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memorandum issued by a large city ' s council on the arts. " In a recent citywide poll, fifteen percent more residents said that they watch television programs about the visual arts than was the case in a poll conducted five years ago. During these past five years, the number of people visiting our city ' s art museums has increased by a similar percentage. Since the corporate funding that supports public television, where most of the visual arts programs appear, is now being threatened with severe cuts, we can expect that attendance at our city ' s art museums will also start to decrease. Thus some of the city ' s funds for supporting the arts should be reallocated to public television. " Discuss how well reasoned... etc. In this argument the author concludes that the city should allocate some of its arts funding to public television. The conclusion is based on two facts: (1) attendance at the city ' s art museum has increased proportionally with the increases in visual-arts program viewing on public television, and (2) public television is being threatened by severe cuts in corporate funding. While this argument is somewhat convincing, a few concerns need to be addressed. To begin with, the argument depends on the assumption that increased exposure to the visual arts on television, mainly public television, has caused a similar increase in local art-museum attendance. However, just because increased art-museum attendance can be statistically correlated with

similar increases in television viewing of visual-arts programs, this does not necessarily mean that the increased television viewing of arts is the cause of the rise in museum attendance. Moreover, perhaps there are other factors relevant to increased interest in the local art museum. For instance, maybe a new director had procured more interesting, exciting acquisitions and exhibits during the period when museum attendance increased, in addition, the author could be overlooking a common cause of both increases. It is possible that some larger social or cultural phenomenon is responsible for greater public interest in both television arts programming and municipal art museums. To be fair, however, we must recognize that the author's assumption is a special case of a more general one that television viewing affects people's attitudes and behavior. Common sense and observation tell me that this is indeed the case. After all, advertisers spend billions of dollars on television ad time because they trust this assumption as well. In conclusion, I am somewhat persuaded by this author's line of reasoning. The argument would be strengthened if the author were to consider and rule out other significant factors that might have caused the increase in visits to the local art museum.

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