



Attracted but Unsatisfied: The Effects of Arousing Content on Television Consumption Choices

Luca Stanca, Department of Economics, University of Milan Bicocca

Marco Gui, Department of Sociology, University of Milan Bicocca

Marcello Gallucci, Department of Psychology, University of Milan Bicocca

Thursday, 10 February 2011, 3pm
Aula Pagani, Building U7, 3rd floor

Abstract

This paper investigates experimentally the effects of arousing content on viewing choices and satisfaction in television consumption. We test the hypothesis that the portrayal of arousing contents combines high attraction and low satisfaction and is thus responsible for sub-optimal choices. In our experiment, subjects can choose among three channels during a viewing session. In the experimental condition, one of the three channels portrays a violent verbal conflict, whereas in the control condition the same program does not contain arousing contents. A post-experimental questionnaire is used to assess subjects' satisfaction with the programs and the overall viewing experience. The results support the hypothesis. The presence of arousing content causes subjects to watch more of a given program, although they experience lower content-specific and overall satisfaction.

CISEPS

Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca

Piazza Ateneo Nuovo, 1

Milano 20126, Italy

Tel: (+39 02) 6448-3089 | Fax: (+39 02) 6448-3085

<http://dipeco.economia.unimib.it/ciseps/>

ciseps@unimib.it