

TELEVISION VIOLENCE: FRAYING OUR SOCIAL FABRIC

Someone has to say, "Enough" —because this is disaster, we are destroying ourselves. Successive societies have destroyed themselves by the failure of their leadership to say, "I know in many respects that's what you'd like to see, but you know what? It's bad for us, we're damaging ourselves. We are untying the fabric of our society." — David Puttnam, former president of Columbia Pictures¹

The historian Arnold Toynbee has pointed out that 19 out of 21 civilizations have died from within and not by conquests from without. He tells us that there were no bands playing or flags waving when these civilizations decayed. It happened slowly in the quiet and the dark when no one was aware of what was happening.

A democratic society carries no inborn guarantee that it will survive on its own merits. We have seen many such societies perish even in our time. A free society cannot be taken for granted. Truth and freedom must be guarded as precious treasures. The foundation to support the civil liberties we enjoy today is dependent upon the vigilance exercised by those who can recognize and who will protect and oppose invasion of their liberties by governments, national, provincial, or municipal. — The Honourable Emmett M. Hall, former justice of the Supreme Court of Canada²