroring the panelists in the earlier telenovela panel, there was a strong consensus among these entertainment industry panelists that anything that interferes with increasing or at least maintaining audience share will meet with stiff opposition.

#### **The industry fears that health-related issues may not be particularly "entertaining"**

Several panelists also voiced concern that incorporating serious health-related information into their programming is inconsistent with their primary objectives of entertaining and retaining audience share. For example, after receiving a corporate directive from Viacom to incorporate HIV/AIDS storylines, Laurie Zaks recalled that her initial reaction was concern that AIDS and comedy just "doesn't mix." [Although the network subsequently produced several HIV-related storylines in their Monday night comedy lineup including *Girlfriends*, *One on One* and *Half and Half*.]

Moreover, the concern over becoming "preachy" was reiterated by various panel members. Gonzalo Perez of MTV also spoke of not violating the hard earned trust established between the network and the audience. "There is always that balance of entertainment and education where we need to make sure we are strengthening that trust." Clearly these concerns are valid, and must be kept firmly in mind when approaching industry professionals.

#### **The industry does not view incorporating socially relevant messages as their job**

Perhaps the sense of industry responsibility can best be summed up by the tale recounted by Kaplan of the producer and writer who tried to pitch a movie to Sam Goldwyn. The writer and producer tried to sway Goldwyn by stressing what a great message the script conveyed. Goldwyn is said to have replied, "If you want to send a message, call Western Union." This sentiment of "It's not what we do" was reiterated by several panelists. In the words of Zaks, the head of programming for UPN, "We are not curing cancer, we are not doing the big work. We are entertaining. And it's not real, it's television."

**However, to the extent that they can incorporate health-related messages into programming without losing audience share, industry members are willing to do so**

To quote Zaks, "We are just the entertainers ... but if we can get some important information across without being too preachy... we are willing to try." The panel members directly involved in the production process, specifically Kip Konwiser, Neal Baer and Zaks, all recounted the personal and professional satisfaction they felt when they were able to incorporate meaningful messages into their work. Panelists also appreciated being acknowledged for their efforts and informed of the outcome. This underscores the important role that positive feedback may play in sustaining relationships with media professionals.

**Interesting, health-related scenarios are useful to writers**

One mechanism cited as being particularly helpful for writers was having an array of interesting, health-related scenarios readily available for writers to incorporate into their scripts. Baer, a writer for both *ER* and more recently *Law and Order: SVU*, gave compelling examples of the utility of being provided "little paragraphs of real stories that existed, like a football team got the mumps and ... some of the kids became infertile." Because of the constant demand for interesting and novel storylines, a pre-existing stockpile of such health-related vignettes could be viewed as valuable resource.

**Factually accurate health information is a priority**

Interestingly, while the panelists insist that what they do is "not real, it's television," several panelists discussed their desire for factually accurate health information. Storyline suggestions or vignettes coming from sources such as the CDC or the Kaiser Family Health Foundation may have the upper hand in terms of credibility.

**Networks and social marketers possess a sophisticated understanding of audience segmentation**

The audience is, as Perez stated, "the flag we all salute to." Not surprisingly, the industry has a very sophisticated handle on who watches what shows and why. Thus, the entertainment industry is keenly aware that they are dealing with multiple diverse audiences that break down along ethnic, age, sociodemographic and other key dimensions.

Ivan Juzang stressed the importance of the Black consumer to the media industry. "They are huge consumers of media entertainment—not only TV, but radio and films. In the lowest income Black communities, the VCR penetration rates are higher than the national average. The cable penetration rates are higher than the national average. They consume entertainment media as the number one thing they do. More time than they spend in school, reading, in church and with their parents combined." Unfortunately, the Black community may not be particularly well-served by the entertainment media. Juzang cited research by the Ford Foundation and The California Endowment that concluded that a primary media message is that there are little or no consequences for one's actions.

Tom Alfieri, Juzang and Perez, the audience researchers on the panel, also noted that viewership breaks down not only along ethnic lines but also along age and socioeconomic lines as well as other key dimensions. For instance, Alfieri pointed out the importance of understanding the daytime viewer. "The daytime audience is very, very different and constantly, when I work with network executives, producers and writers of the show, a goal is to remind them of who this audience is... It's certainly not people who live in Hollywood in gated communities... We are talking about women who are watching TV as a guilty pleasure during the day. They are in the middle of numerous, numerous chores and running around like crazy. These are the type of people who shop at K-Mart and it's a treat for them to take their family out to McDonalds and that's a special event for them. So to be able to enter their lives everyday and be important to them is really a privilege for the network."

Alfieri also pointed to the importance of genre. He suggested that whereas soap opera viewers may be looking primarily for escape from reality, people who tune in to talk shows are actively in search of information. "They may not say it in so many words...but they want to learn something. In particular, they want to learn how to make their lives a little bit easier." If true, this implies that talk shows may provide particularly fertile ground for health-related messages. Future EE research should attempt to capitalize on the entertainment industry's accumulated and extensive knowledge of who watches what and why.

### Research and Funding Issues

**Moderator:** Vicki Freimuth, Associate Director of Communications, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
**Panelists:** Carolina Reyes, Vice President of Evaluation and Planning, The California Endowment  
 Vish Viswanath, Acting Associate Director, Behavioral Research Program, National Cancer Institute

The primary purpose of this panel was to discuss strategies to generate increased funding for entertainment education research. Each panelist gave a brief overview of the specific research interests and funding possibilities available at their respective agencies as well as more generic advice. The first panelist, Carolina Reyes, represented The California Endowment, a community-based foundation that was formed as a result of the conversion of Blue Cross from non-profit to for-profit six years ago. The second panelist, Vish Viswanath, represented the Behavioral Research Program at the National Cancer Institute. Finally, Vicki Freimuth performed the dual role of moderator and panelist, drawing on her experience as Director of Communication at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The following key themes emerged:

#### Entertainment education has intuitive appeal and promise for reaching audiences

All three panelists acknowledged the potential power of utilizing entertainment programming to convey health-related messages. As Viswanath pointed out, entertainment education "is intuitively so appealing. When we talk about Hollywood movies and television... everyone can relate to it. The chances of really advancing an idea and the resolution of a problem through the means of communication particularly through such entertainment media is very appealing."

Reyes further noted that entertainment programs on both television and radio could succeed in reaching minority and underserved populations (i.e., migrant farm workers) where other, more traditional, health outreach attempts have failed.

#### Government agencies and foundations are not interested in funding entertainment education per se

While Viswanath acknowledged that "there is big interest in NCI for this kind of approach" he cautions that NCI and other government agencies are primarily interested in funding entertainment education as a potential solution to a specific health care problem such as smoking among adolescents, cervical cancer among key audiences, obesity, etc. Consequently, when applying for research grants, Freimuth suggests, "I wouldn't necessarily talk about entertainment education, but I would talk about it as Vish has said from the perspective of the public health problem that it solves."

#### There is a potential bias against entertainment education in funding organizations

The panelists also recognized that prejudice regarding entertainment education may exist among health researchers and reviewers. This sentiment was expressed most directly by Freimuth—"We have trouble defending communication a lot of times and if I add the word entertainment I'm lucky if I don't get laughed at." This underscores the need to "start with the public health problem and make the argument about why *entertainment education* is the appropriate solution."

### Robust research design and measurement is critical for establishing credibility

Some of the discomfort felt by funders with respect to using the mass media to convey health-related messages might be reduced by incorporating robust research design and measurement into a proposal. As Viswanath pointed out, robust methodological designs are "really important in selling it to the study sections of the review groups." However, he stressed that robustness did not necessarily mean quantitative, as opposed to qualitative, research. Rather, he reports, "NIH and NCI are very much open in respect to what your system of data collection is. They are very open as long as you are very clear about the design and measurement and variables you are using."

### The needs and focus of the funding agency must be considered

The issue of the fit between the potential funder and the research proposed was highlighted by all three panelists. As Freimuth noted, "the key is you need to make contact with individuals in agencies so they understand what you want to do, you understand their priorities and you're looking for a match." She went on to explain that "as communication people, we always analyze our audiences before we communicate with them... what you really need—when you're trying to get money out of an agency or a foundation—is to really understand everything about that foundation or agency."

The CDC, for instance, is comprised of a group of centers, each of which is organized around a specific disease or safety topic. (This highly specialized structure can be seen among conference participants. For example, Max Lum is in the occupational safety and health area, May Kennedy was formerly in the HIV division, Katherine Lyon Daniel is a member of a group that deals with birth defects and Marsha Vanderford was formerly in the environmental health program.) Funding at the CDC tends to fall *within* these pre-existing areas. Consequently, research that crosses one or more of these pre-established areas (for example, research that covers both HIV and birth defects) may be difficult to fund. Thus, at least at the CDC, understanding the organizational structure is key.

Freimuth also noted that, historically, the CDC has relied more heavily on cooperative agreements (in which the CDC and the researcher have a collaborative arrangement) than more traditional external grants (where the researcher writes a proposal and, once funded, performs the research with little ongoing input from the funding agency). While the CDC will entertain unsolicited proposals, Freimuth contends that such unsolicited proposals are "totally worthless unless you have made contacts and know that someone is interested in your proposal...Just sending them over the transom doesn't really work, so it's back to networks. Back to understanding what people need and what people want."

Viswanath likewise stressed the need for researchers to familiarize themselves with a particular funding agency's foci of interest. In addition to keeping track of what an agency is currently funding, Viswanath suggested contacting the program officer at the federal agency prior to submission. The program officer can both alert the applicant to the funding agency's current foci and, in some cases, steer the submission to a particular review group. He further recommends that applicants review the rosters of these review groups and become familiar with their work and what approaches appeal to these particular reviewers. Finally, he stated that it would also behoove the applicant to avail themselves of other available resources from the funding agency including recent publications (i.e., NCI's *Cancer in Women of Color*), online bibliographies and workshops (i.e., NCI's health communication workshops).

The importance of the match between a funding agency and the research proposed was reiterated by Reyes. The California Endowment is currently a three-billion-dollar foundation whose mission is to improve access to quality healthcare for underserved populations such as migrant farm workers and to improve the health and well-being of Californians more generally. In fulfilling this mission, The Endowment funds four goal areas: 1. improving access to health care; 2. disparities in care and prevention; 3. cultural competency; and 4. improvements in the health workforce. Research falling outside these areas would stand little chance of being funded.



### Training young researchers, particularly minority researchers, is important to funding agencies

A recurrent theme was the need to encourage and include young researchers in the process. Viswanath made a plea for incorporating graduate students into future research. He noted the RO3 small grants mechanism allows individuals—either faculty or graduate students—to apply for up to \$50,000 per year for up to two years. Lum also reported that the CDC offers summer internships for doctoral students and that the CDC may be open to receiving an unsolicited proposal involving one or more of these summer interns.

For young researchers just starting out, Freimuth recommended finding out who the key federal and foundation contacts are and sending them abstracts of your research. She also suggested that young researchers actively take part in review panels to gain experience about how grants are written and funded.

### Funding agencies also recognize the value of establishing partnerships and networks

Panelists and participants alike recognized the need for partnerships between academicians, healthcare practitioners, government agencies and community partners. Viswanath explicitly recommended creating an ongoing network of individuals who are interested in entertainment education. As one example, Viswanath cited the Tobacco Etiology Research Network funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. This network has met biannually for almost ten years and the members have generated numerous grants from NCI and other agencies. He noted that a small amount of funding could be available, at NCI or elsewhere, to establish a similar entertainment education network. Prior to proposing such a network, Viswanath suggests looking at the Health Behavior Theories Workshop on the NCI Behavioral Research Program's Web site as an exemplar.

Reyes pointed out that while The California Endowment does not invest large amounts of funding into research per se it does tend to identify key partners who can answer specific questions. Reyes also noted that several other states such as Minnesota, New York and Washington, D. C., have similar endowments each of which have a different set of research needs.

### Criteria for Future EE Research

The second day of the conference was primarily devoted to determining both the research priorities for entertainment education as well as the criteria that should be applied to any future EE research. The discussion of criteria for funding preceded the discussion of the research priorities and was led by Susan Kirby.

As the discussion session drew to an end, each participant was asked to write their top five criteria on five separate slips of paper. The following lists the criteria generated in order of the degree of support each received. (Note: the numbers in parentheses indicate the number of participants who included that particular criterion as one of their top five.)

#### Future research in entertainment education should:

1. **Be practical / applied (21)**  
The most commonly agreed upon criterion was that future research should generate findings that can be easily translated into practice.
2. **Build knowledge and advance the field (19)**  
In addition to research that "worked," participants wanted theoretically-based explanations of why it worked and under what conditions was it more or less likely to work. This theoretical basis was deemed necessary for two reasons: first, to enable others to replicate success and avoid failure in future endeavors and second, to advance the field more generally.
3. **Be culturally sensitive (11)**  
Throughout the conference, presenters and panelists repeatedly drove home the need to focus on the diverse needs and media use patterns of minority and underserved populations.
4. **Be methodologically robust with measurable outcomes (10)**  
As was mentioned during the earlier funding panel, there may exist some underlying prejudice with respect to using the popular media to change attitudes, knowledge and behavior. However, as discussed previously in the funding panel, some of this potential prejudice might be overcome by incorporating robust research design and measurement into a proposal.
5. **Be fundable (9)**  
In addition to overcoming skepticism within the scientific community, entertainment education must also serve the needs of the funding agency. As clearly articulated in the funding panel, potential funders are not interested in entertainment education per se, but rather in using EE to solve a problem of particular interest to the funding agency.
6. **Lend itself to broad application (7)**  
At the same time, participants wanted research that lends itself to broad application. On the surface, this desire for broad application may seem inconsistent with the previously expressed need to solve a specific problem. However, if the researcher utilizes a theory-based approach to solve a particular problem and is successful, that same theoretical approach can be exported to solve numerous other problems.
7. **Be sensitive to US media industry and environment (7)**  
The entertainment industry and telenovela panels provided participants with a rare and fascinating glimpse into how entertainment programming is actually produced. Factors such as concern over a drop in ratings, the sheer number of potential players involved and a lingering suspicion on the part of some in the industry to the idea of conveying health-related messages make dealing with the entertainment industry difficult at best. Some participants felt that future EE research must reflect the realities and constraints of dealing with the entertainment industry.
8. **Focus on behavioral effects (5)**  
Some participants also felt the need for clear-cut behavioral outcomes. This criterion is related to the need to demonstrate unambiguously that entertainment education really can evoke change.
9. **Be timely (2)**  
Two participants also noted that the lag time between funding, conducting research and reporting the findings can lead to the perception that EE research is not focused on the pressing issues of the day.
10. **Be ethical (1)**  
Precisely because of its potential reach and power, there was the sense that researchers, reviewers and funders must be particularly vigilant to guard against any unintended or unethical consequences.
11. **Generate multiple other projects (1)**  
A final criterion mentioned was that a project should not only produce findings, but also inspire and spawn other research.

#### Overarching Principles

There was general agreement by participants that in addition to the above criteria, there should be a set of overarching principles guiding all future EE research. These overarching principles advocate that future EE research should value and be sensitive to:

- diverse cultures and ethnic groups,
- the core values of those groups,
- different age groups,
- other key stakeholders (such as local communities),
- the specific media environment involved,
- work in other related fields such as psychology, sociology, public health, etc.,
- and the ethical implications of both intended and unintended outcomes.

Moreover, there was a strong consensus among participants that minorities must be centrally involved in all aspects of future EE research—from informed minority participants, to community consultants, to African American and Hispanic researchers.

## Setting an Entertainment Education Research Agenda

The remainder of the second day of the conference was devoted to identifying and prioritizing key research questions. The session began with Kirby summarizing the criteria discussed in the previous session. The group discussion then moved to identifying the most important unresolved practical, theoretical and methodological issues in EE related to African American and Hispanic audiences.

At the close of this discussion, each of the 19 remaining participants nominated their top five unanswered research questions with respect to EE and multicultural audiences. Not surprisingly, there was a fair amount of overlap between the questions compiled at the 2000 agenda-setting conference and the current conference. However, participants also generated a number of new questions (indicated below with an asterisk). The following is a list of the twelve questions that received the greatest number of mentions. These twelve questions can be roughly categorized into three broader sets of issues involving:

1. Outcomes (Does EE work?),
2. Strategic considerations (How does it work?), and
3. The media and audience environment (Does it work differently for different audiences?) and are organized accordingly below.

There was, however, some disagreement in determining which of the categories worked best for certain questions. Questions that may have fit in more than one category are indicated below.

### EE outcomes among African American and Hispanic Audiences/Does it work?

This category received the highest number of nominations, underscoring the need for continued research to both confirm the ability of entertainment programming to effectively convey health-related information effectively to viewers and to identify factors that can enhance this ability. The following key questions remain largely unanswered for African American and Hispanic audiences and general audiences as well:

1. What level and type of exposure to EE content is necessary for adoption of pro-health messages? (9 mentions)
2. What evidence exists that EE messages can significantly influence the knowledge, attitudes, and health-related practices? (7 mentions)
3. Under what conditions are unintended effects (boomerang, confusion, stigmatization) most likely to occur? (6 mentions)
- 4\*. What levels of analysis other than the individual level need to be considered (i.e., family, community, region)? (5 mentions)
- 5\*. What are the most effective research techniques and methodologies? (5 mentions)

### Strategic considerations with respect to African American and Hispanic Audiences/How does it work? How can it work more effectively?

This category of questions dealt with strategies for achieving the greatest potential impact in future EE efforts. For example, could involving indigenous institutions such as churches or other community-based organizations reinforce or amplify the impact of a health-related portrayal? Should future efforts focus on certain genres of programming if they are shown to be more effective in transmitting serious health messages? Are certain health issues already receiving a substantial amount of attention and, if so, how could one best capitalize on existing storylines?

- 6\*. What indigenous institutions and practices can help amplify, enhance or reinforce EE efforts among Hispanic and African American audiences? (7 mentions)
7. What are the different ways in which characters can be shown to cope with health problems, and which are the most effective in terms of modeling? Are certain character portrayals more effective among African American or Hispanic audiences? (6 mentions—also seen as fitting into the outcomes category)
8. What are the most effective ways of motivating writers/producers to address health-related issues in their programming? (6 mentions—also seen as fitting into the media and audience environment category)
9. Are EE strategies used more effectively in some entertainment genres (e.g., sitcoms, dramas) than in others and does this vary as a function by ethnicity? (5 mentions)
10. How (in what ways) are health issues/concerns portrayed in entertainment programming? Do the health issues and outcomes portrayed differ as a function of the ethnic composition of the audience? (5 mentions)

**Media and audience environment/ Does it work differently for different audiences?**

This category of reflects participants' sense that much remains unknown regarding how messages are received, understood and acted upon by diverse audiences. It also recognizes writers, producers and the entertainment executives as distinct audiences in their own right.

11. What are the key determinants of audience segmentation (ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, age)? (6 mentions)
12. What impact will acculturation have on EE efforts? (5 mentions)

**Next steps**

Vicki Beck concluded the program by recognizing the role of the CDC's Office of Communication in supporting ongoing EE activity, including research to assess the impact of current EE efforts. She explained that there would be a final report posted online at the Hollywood, Health & Society Web site. At this point, the discussion turned to comments regarding the conference program and suggestions for future steps to promote more EE research, particularly with respect to African American and Hispanic audiences. Some of the suggestions included the following:

1. **Future meetings should include a wider range of minority media representatives.**  
The focus of the present conference was domestic television. This focus was selected for primarily pragmatic reasons: In the United States, television programming reaches a larger number of African Americans and Hispanics than any other medium and, Los Angeles, the location of the conference, is the epicenter of television production. Future meetings should include other media such as the Internet, radio or smaller community-based media that can also have a tremendous impact on minority audiences.
2. **A network of individuals and institutions interested in promoting EE domestically should be established and maintained.**  
Conference participants strongly supported the idea of establishing a network of individuals interested in domestic attempts at EE involving African American and Hispanic audiences. Several participants also expressed the sentiment that this network should attempt to include key stakeholders such as community members, members of the entertainment industry and researchers from other fields such as business and sociology. Various mechanisms for maintaining such a network were suggested such as an ongoing email listserv to disseminate relevant information or an annual or biannual conference (which could potentially be funded by the NCI, The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation or another interested institution).
3. **Minority researchers should be identified, trained and included in the process.**  
Participants reiterated the need to encourage and include minority researchers in future EE efforts. Three specific mechanisms were mentioned. Viswanath noted that small grants of up to \$50,000 per year are available from NCI for either faculty members or graduate students. Lum suggested that promising minority doctoral students could be encouraged to apply to the CDC for a summer internship involving EE. Finally, Freimuth recommended that young researchers should actively take part in the review process to learn firsthand how grants are written and funded.
4. **A concerted effort should be made to promote research on the questions identified.**  
Finally, participants stressed the need for a concerted and sustained effort to ensure that funding agencies, researchers, and members of the entertainment industry to work in concert and commit the resources necessary to answer the crucial questions laid out in the research agenda.

**Appendix A: Grid of Research Questions by Audience**

<b>RESEARCH QUESTIONS</b>	<b>General Audiences</b>	<b>African-American Audiences</b>	<b>Hispanic Audiences</b>
<b>EE Outcomes</b>			
<b>What evidence exists that EE messages can significantly influence knowledge, attitudes and health-related practices?</b>	Beck: Healthstyles surveys indicate viewers of soap operas learn from viewing; Brodie et al.: <i>ER</i> viewers learn facts; Kennedy et al.: soap opera viewers call AIDS/STD hotline; Keller and Brown: viewers learn about safe sex/date rape from shows like <i>Felicity</i> ; Sharf's work: Women learn about cancer treatment from thirtysomething; Winsten and DeJong: Designate a Driver success	Beck: Healthstyles surveys indicate minority women learn from viewing soap operas; Freimuth et al.: AA have limited accurate knowledge about research and distrust research agencies. Most lacked specific and correct information about Tuskegee experiments. Ghez: Radio drama on domestic abuse, "It's Your Business," reaches few people.	Alcalay et al: novela format+PSAs significantly increased awareness and knowledge of cardiovascular care (no impact on behavior); Beck: Healthstyles surveys indicate minority women learn from viewing soap operas; Lalonde et al.: awareness and knowledge of alcohol abuse significantly improved in Latinas, but not Latino males.
<b>What levels and types of exposure to EE content are necessary for adoption of pro-health practices?</b>	International projects indicate multiple exposures in integrated campaign needed for behavioral impact; Designate a Driver campaign concluded multiple exposures important; Brodie et al: a single statement had limited effects (effects faded over time), Sharf's projects: Women vividly recalled cancer storyline months after it aired (drama unfolded over 6 episodes)		
<b>Under what conditions are unintended effects (boomerang, confusion, stigmatization) most likely to occur?</b>	Sharfs' projects: Some women inaccurately recalled the tests conducted when character Nancy was diagnosed with cancer; Harvard assessment of smallpox story on <i>ER</i> found that some people would avoid going to Emergency Room for fear of being quarantined. Unintended effects are rarely studied.	Freimuth et al.: AA viewers view government actions through a lens of suspicion and distrust; Tirodkar and Jain: food and beverages appearing on Black programs are problematic; Ward and Rivadeneyra: Entertainment viewing impacts on viewers beliefs, expectations and behaviors about sex; Wingood et al.: views of women in rap music videos are problematic.	
<b>What effect does post-viewing discussion have on adoption of pro-health practices?</b>	International projects routinely document that EE viewing prompts interpersonal communication and information seeking; Sharf's projects: Women talked about cancer storyline with family and friends; Kennedy et al., Keller and Brown: when featured viewers do in fact call hotlines		
<b>Can we enhance EE effects through links with chat rooms and other Internet features?</b>			
<b>How can EE be used to influence social norms?</b>	Designate a Driver campaign influenced social norms		

**EE Content**

**How (in what ways) are health issues/concerns portrayed in entertainment programming?**

The question is not systematically addressed.

**What specific theories are most applicable to developing EE messages?**

See Singhal and Rogers; Communication Initiative website, Johns Hopkins Communication Program's web site; selected chapters in Singhal, Cody, Rogers and Sabido. Usually, Social Learning Theory, ELM, Theories of Planned Behavior, Reasoned Action.

Ghez: "It's Your Business" relied on perceived involvement and social learning theory.

Alcalay et al.: Social Marketing, Social Learning Theory (SLT), stages of change, theory of planned behavior, self-efficacy and ecological perspective; Lalonde et al.: SLT, theory of reasoned action, Sabido Methodology.

**What health issues/concerns are being depicted over time, and with what frequency?**

Unknown at this time

**What are different ways in which characters can be shown to cope with health problems, and which are most effective in terms of modeling?**

Unknown at this time

**What makes certain characters appealing as role models? Are there enduring qualities of appealing characters that cut across programs and audience segments?**

Unknown at this time

**Are EE strategies used more effectively in some entertainment genres (e.g., sit-coms, dramas) than in others?**

Unknown at this time

What is the "right" kind of humor, i.e., humor that can take the edge off taboo topics, increase attention, comprehension and recall? How can humor backfire or create mixed messages?

Unknown at this time

What is the best way in which to portray culturally sensitive health issues?

Ghez: "It's Your Business" was culturally sensitive.

See Alcalay et al.; Lalonde et al.

### EE Audiences

What types of television characters are considered credible sources of health information?

How important is the ethnicity or race, and gender, of the character(s) or spokesperson?

How many distinct audiences exist and how many is it feasible to target?

What are the key determinants of audience segmentation (ethnicity, gender, social economic status, age)?

What impact will acculturation have on EE efforts?

### The Entertainment Industry Itself

What do writers/producers want from health-information resources, and in what form?

What are effective ways of motivating writers/producers to address health-related issues in their programming?

What sources of information do writers/producers currently use to get expert advice and/or accurate information?

What health issues and concerns are currently on the agenda of writers/producers?  
How open would the Entertainment Industry be to evaluative research?



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