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ABSTRACT

This study was made to evaluate the success and potential of the Columbus Video Access Center (VAC) and compare it with other access organizations operating throughout the nation. Basic trends, issues and problems now confronting public access television were related to Columbus, Indiana. The survey data were collected by: (1) telephone interviews, (2) a diary survey of subscribers, and (3) 150-in-depth questionnaire interviews. The study concluded that: (1) the Columbus VAC appeared superior in facilities, equipment, staff, hours of operation and funding to any public access center in a comparable or larger market situation, (2) the audience of the VAC was small and undifferentiated, (3) a venture such as VAC will never successfully counter mass appeal programing, (4) VAC can build an audience by selecting a specific audience and one audience need, and programing consistently, directly to that need, and (5) future success of VAC depends on community support. (WCM)

THE COLUMBUS VIDEO ACCESS CENTER: A RESEARCH EVALUATION OF AUDIENCE AND PUBLIC ATTITUDES

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INTRODUCTION

Proponents of cable television have long maintained that public access is one area in which cable television has vast potential. They have argued that cable technology, when properly utilized, can make it possible for local citizens to communicate with one another, exchange their views more effectively, and participate more completely in the affairs of the community.

Recognizing this potential, the Federal Communications Commission, in its 1972 rules for cable television, required all new cable systems in the top 100 markets to provide a channel for public access; major market systems in existence before March 31, 1972 were given five years to comply, unless they receive FCC certification to "import" distant signals. Smaller communities have two options: (1) stipulate a public access channel as part of the franchise agreement; or (2) bargain with the existing cable operator for a public access channel. It should be noted that many cable companies have fully endorsed the concept of public access and co-operated in its development as long as citizen requests remain within reasonable financial limits.

But neither recognizing the potential of cable television nor requiring systems to make access channels available can make public access television an effective channel for local communication. Problems of audience definition, programming, training, equipment availability, financing, and public relations must be solved before any public access facility can be expected to play a significant role in the affairs of a community. It is apparent that few groups have been willing to invest the time and effort necessary to make public access a viable community force. As a result, both the number and quality of successful access organizations is limited.

Due to the concern of interested citizens, the co-operation of the local cable company, the financial support of the Irwin-Sweeney-Miller Foundation, and the diligent efforts of its staff, the Video Access Center (VAC) in Columbus, Indiana can be counted as one of the few places in the country where the concept and reality of public access television have been successfully brought together. For nearly two years, the VAC has sought to "demythify" television; to develop better communication in Columbus; to demonstrate both the feasibility and the desirability of public access; and to create a model for community involvement with television that would be transportable statewide and nationwide.

Recently, with the co-operative support of both the Irwin-Sweeney-Miller Foundation staff and the director of the Video Access Center, this team of researchers, under difficult time constraints, undertook a comprehensive study to determine the effectiveness of the Columbus VAC and compare it with other access organizations operating throughout the nation. In general, the study sought to answer the following questions:

(1) How does the Columbus VAC compare with other public access facilities?

(2) What are the relative costs of VAC programming?

(3) What type and how much of an audience does VAC have?

(4) What are the attitudes of Columbus residents toward the concept of public access television in general and VAC television in particular?

This report is the product of the investigation which was begun in February, 1974. Chapter 1 provides descriptive, comparative data against which the funding, programming and administration of the Columbus Video Access Center can be evaluated. Chapter 2 presents a quantitative analysis

of television viewing patterns in Columbus with special emphasis on VAC viewing. Chapter 3 provides detailed data, based on 150 in-depth interviews, on the attitudes of Columbus residents toward public access television and the VAC.

From the outset, it should be noted that this study did not attempt to place value judgments on the programming, administration, or wisdom of funding VAC. It merely sought to summarize the basic trends, issues and problems now confronting public access television on a nationwide basis and relate those concerns to the situation existing in Columbus, Indiana. This report does not describe the programming, funding, or administration of the VAC, but focuses on the reactions of Columbus residents to the concept, programming and operation of the VAC. No other access facility known to the writers has been evaluated more thoroughly.

CHAPTER 1

PUBLIC ACCESS TELEVISION: THE CURRENT SITUATION

The purpose of this chapter is to present a general picture of public access television as it exists across the United States. Specifically, it is meant to provide basic information on funding, programming, staff, facilities and cost against which the efforts of the Columbus Video Access Center can be measured.

Procedure

From the beginning, it was assumed that VAC was among the most developed public access organizations in the country. Consequently, comparative data was not gathered from any of the following: (1) the multitude of small, unfunded, disorganized, beginning access projects; (2) independent production groups such as Global Village and Raindance which have no direct allegiance to the success of public access in a given community; and (3) access centers such as those in Denver and Washington, D. C. which currently have no relationship to cable television because cable service does not yet exist in their communities. All of these projects, valuable as they might be, were deemed inappropriate as sources of comparative data on which to judge the Columbus VAC.

Rather than selecting a sample of any type, the researchers proceeded by developing a list of major public access projects currently in operation across the country. By definition, projects which were utilized as the source of data for this analysis satisfied the following criteria: (1) all were mentioned and discussed in the public access literature; (2) all

were suggested by one or more of the "project directors" contacted during this survey; and (3) all were known to be producing and disseminating programming.

While it is true that other access projects in operation at this time might provide additional insight, the researchers are reasonably confident that the access projects currently under way in the following cities provided an adequate and appropriate source of descriptive data from which useful comparisons might be drawn:

(1) New York, New York
(2) Bakersfield, California
(3) Ann Arbor, Michigan
(4) East Lansing, Michigan
(5) Lawrence, Kansas
(6) Akron, Ohio
(7) DeKalb, Illinois
(8) Aspen, Colorado
(9) Reading, Pennsylvania
(10) Casper, Wyoming

By means of telephone interview (10-15 minutes in length), supplementary information available in pamphlets, newsletters and periodic publications such as Urban Telecommunications Forum, and thorough reviews of reports such as The Wire Island: The First 2 Years of Public Access to Cable Television in Manhattan and A Story About People (a report on access television in Reading, Pennsylvania), the following descriptive information was gathered from each system.

(1) length of operation
(2) background and structure of organization
(3) available equipment
(4) amount and type of programming
(5) source of original funding
(6) current operating budget
(7) audience reaction
(8) staff
(9) major problem areas
(10) immediate and long-range objectives

The following descriptive analysis was constructed on the basis of the data gathered from the survey of selected access centers and supplementary literature. For purposes of both clarity and organization, the writers have chosen to present the data in narrative rather than tabular form. Hopefully, this method of presentation will provide greater insight into the data by maximizing the opportunity for interpretive comment in areas where the fluidity of the situation or the uniqueness of the concern make such comment mandatory.

Results

Initiation and Development of Access Activity. The initial development of public access capability in every community contacted was dependent on two factors: (1) the existence of a small group of television enthusiasts who wanted to make the concept of public access television a local reality, and (2) the availability of technical expertise and financial assistance. Four types of group or organization have provided such support.

(a) "Facilitator" groups such as the Alternate Media Center and Open Channel have chosen to minimize their support of program production while maximizing their efforts in areas such as personnel training, information dissemination, and technical assistance. Access centers in DeKalb, Reading, Orlando and Bakersfield have been direct beneficiaries of this policy. Other centers in Columbus, Indiana and Cape May, New Jersey have consulted with the Alternate Media Center. In the typical situation, such as Reading, the local cable companies (Berks TV Cable Co. and the American Television and Communications Corporation) and the Alternate Media Center agreed to share the expenses incurred in initiating the access project.[1]

(b) Major CATV corporations and local cable companies have decided to make "public access" something more than a legal responsibility. In cities such as New

York, Ann Arbor (Mich.) and Reading (Pa.), the cable operators have given both equipment and funds far beyond the required legal effort. In some instances, cable company personnel have played a significant role in the initiation of public access activity.

(c) Organizations such as the John and Mary Markle Foundation, the Noble Foundation, and the Irwin-Sweeney-Miller Foundation have taken an active interest in access development. Many of the so-called "facilitator" groups and several access projects are in existence because of foundation support.

(d) Governmental units at the city, county, state, and federal levels have assisted by utilizing monies from revenue sharing, franchise fees, special bonds, or the general fund. The Video Reference Service in Casper, Wyoming is a product of county financing; the VAC in Columbus has received help from the Indiana State Arts Commission; and the Fund for the City of New York has granted the La Guardia VAC money to defray the cost of salaries and rent during its first year.[2]

Although each access organization must deal with unique problems during its development, two distinct problem areas typically appear: (1) method of program dissemination, and (2) permanent funding.

METHOD OF PROGRAM DISSEMINATION. As one examines the various methods of public access program distribution now being utilized, it is apparent that the existence of public access programming does not yet mean the existence of a public access channel. In communities such as Lawrence and Aspen, access programs are distributed on local origination channels; in other areas such as DeKalb, access programming must share a channel with other users such as an educational institution, a school corporation, or a governmental agency.

As a direct result of these unusual distribution methods, it has been difficult for public access television to develop an identity of its own; local citizens typically confuse the concepts of local cable programming and public access.

Perhaps a second potential result of these situations is even more serious. Control of programs telecast on the local origination channel rests solely with the cable operator; he can choose to broadcast whatever material he deems appropriate. In contrast, programs aired on the public access channel cannot be directly controlled by the cable operator and are subject only to the basic access restrictions developed by the FCC. Although the number of "control" disputes which have developed thus far is minimal, the possibility for conflict is readily apparent.[3]

Although the evidence gathered in this investigation is far from conclusive, it does appear that local groups, when assisted by experienced personnel from "facilitator" groups or foundations, are more successful in securing a designated access channel. Local groups, without the benefit of outside assistance, have often been given "time on the origination channel" by the cable operator.

PERMANENT FUNDING. This survey also suggested, in a fairly definitive fashion, that public access facilities must begin to develop some long-range permanent source of funding. It is already apparent that cable companies, foundations, and "facilitator" groups that have borne the burden of financial support in recent years cannot and will not sustain the access movement for a long period of time. A few examples:

(1) Cable company support for the access center in DeKalb has just been withdrawn;

(2) Personnel assigned to access programming in Akron have been terminated and those functions "incorporated" into the programming director's job;

(3) Producers of public access programming such as Videofreex, Raindance and Global Village have been told that "facilitator" groups and foundations will no longer devote major portions of their access money to this type of project.

In the immediate future, access centers in financial trouble have turned to local governmental units for support; more particularly, they have asked for part of the annual franchise fee. As long as these requests have simply asked the franchising agent (e.g., the city council) to assign part of the franchise money, cable operators have not objected. However, in situations where centers have proposed an additional tax (beyond the franchise fee) on cable revenue for the support of public access television, the objections of cable operators have been loud and clear. They have effectively argued that they are being asked to subsidize an activity which the community must underwrite if it is to survive. In Santa Cruz, California, the City Council has refused to amend its cable ordinance to provide for the assignment of an additional 2% of the cable system's revenue to the funding of a non-profit corporation responsible for public access television.[4]

In the long run, the overwhelming majority of cable executives, a substantial number of governmental agencies, and some advocates of the public access movement seem to agree that permanent funding can only come from the users and viewers of public access television. Thus far, citizen donations and user fees have accounted for only a small percentage of the revenue needed to finance public access facilities; in the future, these sources must bear a significant share of the financial burden. With this realization in mind, public access advocates in New York City have recently

recommended that a self-sustaining access center be opened on a trial basis in order to gather data on how such an operation might work.[5] To quote directly from the conclusions ond recommendations of the recent summary report on public access to cable television in Manhattan:

> "Finally, viewers should help fund PA through contributions and volunteer work. If PA is to belong to the people, it must receive more than passive support from them."[6]

Equipment. This is the only area in which there is virtually unanimous agreement among the respondents. All of the access centers contacted, with the exception of the Video Reference Center in Casper, Wyoming, relied heavily on the use of portapak equipment. On the average, the typical "plant" either owned or had the use of 3-5 portapak units. Two problems continually occurred: (1) at least one, and often two, of the machines were out of service; and (2) there was great difficulty in maintaining an adequate supply of videotape.

A second area of consensus was the need for a public access studio if large amounts of programming are to be produced by the center. Those who had a studio reported that it usually accounted for over one-half of the programming produced; those who didn't have a studio clearly believed that this deficiency was directly responsible for the low amount of program production in their communities. Perhaps the most dramatic example of studio importance was reported in New York City where the new 125th Street Studio of Teleprompter accounted for more than 60% (328 hours) of the original access programming produced between December, 1972 and January, 1973; this pattern has since continued.[7]

From all the estimates provided and supplementary publications as well, it would appear that $15,000 to $30,000 worth of equipment is needed

for an adequate production facility. Sterling Manhattan provided between $15,000 and $18,000 worth of half-inch videotape equipment for the La Guardia VAC in New York City; Michigan Cable TV provided nearly $30,000 worth of gear for the Ann Arbor Access Center; and National Cable Company has purchased equipment valued at $40,000 for its new facility in East Lansing. For comparative purposes, the average estimated capital expenditure needed to initiate a new public, non-commercial station is $1,500,000.[9]

The fluctuation in equipment cost is directly related to the quantity and type of the gear selected. The 125th Street studio equipped by Teleprompter with a black-and-white, one-inch stationary camera and its affiliated studio apparatus costs $20,000;[10] the La Guardia VAC equipment (4 portapaks, 3 editing decks, and a special effects generator) is valued at $15,000.[11] Any combination facility with both studio and remote capability would cost considerably more.

Although the above estimates are reasonably accurate and provide for a well-equipped facility, it should also be noted that other access centers have done a great deal with far less capital expenditure. Using imagination, ingenuity, spare parts, and a lot of volunteered time, various centers have managed to assemble an adequate technical facility at far less cost.

Programming. When access directors surveyed for this study were asked how many hours of programming would be cablecast during an average week, the responses ranged from a low of 3-4 hours per week in Lawrence and Akron to a high of 135 hours in New York City on the Teleprompter access channel. The majority averaged from 15-30 hours per week.

It is difficult to interpret this data when one recognizes the following limiting factors:

(1) the access center in DeKalb must "share" its channel with others;

(2) the Video Reference Service in Casper, Wyoming operates at the request of a viewer;

(3) access programming in Lawrence and Aspen must be approved by the local cable operator because it is disseminated on the local origination channel;

(4) All centers have a substantial backlog of programming which has never been "titled" or "edited" into final form for "on the air" use.

While there is no doubt that use of the access center and its equipment for programs which are never disseminated is perfectly legitimate, this substantial activity is simply not reflected in the data gathered.

It was interesting to note that every access center considered its programming to be unique; each project director or co-ordinator claimed his shows were geared to the interests of the local area. And yet, when asked to describe those efforts, most respondents enumerated the same basic programming types:

(1) Entertainment/Talk Shows---interviews; mini "Tonight" shows; country-western music; local humorists; etc.

(2) Video "Art" Programs---experiments in video; programs in "process"; programs in which artists try to utilize the medium to communicate or portray abstract ideas.

(3) Community Information Shows---panel discussions on local issues; shopping tips; weather; local history; etc.

(4) Educational Series---programs on cooking, gardening, psychiatry, travel, and the like.

(5) Miscellaneous---a series of "street" interviews; children "playing" in the park; an original "animal" drama; etc.

All of these efforts were produced by the three basic types of program "producer" involved in public access television. The first is the

established video production group such as Raindance, Global Village, or Videofreex. Basically, their efforts are evident in large, urban areas and generally do not pertain to local community issues; access centers in the smaller cities have minimal contact with program producers of this type. Parenthetically, as foundation support diminishes over the next ten years, it appears that the number of specialized video production groups will also diminish.

The second type of "producer," and perhaps the most important thus far in the smaller areas, is the local community group such as the League of Women Voters, the Fraternal Order of Police, the local chapter of the National Organization of Women, the Vietnam Veterans Against the War, etc. These groups often produce programs to: (1) communicate with their own members, or (2) bring their point of view on a particular issue to the community. The number of such local groups involved in public access activity appears to be rapidly increasing.

The third type of "producer" is the individual or "ad hoc" organization of several individuals for whom public access represents the opportunity to say what they think and why on nearly any topic. Although this type of producer has not yet become a dominant force, the long-range growth and well-being of public access television is dependent on users of this type. If public access is to become a vehicle for information exchange and diversity of opinion, it must generate considerable enthusiasm among the individuals of a community.

Operating Costs.

ANNUAL BUDGET. It is difficult to determine the average annual operating budget of the typical access center when one realizes that some

facilities are completely financed within existing cable firms, and no specific dollar figure is allocated to public access (Lawrence); others are being implemented with cable corporations and "facilitator" groups sharing expenses (Reading); and still others are supported by money received from both cable companies and local governmental units (La Guardia VAC).

In this study, the annual operating budgets reported by the respondents ranged from a low of $12,000 per year in both DeKalb and Ann Arbor to a high of approximately $65,000 in New York by Teleprompter. For comparative purposes, the total operating expense of the typical commercial television station is estimated at $1,446,500.[12] The estimated operating expense for a non-commercial station is $690,000 per year.[13] The average budget for a public access center appears to be $15,000 to $25,000. Expenses typically covered include staff salaries, space rental, telephone, utilities, and insurance.

It should be noted that the average operating budget observed in this study is a function of two factors: (1) the location of the access centers, and (2) the minimal staff being employed at the present time by those centers. The first factor is illustrated by the fact that the La Guardia VAC in New York has found a $20,000 operating budget to be inadequate while project directors in both Ann Arbor and DeKalb would be ecstatic with such a figure.[14] The second factor simply testifies to the immense contribution being made to the public access movement by volunteers. As public access activity increases in the years to come, the size of the staff must also increase. If that is to occur, operating budgets must become larger.

PROGRAM COSTS. Perhaps even more meaningful than the annual operating budget or the necessary capital expenditures would be accurate data on the cost per hour of programming produced. In this regard, data is scarce. Most centers do not keep records of equipment utilization for the purpose of cost accounting; many do not record the number of studio hours given to a particular project; and the great majority simply pass out videotape to users without any real concern for how much or how often until the supply has substantially diminished. These loose operating procedures have probably evolved from a basic desire to keep public access "open to the people" and minimize the "administrative hassle" involved in utilizing the facilities or equipment.

Eventually, however, as foundation support diminishes and "facilitator" groups are forced to choose among a myriad of potential projects, cost accounting will become a reality. Already, production groups based in New York City have begun to estimate their hourly production costs. Incorporating both salaries and administrative overhead into its figures, Open Channel estimates production costs at $1,000 per hour; the Videofreex estimate about $200 per hour and Experiments in Art and Technology assumes an average cost of $383 per hour.[15] Even these figures which pertain to relatively expensive access productions are minimal when compared to network programs such as Ironside and Hawaii Five-O which cost $250,000 per hour.[16] Commercial networks can afford this type of expense in view of the fact that advertisers are willing to pay substantial sums for spot announcements in popular programming. For example, the asking price for a spot announcement in All In the Family during the 1973-74 season was $125,000; the asking price for a spot during the Super Bowl game was $225,000.

The only certainty at this time is that public access programming is significantly less expensive than commercial or public broadcasting. While the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) spends over $45,000 per hour of programming produced for national distribution, public access groups can produce a simple talk/information show for $25 to $50.[17] While commercial stations must pay over $300 for a one-hour videotape, access organizations pay $25 to $30. While commercial stations figure a cost of $150 to $200 per hour for studio operation, Teleprompter has computed its cost for the 125th Street Studio at $50 to $100 per hour.[18]

In the final analysis, accurate figures on program cost will only become available when administrators begin to record and analyze the cost of studio operation, the cost of portapak operation including maintenance, the cost per hour of original and repeat programming, and so on. As the situation now stands, most groups keep only a small amount of data; some record nothing.

Staff. Ignoring the complexities of staff assignment in New York City because of the existence of multiple access centers and numerous "facilitator" groups, this study found that most access facilities had 1-2 full-time personnel with perhaps 1-2 part-time people. In every case, volunteers, numbering anywhere from 15 to 100, were responsible for many of the activities in which the center was involved.

As expected, the interviews conducted indicated that everyone felt justified in requesting additional help. Access centers that had one full-time administrator reported that they needed another full-time person; facilities which already had two people saw the need for a third; and so on. In short, those who have, want more; those who do not have, want to catch up.

Audience Reaction. With the exceptions of New York and Columbus, there has been little attempt to assess viewer reaction to access programming in any formal manner. Most project directors maintain that they do not have the time or money required for such an effort.

What has occurred on a frequent basis is some type of informal gathering of data. Facilities in Ann Arbor and DeKalb have asked viewers to telephone the center with their comments; centers in East Lansing and Reading have received numerous letters complimenting the center on its efforts. Perhaps most often, access facilities have noted the favorable word-of-mouth comments made throughout the community by individuals and organizations which have utilized the equipment. These informal methods, by their very nature, cannot provide a representative cross-section of viewer reaction to public access television.

It was particularly interesting to note the differences in perception between access center directors and cable company personnel with respect to audience reaction. In every case, access center directors reported an enthusiastic but limited audience reaction to their programs. In contrast, cable company personnel working with access activities in communities such as Lawrence and Akron reported "mild interest" at best and, upon occasion, total boredom with the programming being presented. This difference can probably be attributed to philosophical disagreement on the size, interest, and enthusiasm of an "adequate" audience.

While no one can legitimately expect access programming to compete effectively for the mass audience in any community, it will be necessary for public access television to become much more concerned about building and maintaining its target audience in the immediate future. In this regard,

access facilities reported their awareness of the need for the following important steps:

(1) promotional materials for the access center must be prepared and disseminated throughout the community;

(2) program schedules must be published in the newspaper and then adhered to by the access facility;

(3) questionnaires must be administered periodically to measure viewer reaction;

(4) groups utilizing public access television must be encouraged to promote their programs by direct mail, posters, phone calls and announcements at meetings.

In the end, the access center itself benefits from activities of this type. As people become more aware of its activities, as people learn more about its programs, the likelihood of their active involvement in community affairs increases.

Overview. From this analysis, it is readily apparent that there is common agreement on both the common problems and the immediate objectives of public access television in the United States. The list of problem areas enumerated by access coordinators in both large and small facilities is remarkably similar:

(1) Insufficient funding
(2) Lack of staff
(3) Lack of equipment
(4) Maintenance of equipment
(5) Access to "studio" facilities
(6) Public relations with the community
(7) Promotional efforts for access programs
(8) Lack of citizen participation
(9) Need for improved technical quality

As a consequence of this unanimity, there is also considerable agreement on the immediate objectives of public access television. First, access directors would like to find some reasonably permanent source of funding;

the continuing struggle to survive financially, in their opinions, consumes time which could be more valuably utilized in other areas. Second, advocates of public access would like to overcome the psychological hesitancy which they believe "inhibits" citizen participation; in their view, many people do not become involved in public access because they somehow fear comparison of their efforts with network programming. Third, project directors would like to achieve greater interaction between the access center and the local community; in this regard, they feel the need to have an identity of their own which projects public access television into the center of community affairs.

The current situation in access television is undoubtedly responsible for the general belief that "more" of everything (equipment, staff, videotape, public relations, and so on) will vastly improve both the quantity and quality of programming produced. Given the time to promote their efforts, improve community relations, and interact with local groups, access leaders believe that they can succeed.

The difficulty confronting access television is that "more" of everything seems to be impossible. Cable operators throughout the nation are now experiencing severe financial difficulty; governmental agencies are limited in the degree to which they can help; foundations cannot be expected to bear a major portion of the cost on a permanent basis. As a result, at a time when most groups want and need increased assistance in the areas of personnel and facilities, the financial support available from cable corporations, "facilitator" groups, governmental agencies, and foundations is being curtailed. In the final analysis, the success or failure of any particular access project is dependent on the degree to which it has been

accepted as an integral part of the community in which it exists; that acceptance should be the "key" to the necessary financial support.

Footnotes

1. A Story About People. Reading; Pennsylvania: Community Video Workshop, Berks Cable TV Co., 1973, pp. 8-9.

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4. Baer, op. cit., p. 145

5. The Wired Island: The First 2 Years of Public Access to Cable Television in Manhattan. New York: Fund for the City of New York, 1973, p. 48.

6. The Wired Island, p. 49.

7. The Wired Island, p. 9.

8. Public Access Report, p. 57.

9. Schramm, Wilbur and Lyle Nelson, The Financing of Public Television. Palo Alto: Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies and the Academy for Educational Development, Inc., 1972, p. 35.

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11. Public Access Report, p. 57.

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13. Schramm and Nelson, op. cit., p. 7.

14. Public Access Report, p. 57.

15. The Wired Island, p. 31.

16. Pearce, Alan, The Economic Consequences of the Federal Communications Commission's Prime-Time Access Rule on the Broadcasting and Program Production Industries. Washington, D. C.: Federal Communications Commission, 1973, p. 112.

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18. The Wired Island, p. 31.

CHAPTER 2

TELEVISION VIEWING BY COLUMBUS CABLE SUBSCRIBERS

Procedure

The Diary. The audience of all television programming in Columbus was measured by a diary survey of subscribers to the Columbus Cablevision Company. The diary is a booklet in which respondents were asked to report each instance of television viewing by any member of the household during the survey week of Friday, February 8th, through Thursday, February 14th. The instructions provided with the diary asked that respondents list the day, time, channel number, program title, age and sex of viewers of each television program watched on the principal television set connected to the cable service. Viewing by casual guests was not recorded. Sample listings were included in the diary, and a toll-free number was given for those with any questions.

Placement of Survey Diaries. Households were chosen by random from the current subscription list of the Columbus Cablevision Company. Every cable subscriber had an equal chance of being selected. Trained interviewers contacted by phone the 475 households selected on February 2nd and 4th, asking the respondent's cooperation in accepting a diary for listing of the family's television viewing. Interviewers identified themselves as from the Communications Research Program at Indiana University, who were currently studying how people in Columbus use television. The interviewers asked if the interviewee's household was connected to the cable service, and, if so, the respondent's cooperation in accepting and filling out a diary was solicited. A cash incentive of 50 cents was promised to those who

would return a completed diary.

The researchers had predicted that eighty percent of those contacted would agree to participate. The actual rate of acceptance was 82 percent of those contacted. Diaries were mailed from Columbus on February 6th to the 400 households who had agreed to participate.

Individual cable subscribers living in Williamsburg Village apartments and Triangle and Candlelight trailer parks were not listed in the cable subscription files. Twenty-five diaries were randomly distributed in person to residents of these areas on February 6th. An introduction and appeal similar to the phone message was used to gain cooperation.

Two diaries were returned by the postal service as undeliverable. One diary was returned by the addressee who had decided not to participate in the study. The researchers received only three phone inquiries from recipients of diaries. All were minor problems quickly clarified.

Rate of Diary Return. It was predicted that 75 percent of the diaries placed would be returned at the end of the survey period. Of the 422 diaries actually placed, 306 were returned for a return rate of 72 percent. (Diaries were still being returned as this report was being written.) Twelve of these diaries were unusable because of insufficient data or failure to follow directions. From the usable diaries, a sub-sample of 200 was randomly chosen. These diaries recording the viewing of 200 households provided the sample of the television viewing of the full population of 3467 families served by Columbus Cablevision, and are hereafter referred to as the diary sample.

Validity of Generalizing from Sample. The size of sample and overall population determine the validity and accuracy of inferences made about

the characteristics of the population based on study of the characteristics of the sample. Given a sample size, precision is determined by the formula:[1]

$$T^2 = \frac{PC\ (100-PC)\ z^2}{N_S}$$

where T = the tolerance or precision of estimates. The discrepancy between estimates of the population based on diary sample and results of survey of all cable subscribers.

PC = the preliminary estimate of variation in the population. Based on the most recent study of mass television audience viewing behavior[2] a conservative preliminary estimate of variance of 85 was used. That is, viewing of about 15 percent of television viewers varies from overall viewing patterns.

z = the number of standard error units which are found from a normal probability table to correspond to required probability. Probability is the degree of assurance that estimates of the population are within the precision range, T.

N_S = sample size.

Utilizing the formula:

$$T^2 = \frac{85\ (100-85)\ 1.96^2}{200} = \frac{1275\ (3.8416)}{200} = 24.4902$$

$$T = 4.94$$

Thus the error range is below 5 percent, which is below requirements of normal predictability for this type of study. Predictions based on the diary sample will be within ± 4.9 percent of the actual population of all Columbus cable subscribers 95 out of 100 times.

Preparation of the Data Base. Diary entries were transferred by coders to IBM coding forms. All diary information was coded at face value. If a CBS show was reported by the diary family as viewed on Channel 6, for instance, the viewing instance was recorded as reported. A viewing instance

is the reported viewing of one person watching one program for one-half hour. If three persons watched a program together, each person's viewing is coded, giving three separate viewing instances.

The information coded for each viewing instance was the day of the week, the time of day, the channel number and type of program viewed, and the age and sex of the viewer.

AGE. For the purpose of some analyses, age was also grouped into the following categories often used in television audience studies:

GROUP	YEARS INCLUDED
Children	2 through 11 years of age
Teens	12 through 17 years of age
18 thru 34	18 through 34 years of age
35 thru 49	35 through 49 years of age
50 thru 65	50 through 65 years of age
Over 65	66 years of age and older

TIME. Time was measured in half-hour segments from six a.m. through 1:30 a.m. the following morning. For the purpose of further analysis, time was also studied in day parts, groups of half-hour segments reflecting general distinctions in the television programming day. These time divisions were:

PERIOD	HOURS INCLUDED
Morning	6:00 through 10:59 a.m.
Noon	11:00 a.m. through 12:59 p.m.
Afternoon	1:00 p.m. through 4:59 p.m.
Evening	5:00 p.m. through 6:59 p.m.
Night	7:00 p.m. through 10:29 p.m.
Late Night	10:30 p.m. through 1:30 a.m.

CHANNEL. Channel numbers were reported and coded according to the dial position on which they were modulated by Columbus Cablevision. They were:

CABLE CHANNEL NUMBER	STATION CALL LETTERS	STATION CHANNEL NUMBER
2	WTTV	4
3	WAVE (NBC)	3
5	Video Access Center	5
6	WRTV (NBC)	6
8	WISH (CBS)	8
9	WGN	9
10	WLKY (ABC)	32
11	WHAS (CBS)	11
12	WTIU (PBS)	30
13	WLWI (ABC)	13

PROGRAM TYPE. All programs were grouped into ten general types for purposes of analysis. The particular program viewed was judged on the basis of the series. Though a particular episode of Daniel Boone, for instance, may appropriately be categorized as comedy or drama, the viewing instance would be coded as adventure, the category for Westerns which is the genre of the series. The following program categories were used:

1) News and Information. Including, for example, local and national news reports; news essays such as 60 Minutes; programs with a basic news format such as Today; programs of general scientific or documentary structure such as Jacques Cousteau, Wild Kingdom, Nova, and Other People, Other Places.

2) Game. Including, for example, celebrity-quiz shows such as Hollywood Squares and What's My Line; give-away shows such as Let's Make A Deal.

3) Drama. Examples would be theatre such as Masterpiece Theatre; soap operas such as Days of Our Lives; serials of general dramatic structure such as The Waltons, Marcus Welby, M.D. and Medical Center.

4) Adventure. For instance, detective such as Columbo; suspense such as Night Gallery; police such as Chopper One and Dragnet; Westerns

such as Big Valley.

5) Situation Comedy. Such programs as Maude, Gomer Pyle, USMC, Andy Griffith, Beverly Hillbillies, and Lucy.

6) Movies. For example, old films, late-night movies and made-for-television films presented in formats such as Wednesday Movie of the Week.

7) Sports. Some examples would be games, sporting anthologies, sports commentary and review, and sports-related programs such as American Sportsman.

8) Music-Variety-Talk. Including, for instance, musical shows such as Lawrence Welk and American Bandstand; variety format shows such as Hee-Haw, Sonny & Cher and Carol Burnett; talk shows such as Phil Donahue, Merv Griffin, the Tonight Show and Indy Today.

9) Children's. Examples would be instructional shows such as Sesame Street, Hodgepodge Lodge; all cartoons; serials for children such as Sargeant Preston of the Yukon, Sea Monsters, and Captain Kangaroo.

10) Other. Including all religious shows such as Garner Ted Armstrong and Faith for Today; shows which do not fit clearly into any other category such as Firing Line, Jack LaLanne; viewing for which no program title was given or for which no type was evident. Because many of Channel 5's programs do not fit the rather stereotyped categories of most television, much of the viewing of Channel 5 was coded in this category.

Data was then punched on IBM cards for computer analysis. All missing observations and punching errors were removed from the data base at this time. Analysis was completed using library programs and the Control Data Corporation 6600 computer of Indiana University. The predetermined .05 level of confidence was used in all statistical measures.

Results of Viewing Survey

Day and Time. The 26,336 instances of television viewing reported by the homes of the diary sample distributed evenly during the weekday period of Monday through Thursday. Viewing is about four percent higher for the days of Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Table 1 presents distribution of all viewing by days of the survey week. Viewing of the Columbus cable audience distributed across time in a pattern similar to that reported in studies of the national television audience. Viewing was generally light during the morning hours, increased slightly in the early afternoon and more quickly after school hours. Viewing peaked sharply during early prime time during which hours about half the total viewing occurred. Viewing diminished rapidly during the late-night hours. Table 2 presents viewing distribution by half-hour segments across the seven days of the survey week. Table 3 presents viewing distribution by day parts.

Viewers. In the survey portion of the study, sex and age of the viewer were analyzed as attributed to the viewing instance rather than to individual subjects. Distribution of all viewing instances by sex of the viewer indicates that 55.4 percent (14,600 instances) of all viewing was by females; 43.8 percent (11,548 instances) was by males. In 207 viewing instances (0.8 percent), the sex of the viewer was not reported.

The age of viewers surveyed ranged from two to 86 years. The distribution of viewing by age of viewer is presented by years of age in Table 4 and by age groups in Table 5. One-and-one-half percent of all viewing was by persons who did not report their age.

The most popular programming category was movies with 20.2 percent of the total amount of television watched. The six categories of News-In-

TABLE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF VIEWING BY DAY OF THE WEEK

Day	Frequency and Percentage of Total
Sunday	********** (4,217) 16.0%
Monday	********** (3500) 13.3%
Tuesday	********** (3,228) 12.3%
Wednesday	********** (3,130) 11.9%
Thursday	********** (3,416) 13.0%
Friday	********** (4,219) 16.0%
Saturday	********** (4,623) 17.6%

Total: 26,333 valid observations.

TABLE 2

DISTRIBUTION OF VIEWING BY TIME OF DAY

Time Period	Frequency and Percentage of Total
6:00 - 6:29	(4) 0.0%
6:30 - 6:59	** (42) .2%
7:00 - 7:29	********** (216) .8%
7:30 - 7:59	********** (286) 1.1%
8:00 - 8:29	********** (326) 1.2%
8:30 - 8:59	********** (289) 1.1%
9:00 - 9:29	********** (365) 1.4%
9:30 - 9:59	********** (402) 1.5%
10:00 - 10:29	********** (374) 1.4%
10:30 - 10:59	********** (389) 1.5%
11:00 - 11:29	********** (363) 1.4%
11:30 - 11:59	********** (363) 1.4%

TABLE 2 (CONTINUED)

Time Period	Frequency and Percentage of Total
12:00 - 12:29	********** (508) 1.9%
12:30 - 12:59	********** (446) 1.7%
1:00 - 1:29	********** (546) 2.1%
1:30 - 1:59	********** (442) 1.7%
2:00 - 2:29	********** (447) 1.7%
2:30 - 2:59	********** (405) 1.5%
3:00 - 3:29	********** (617) 2.3%
3:30 - 3:59	********** (663) 2.5%
4:00 - 4:29	********** (722) 2.7%
4:30 - 4:59	********** (673) 2.6%
5:00 - 5:29	********** (885) 3.4%
5:30 - 5:59	********** (912) 3.5%
6:00 - 6:29	********** (1,065)4.0%

TABLE 2 (CONTINUED)

Time Period	Frequency and Percentage of Total
6:30 - 6:59	********** (1,312) 5.0%
7:00 - 7:29	********** (1,857) 7.1%
7:30 - 7:59	********** (1,880) 7.1%
8:00 - 8:29	********** (1,780) 6.8%
8:30 - 8:59	********** (1,661) 6.3%
9:00 - 9:29	********** (1,622) 6.2%
9:30 - 9:59	********** (1,381) 5.2%
10:00 - 10:29	********** (1,255) 4.8%
10:30 - 10:59	********** (727) 2.8%
11:00 - 11:29	********** (471) 1.8%
11:30 - 11:59	********** (300) 1.1%
12:00 - 12:29	******** (177) .7%
12:30 - 12:59	****** (120) .5%

TABLE 2 (CONTINUED)

Time Period	Frequency and Percentage of Total
1:00 - 1:29	** (40) .2%

Total: 26,332 valid observations.

TABLE 3

DISTRIBUTION OF VIEWING BY DAY PARTS

Time Period	Frequency and Percentage of Total
Morning	********** (2,693) 10.2%
Noon	******** (1,681) 6.4%
Afternoon	********** (4,515) 17.1%
Evening	********** (4,173) 15.8%
Night	********** (11,437) 43.4%
Late-Night	********* (1,835) 7.0%

Total: 26,334 valid observations.

TABLE 4

DISTRIBUTION OF VIEWING BY AGE OF VIEWER

Age in Years	Percentage of Total	Cumulative Percentage	Age in Years	Percentage of Total	Cumulative Percentage
Not given	1.5	1.5	37	2.0	62.2
2	1.4	2.9	38	.6	62.9
3	2.7	5.6	39	1.1	64.0
4	4.1	9.8	40	.3	64.3
5	1.7	11.5	41	2.3	66.5
6	1.8	13.2	42	1.3	67.8
7	1.9	15.1	43	1.7	69.5
8	2.5	17.6	44	.9	70.4
9	1.7	19.3	45	.5	70.9
10	1.9	21.1	46	1.8	72.7
11	2.4	23.5	47	1.0	73.7
12	2.2	25.7	48	1.2	74.9
13	1.7	27.5	49	1.9	76.8
14	1.2	28.7	50	.8	77.7
15	2.0	30.7	51	2.4	80.1
16	1.3	32.0	52	.9	81.0
17	.5	32.5	53	1.0	82.0
18	.5	33.0	54	1.4	83.4
19	.3	33.3	56	.6	84.0
20	.5	33.8	57	2.5	86.5
21	.3	34.0	58	1.3	87.8
22	.4	34.4	59	1.4	89.2
23	2.3	36.7	60	2.1	91.3
24	2.0	38.7	61	1.3	92.7
25	1.6	40.4	62	1.3	93.9
26	.8	41.1	63	.6	94.5
27	2.0	43.1	64	1.0	95.5
28	2.2	45.3	65	.4	95.8
29	2.3	47.6	66	.7	96.5
30	2.9	50.5	67	.1	96.6
31	1.1	51.6	68	.6	97.2
32	2.1	53.7	70	.6	97.9
33	1.1	54.8	71	.2	98.1
34	1.7	56.5	72	.6	98.7
35	2.1	58.6	75	.4	99.1
36	1.6	60.2	76	.3	99.4
			77	.5	99.9
			86	.1	100.0

TABLE 5

DISTRIBUTION OF VIEWING BY AGE OF VIEWER BY AGE GROUPS

Group	Frequency and Percentage of Total
Children	********** (5,814) 22.1%
Teens	********** (2,353) 8.9%
18 thru 34	********** (6,340) 24.1%
35 thru 49	********** (5,341) 20.3%
50 thru 65	********** (5,002) 19.0%
Over 65	********** (1,101) 4.2%
Not given	** (385) 1.5%

Total: 26,336 valid observations.

formation, Drama, Adventure, Situation Comedy, Music-Talk and Children's were clustered between 10 and 12.6 percent of the total. The distribution of viewing by program types is presented in Table 6.

The Bower study provides percentages useful for rough comparison.[3] The viewing of the five Minneapolis-St. Paul VHF stations (3 commercial network affiliates, 1 PBS affiliate, 1 independent) was reported from 5 p.m. till sign-off for one week during November 1970 using program categories somewhat similar to those used in the Columbus study. The results of the Bower study, expressed in percentage of total amount of television watched were: Comedy-variety, 26%; Movies, 20%; News-Information-Public Affairs, 17%; Action, 16%; Light music, 10%; Sports, 9%; Light drama, 2%; Heavy drama, 0%; Religious, 0%; Heavy music, 0%.

Station channel usage by Columbus cable viewers was distributed broadly on predominantly three stations; WISH, WRTV, and WTTV. WLWI, WHAS, and WAVE each received over seven percent of the total viewing. WGN which was introduced to the cable system on January 1, 1974, received 4.4 percent of the total viewing. WTIU, the Bloomington PBS affiliate, received 3.2 percent. The Video Access Center received 0.2 percent. Distribution of the total viewing by channel is presented in Table 7.

Because Columbus has no local station and is located between Indianapolis and Louisville, viewer loyalties are not concentrated on one station affiliated with each network. Columbus cableviewers spread their television viewing more evenly across available channels than is evident in studies of cable viewers in other markets. On a national basis, for both broadcast and cable viewers, viewing is generally concentrated within a few percentage points on the three local network-affiliated stations.

TABLE 6

DISTRIBUTION OF VIEWING BY PROGRAM TYPE

Program Type	Frequency and Percentage of Total
News-Information	********** (3,320) 12.6%
Game Shows	******** (857) 3.3%
Drama	********** (2,973) 11.3%
Adventure	********** (2,809) 10.7%
Situation Comedy	********** (3,161) 12.0%
Movies	********** (5,324) 20.2%
Sports	********** (1,895) 7.2%
Music-Talk-Variety	********** (3,083) 11.7%
Children's	********** (2,657) 10.1%
Other	** (257) 1.0%

Total: Valid observations 26,336.

TABLE 7

DISTRIBUTION OF VIEWING BY CABLE CHANNEL NUMBER

Station and Channel No.	Frequency and Percentage of Total
WTTV 2	********** (4,009) 15.2%
WAVE 3	********** (1,915) 7.3%
VIDEO ACCESS CENTER 5	* (46) 0.2%
WRTV 6	********** (5,192) 19.7%
WISH 8	********** (6,380) 24.2%
WGN 9	********** (1,162) 4.4%
WLKY 10	********** (1,399) 5.3%
WHAS 11	********** (2,224) 8.4%
WTHU 12	********** (838) 3.2%
WLWI 13	********** (3,059) 11.6%
Not given	* (102) 0.4%

Total: Valid observations 26,324.

Other stations available share about only 10 percent of the total audience.

The market of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, though larger than Columbus may serve as a comparison. Cable subscribers receive 13 channels which include imported stations from New York City and Philadelphia. The three nearest network affiliates received 84 percent of all viewing surveyed. The remaining 16 percent was divided among 10 stations cabled from off-the-air signals and one cable-origination channel. Of these, only five channels received over one percent of total viewing each.[4]

The Video Access Center Audience

The audience of the Video Access Center programming during the survey week can be analyzed by cross tabulation of the station variable with other measures. Because the total number of instances of reported viewing on Channel 5 is low, however, distributions are strongly affected by few viewing instances; and these may not support generalization.

The distribution of Channel 5 use by day of the week shows no valid observations of VAC viewing on Saturday or Sunday. Viewing is heaviest on Wednesday, February 13th. About 25 percent of all VAC viewing during the survey week occurred on this day, with the remainder distributed fairly evenly across the other four weekdays.

As a basis for comparison, Table 8 presents the distribution of station use by day for WISH, the most popular station in the Columbus market; and WTIU, the station in the market most likely to offer a clear alternative to network programming.

TABLE 8

DISTRIBUTION OF STATION USE BY DAY OF WEEK
EXPRESSED IN PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL VIEWING FOR EACH STATION

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
WTIU	8.6	20.3	14.9	18.4	15.0	22.2	0.6
WISH	13.1	11.4	11.1	13.0	15.6	15.8	20.1

Table 9 presents the distribution of Channel 5 use by time periods of the day. Again, comparable distributions for WISH and WTIU are presented to provide some basis of comparison.

TABLE 9

DISTRIBUTION OF STATION USE BY TIME OF DAY
EXPRESSED IN PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL VIEWING FOR EACH STATION

	Morning	Noon	Afternoon	Evening	Night	Late Night
VAC	3.6	5.4	1.8	23.2	42.9	23.2
WTIU	43.9	0.1	15.9	19.7	18.9	1.6
WISH	5.3	7.0	10.3	13.2	58.2	6.1

Similar breakdowns of station use by age groups, sex and program type are presented. Table 10 presents the distribution of VAC viewing by

age groups. Over 46 percent of VAC viewing is by persons 50 years of age and above. No other channel on the cable received over 28 percent of its total viewing by this age group. Adults between the ages of 18 and 49 account for 44 percent of VAC viewing.

TABLE 10

DISTRIBUTION OF STATION USE BY AGE IN GROUPS
EXPRESSED IN PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL VIEWING FOR EACH STATION

	Children	Teens	18 - 34	35 - 49	50 - 65	Over 65	Not given
VAC	7.1	1.8	23.2	21.4	44.6	1.8	0.0
WTIU	73.9	2.7	9.2	7.0	4.2	3.0	0.0
WISH	15.0	8.3	23.3	24.4	21.0	5.8	2.1

Table 11 presents the distribution of VAC viewing by sex of the viewer. Of all viewing on Channel 5, 64 percent was by women. The divisions for all viewing on all stations is 55 percent by women and 44 percent by men.

TABLE 11

DISTRIBUTION OF STATION USE BY SEX
EXPRESSED IN PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL VIEWING FOR EACH STATION

	Male	Female	Not given
VAC	35.7	64.3	0.0
WTIU	43.0	56.9	0.1
WISH	40.3	58.6	1.1

Though much of Channel 5's programming was classified in the "Other" category, distribution of station use by program type is presented in Table 12. Besides WISH and WTIU, the strong independent station, WTTV, is included.

TABLE 12

DISTRIBUTION OF STATION USE BY PROGRAM TYPE
EXPRESSED IN PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL VIEWING FOR EACH STATION

Station	News	Game	Drama	Adven-ture	Situ-ation Comedy	Movies	Sports	Music	Chil-drens	Other
VAC	12.5	0.0	1.8	0.0	3.6	0.0	1.8	1.8	0.0	78.6
WTIU	8.6	0.2	4.8	0.5	0.1	1.1	0.1	2.4	75.4	6.8
WISH	16.6	2.4	18.1	11.5	13.2	20.4	5.4	9.0	3.3	0.2
WTTV	2.2	2.1	5.7	1.2	26.8	24.6	8.9	6.7	21.8	0.1

From the 200 homes in the diary sample, 11 reported viewing some Channel 5 programming. One of these is an invalid observation, however, since it reports viewing a one-hour gospel show on Channel 5 at a time when Channel 5 was dark. This instance remains in the data base, however, because of the policy of this study to take all diary entries at face value. Twenty viewers of the 643 within the diary sample reported viewing Channel 5 during the survey week. Seven of these are male, 13 female. This difference by sex is much greater than that of the overall sample made up of seven percent more females than males.

Table 13 presents further data concerning all instances of Channel 5 viewing reported. Columns A and B indicate age and sex of the viewer. Column C indicates whether the viewer is the head of the household; column D indicates the number of persons in the household of the viewer.

Column E indicates the total number of ½-hour units of television the viewer watched during the survey week. Column F indicates whether the viewer watched the Channel 5 program alone or as part of a group.

Remaining columns deal with the program viewed. Column G, H and I indicate the day, time and title of the show watched. Column J indicates the length of the time Channel 5 was viewed. Column K provides a flow indicator, specifying what channel, if any, the viewer watched before and after switching to the Channel 5 program.

Twenty instances of Channel 5 viewing were by a 50-year-old woman who is a member of the third household in the table. The large percentage of all VAC programming reported by this woman accounts for the skewing of VAC viewing distribution by age and sex. She is also the only respondent who reported requesting a tape to be played on Channel 5. Excluding the viewing of this person and the viewing invalidly reported by the eleventh household in the table, viewing of VAC programs was predominantly by young adults watching in small groups during the evening.

The VAC users appear to be rather high television consumers. Viewing totals by VAC viewers ranges between 12 and 76 hours of television a week with an average of 32.9 hours a week. They also appear to be selective viewers, usually turning to VAC for one show, then turning to another channel. Two children and one teen-ager were reported among VAC viewers.

TABLE 13

DESCRIPTION OF ALL CHANNEL 5 VIEWING
BY 643 MEMBERS OF DIARY SAMPLE

VIEWER							PROGRAM					
No.	Age	Sex	Head of Household	No. in House	Units/ Week Vd.	Viewing	Day	Time	Title	Minutes Viewed	Flow From	To
1	30	M	Yes	3	45	alone	Tue	9:00 pm	Symphony	60	Banacek-6	News-6
2	41	M	Yes	3	44	group	Mon=	5:30 pm	Belly Dancer	15	News-12	off
	43	F	No	3	37	group						
	16	F	No	3	25	group						
3	48	M	Yes	4	37	group	Fri	Midnt	Rap Session	90	Mission Imp -6	Off
	50	F	No	4	42	alone	Mon	8:00 pm	VAC	60	Gunsmoke-11	Off
							Tue	10:00am	Requested Tape	90	Off	Off
						alone	Tue	7:30pm	VAC	150	Off	Big Valley-2
						alone	Wed	7:30pm	School Discussion	180	Off	Off
						alone	Thur	11:00pm	Lawson Poems Requested Tape	30	Star Trek -13	Off
4	66	F	No	2	35	alone	Thur	7:00pm	Exercise Time	30	Off	Off
5	37	M	Yes	4	57	group	Wed	9:00pm	Let's Rap	90	Theatre-12	Off
	34	F	No	4	44							
6	51	F	No	3	102	group	Mon	7:30 pm	Exercise	30	Deal's Choice-9	Special-11
	10	F	No	3	45							

TABLE 13 (CONTINUED)

7	29 28	M F	Yes No	3 3	43 42	group	Tue	6:00pm	Drug Misuse	30	News-11	Price Is Rt-13
8	36 32	M F	Yes No	3 3	13 39	group	Fri	7:30pm	VAC	30	World at War-11	Girl With Some-Thing Extra-3
9	61 60	M F	Yes No	2 2	93 97	group	Wed	10:30pm	Rap Session	30	News-6	Off
10	54 23 4	F F M	Yes No No	3 3 3	80 157 138	group	Fri	6:30pm	School Discuss.	30	Andy Griffith 9	Sanford & Son 6
11	33	F	No	3	60	Alone	Sun	11:30am	Gospel	60	Off	Off

Channel 5 Viewers Not Included in Diary Sample

The low percentage of all viewing attributed to Channel 5 prompted the researchers to go beyond the selected sample to learn more about the viewing habits of Channel 5 users. Careful review of all entries in the 106 returned diaries which were randomly eliminated from the diary sample revealed an even smaller proportion of VAC use. In the 106 diaries not in the sample, only seven instances of viewing involving five people of two different households were reported. These are reported in Table 14 in the same format as those instances of viewing within the sample.

Though the combination of the two groups represent all viewing by all members of all families who returned the viewing diary, all tabulated frequencies and percentages refer to the diary sample group only.

TABLE 14

DESCRIPTION OF ALL CHANNEL 5 VIEWING
BY MEMBERS OF 106 FAMILIES RETURNING DIARIES BUT
EXCLUDED FROM DIARY SAMPLE

1	32	M	Yes	4	26	alone	Sat	8:00am	Kroats	30	Off	Off
						alone	Mon	9:30pm	Hot Line	30	Off	Off
2	12	F	No	5	50	alone	Fri	10:30pm	Basketball	30	News-8	Off
						group	Tue	6:30pm	Putting Chairs Together	30	Hogan's Heroes-4	Maude-8
	52	M	Yes	5	49							
	42	F	No	5	79							
	12	F	No	5	39							

Footnotes

1. Hays, William L., Statistics. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1963.

2. Bower, Robert T., Television and the Public. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1973.

3. Bower, op. cit., p. 131.

4. Agostino, Donald E., A Comparison of Television Consumer Behavior Between Broadcast and Cableviewers. Unpublished Dissertation. Ohio University, 1974.

Interviewers were selected and trained. Nine (seven female) interviewers were employed with the bulk of the interviewing done by three people. The interviews were conducted in the respondents' home with any member of the household over twelve who answered the door. If no one answered the door of the household selected, the interviewer had a list of nearby residents to utilize as alternates. The interviewers identified themselves as research assistants from the Institute for Communication Research at Indiana University. Each had a badge with their name on it and the Institute's logo. The interviews were conducted during daylight hours on three days--Saturday, Monday and Wednesday, February 16th, 18th, and 20th.

Results

General Considerations. One hundred fifty interviews were conducted--74 in homes which subscribed to Columbus Cablevision. Three of the interviews were with Blacks--comparable to the distribution of Blacks in Columbus according to the 1970 census.[2] About two-thirds of the interviewees were female. Of the 134 persons willing to give income for the household: 14 earned below $3,000 a year; 14 earned $3,001 to $7,000; 32 earned $7,001 to $11,000; 24 earned $11,001 to $15,000; 23 earned $15,001 to $19,000; and 27 earned more than $19,000.

The persons interviewed represented a number of various occupations: 23 were professionals (e.g., doctors, lawyers, engineers, teachers); 20 were professional/self-employed (e.g., managers, company owners); 73 were laborers (including, for example, sales people and clerical workers); two were civil servants; 23 were retired; and 10 gave occupations which did not clearly fit these categories.

The average age of the persons interviewed was 42.4--the youngest was 13; the oldest was 89. Twenty-two were 24 or under; 39 were 25-34 years old; 41 were 35 to 49 years old; 23 were 49 to 65; and 25 were 65 or more years old.

Race, income, age or sex had no systematic effect on the results of the questionnaire.

The people interviewed who were cable subscribers had been on the cable for a considerable length of time : 77 percent for one year or more. Because over two-thirds of the respondents have been on cable for more than one year, they should have been knowledgeable about cable service in Columbus and have had ample time to learn of the Video Access Center.

Similarly, most of the people interviewed had lived in Columbus for a substantial length of time--76 percent for at least five years and 89 percent for as long as the Video Access Center has been in existence. Again, the persons interviewed should have been familiar with Columbus and knowledgeable of Columbus' needs and wants.

More Specific Findings. Initially multiple regression analyses were conducted to determine which items on the questionnaire were correlated. Factor analyses were then conducted to determine further patterns of relationship. Because of the need to discuss results of each question, however, each question was cross-tabulated with other relevant questions and chi square computations were made. It is the results of those analyses which will make up the bulk of this report.*

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*The multiple regression and factor analyses indicated several areas in which further research might be appropriate.

It appears, for example, that three groups of cable subscribers could be identified from the questionnaire: those who got on the cable for better reception, more channels, no bother with the antenna, local sports and news and those satisfied with the cable; those who got on the cable because of WGN, WTIU or VAC; and those who were really "in" to the Video Access Center. An interesting, and perhaps alarming, pattern which also emerged was that the people who had strong convictions about using elevision to relate, communicate and so on were not people who were using the Video Access Center. Instead, the users (viewers and participators) at the VAC tended to not be strongly opinionated on television's ability to help a community. (Continued on next page.)

The first question on the questionnaire was simply designed to get respondent cooperation and the results were not intended for use and, hence, were not analyzed. Most of those interviewed (92.2 percent) obtain their information about television programming from one of these sources: TV Guide magazine (47 mentions); the daily newspapers (36 mentions); or the newspaper supplement (83 mentions). This was true of the cable as well as the noncable households.

There was some tendency for the cable subscriber to rely more on newspaper supplements, probably because TV Guide and the daily newspapers do not/cannot discriminate between different channel designations for various cable systems; this tendency was not statistically significant.

As for those who have watched Video Access Center programming, the majority, 57.8 percent, rely on newspapers for their information; others happen on to it while changing channels (26.7 percent) or get information from friends (20 percent). Very few rely on announcements over VAC or the radio station for program information.

Of the people who subscribe to cable, 68.9 percent are satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of the picture they receive on the cable. Over 20 percent, however, were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the quality of the picture received.

Cable subscribers were given seven cards and were told that the statements on each card were reasons people normally subscribe to cable television. A list of the actual statements is appended as Attachment 2. The respondent was asked to rank order the cards, omitting any which were

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Findings in the exploratory multiple regression analyses, indicate that people who watched VAC programming were deterred from watching because of the technical quality of the picture. Those who thought the sound quality good, the general education value high and the creativity high tended to be heavier users.

thought to be irrelevant to him. After he had ranked the cards, he was asked if there were other reasons he had subscribed. From the reasons given, Table 1 was prepared.

TABLE 1

REASONS FOR SUBSCRIBING TO CABLE--RANK ORDERED FROM THE REASON MOST OFTEN CITED TO THE REASON LEAST OFTEN CITED WITH THE FREQUENCY OF MENTION INDICATED

	Frequency							
	Most Important (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	Least Important (7)	No Response
1) More channels	23	22	11	8	1	0	2	7
2) Better reception	15	17	10	5	7	4	2	14
3) More noncommercial stations (e.g., WTIU)	17	7	5	9	4	4	5	23
4) Antenna bother	8	5	7	5	7	8	10	24
5) Local programs (sports and news)	4	9	14	4	10	11	1	21
6) More commercial stations (e.g., WGN)	1	4	9	9	8	6	9	28
7) Video Access Center	2	4	7	9	8	7	7	30

The fact that a noncommercial additional station, such as WTIU, was ranked higher as a reason for subscribing than an additional commercial station deserves some comments. Columbus is an unusal city with more stated and actual interest in cultural events than comparable-sized communities. Therefore, it is conceivable that the availability of an

educational (public) station on the cable has some attractiveness to potential subscribers. This is not the case nationally; most research indicates that availability of an educational channel on cable does not affect cable penetration[3]--but it appears that it had had some affect on cable penetration (subscribers) in Columbus.

The explanation as to why an additional commercial channel, such as WGN, was ranked low as a reason for subscribing would appear to be because WGN has only recently been added to the cable system (January 1, 1974) and most subscribers we interviewed were on the cable long before that. Hence, WGN was not one of their reasons for subscribing. The addition of an independent commercial station usually does affect penetration.

It is also clear that the Video Access Center programming is not often cited as a principle reason for subscribing. In fact only two people (2.7 percent) thought it to be the most important reason for subscribing.

Other reasons for subscribing mentioned were:

.It was in when we moved in and we like it (2)
.Just for Sesame Street (2)
.Wife likes it (2)
.Comes with apartment (2)
.Successful experience before
.To get Louisville stations
.Gift
.Son pays the bill
.Not as much local interference

The respondents who were not on cable were asked if they had ever subscribed to Columbus Cablevision or any other system and, if so, why they were not now subscribing. Thirteen people indicated they had subscribed but did not now; the explanations given were as follows:

.Didn't seem worth the money (9)
.Get what we want already (4)
.Don't watch enough TV
.Cost too much and heard reception wasn't good
.Not interested

.Not satisfied with cable company
.Because I'm cable company general manager
.Haven't had it connected due to scheduling problems
.Not hooked up when we moved in
.Wasn't reliable
.We tried it on a trial basis but it was too expensive
.Parents think it cost more, more repairs too difficult
.Goes off too long
.Moved and didn't have it reinstalled

Attitudes Toward Television in General. The interviewees were asked to state their attitudes about several statements concerning television in general. Each respondent was given a card on which there were seven options from Very Strongly Disagree to Very Strongly Agree. A percentage breakout and the means (1 = very strongly disagree; 7 = very strongly agree) of the statements on which measurable differences existed follows. The investigators ran an analysis comparing cable subscribers with nonsubscribers across each of the statements. On several of the statements, there was a statistically significant difference between the cable and noncable households.

On the statement that Columbus should have a local station of its own, there was considerable interaction and the subscribers tended to vary from one extreme to the other. Overall, subscribers were significantly more favorable toward the idea than the nonsubscribers.

On the statement that it is possible to get a program on television which you produced on your own, there was uniform disagreement between cable and noncable households--the cable subscribers tended to believe that it was possible, while the noncable people felt that it was not--and the difference was significant.

On several other statements cable and noncable groups differed but not significantly. Cable subscribers tended to believe that someone should

provide training in television production; and disagreed that local programs are bad for the community--almost significantly more so than people who did not subscribe to cable.

On the other statements about television in general the differences between cable and noncable households were either lost in interaction or not significant. However, a discussion of the overall patterns on some of the questions (percentage breakdowns and means) might be useful.

Seventy-eight percent of the people disagreed (5.3% had no opinion) that television should only be used for entertainment ($\bar{x}$ = 2.97 on a scale of 1 to 7). More than 73 percent disagreed (4.7 percent had no opinion) that television cannot be used to help solve community problems ($\bar{x}$ = 3.29). Seventy-two percent agreed (2.7% had no opinion) that all people should have the opportunity to express their views on television ($\bar{x}$ = 4.55). Fifty-two percent agreed (26.7 percent had no opinion) that television production training should be provided by someone in the community ($\bar{x}$ = 4.34). Seventy-eight percent disagreed (8 percent had no opinion) that television should not attempt to teach useful skills ($\bar{x}$ = 3.07). Eighty-two percent disagreed (11.3 percent had no opinion) with the statement that local television programs are bad for the community ($\bar{x}$ = 2.89). More than 84 percent agreed (8 percent had no opinion) that television can help groups relate to each other ($\bar{x}$ = 4.95).

Attitudes Toward Public Access to Television. The next area of the questionnaire dealt with the concept of public access to television. Subjects were asked if they were familiar with the term. Only 51 of the 150 respondents were familiar--74.5 percent of those were on cable. A survey conducted in New York City reveals that only 30 percent of the system subscribers there stated that they knew what public access was.[4]

Several statements about public access to television were then read to the interviewee and using the same classification as the earlier statements (very strongly disagree to very strongly agree), the respondent rated each statement on a scale from one to seven.

There were no significant differences on any of the public access statements between subscribers and nonsubscribers. There were some general positions (of both groups) which deserve mentioning.

Sixty-six percent agreed (15.3 percent had no opinion) that people in Columbus need public access to television ($\bar{x}$ = 4.42). More than 64 percent disagreed (12 percent had no opinion) that public access should be restricted to informational programs ($\bar{x}$ = 3.51). Seventy-one percent agreed (9.3 percent had no opinion) that public access programming should be as high in quality as other shows on television ($\bar{x}$ = 4.65). Sixty-six percent disagreed (13.3 percent had no opinion) that public access would not increase awareness of problems in Columbus ($\bar{x}$ = 3.29). Nearly 72 percent agreed (12.7 percent had no opinion) that public discussion on television could help solve Columbus' problems ($\bar{x}$ = 4.67).

Attitudes Toward Video Access Center. The next segment of the questionnaire dealt with knowledge of and opinions about the Video Access Center. Interviewees were asked if they were familiar with Channel 5 on the Columbus cable system--56.7 percent said they were. More than 80 percent of the cable subscribers interviewed were familiar with Channel 5; only one-third of the noncable interviewees were familiar with Channel 5.

Each respondent was then asked which of five organizations originated the Channel 5 programming--only 41 of the 150 interviewed were correct (28 percent) and nearly all of those were cable subscribers. Sixty-eight

people (45 percent) simply didn't know and 29 people (nearly 20 percent) thought the cable company originated the programming.

Only 30 percent of those interviewed were familiar with the Video Access Center (the discrepancy between this and the number familiar with Channel 5 is probably best explained by the fact that VAC has become known more as Channel 5 than as VAC--an event which is unfortunate, especially now that VAC has switched to Channel 7).

Forty-five people stated that they had watched a program on Channel 5 (30 percent of all interviewees). That is similar to the percentage of viewers of the New York City public access program.*5 The respondents who had watched a program on Channel 5 were then asked a battery of other questions.

When questioned about the regularity of viewing, seven said they watched three or more programs a week; 14 watched one or two programs a week; seven watched one program every other week; six watched one program a month; and 10 watched less than one program a month. The reader is encouraged to look carefully at Chapter 2 of this report which accurately depicts actual viewing behavior in cable homes on a given week.

More than 92 percent of those who had watched a Channel 5 program believed the quality of the programs were the same or improved ($\bar{x} = 4.54$) over what they had been. One-third of those who watched had participated in the planning or production of a television program for Channel 5; their likelihood of participating in the future gave no predictive pattern for analysis.

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*One should point out that the New York report gives no indication as to how the size of the audience was determined and, as such, their figures leave much room for speculation and doubt.

When asked to name programs they remembered as particularly good, the following were mentioned:

Kaleidscope (4)
Physical Exercises (2)
Phil Breskitt Shows (2)
Belly Dancer program (2)
Concerts (2)
Gymnastic meets
Local sports events
Children on a park obstacle course
Discussion of X-rated movies
W. C. Fields films
Discussion of porno with call-in opportunities
Participation programs
Chef Gregory
Discussion of a bill
6th grade moderator with school board member
Feedback
Camera on top of the courthouse
School Board discussion
Petersville School Program
Senior Citizens Center and dinner
Sewage treatment plant
Health facilities program
Group of actors and singers
Free Street concert
Discussion
Let's grow organic
Story hour for small children
Cooking program
Talk show
Debuteens from High School Singing
Ministers talk session on world problems
Request night
Interviews at the Mall
Police Station
GPO Climbs
Midnight Machine
Meals on Wheels program
Susan Showalter Brubeck and husband

When asked what other services besides programming are provided by Channel 5, the following were mentioned:

Talks by people
Public discussion shows
Interviews of local citizens
School Board meetings (2)
Community information
Information and video taping of school programs

Request show (2)
Audio coverage of Sports events (2)
Community announcements (2)
Take out cameras and do it yourself (3)
Tells time and weather (3)
Delayed ball games
Keeps you aware of local talents and what's going on (2)
Help with hospital TV program
Library use
Video tape programs free
Pictures of social groups
Will go out almost anywhere to tape item of interest
Impressed by their helping groups to make a program of their interests to use within the group as well as over TV
Replay show at home with their equipment
Tapes checked out for home or group use
About town shows
Plays music

When asked who pays for the programs on Channel 5, fifteen people said the Irwin-Sweeney-Miller Foundation, four said the people who put on the program, and three each said the cable company and the Video Access Center. Other answers given were: public solicitation; advertising; the independent man who started it; the taxpayer; citizens of Columbus; and private funds.

When queried as to the cost of a typical half-hour Channel 5 program, estimates ranged from $10 to $4,000. Most simply had no idea; those who ventured a guess stated the following:

$3,000 to 4,000
$1,000 to 1,500
$1,000 (2)
$ 500
$ 200 (2)
$ 150
$ 100 (2)
$ 50 to 100
$ 10 (2)

Viewers of Channel 5 programs tended to think that those watching were in the 25-39 age bracket; while those producing the programs were in

the 18-24 age bracket. Years of schooling for watching and producing of the programs were believed to be 13-16 years (i.e., those with some college).

The viewers were then given another card with seven categories from terrible (1) to excellent (7). A number of statements concerning Channel 5 programming were then read and the viewers expressed their attitudes towards each of the statements.

Sixty-eight percent of the viewers thought the quality of the picture was poor to terrible (23 percent thought it to be average) ($\bar{x}$ = 3.02). An earlier study of the Video Access Center indicated that 69 percent of the viewers felt their "reception" was fair or poor and 72 percent rated Channel 5 programs fair or poor.[6] Those results, however, were from volunteered returns of questionnaires mailed to all cable subscribers in Columbus by the Video Access Center.

The quality of the sound was rated as average ($\bar{x}$ = 3.90). Fifty percent judged the creativity to be good to very good (30 percent judged it to be average) ($\bar{x}$ = 4.37). Eighty-one percent judged the general educational value to the community of the programming to be average to very good ($\bar{x}$ = 4.34). More than 72 percent of the viewers thought the chances of Channel 5 programming to build awareness of community problems to be average to excellent ($\bar{x}$ = 4.32).

Nearly 63 percent thought the general usefulness to the community to be good to excellent ($\bar{x}$ = 4.63). Nearly 73 percent judged the usefulness to them personally of Channel 5 programs to be average to terrible ($\bar{x}$ = 3.63). These last two results, which on the surface appear to be contradictory, are not unusual findings; Gary Steiner found that people think television programming (especially cultural television) is a good thing but

only for the "other guy."[7] The viewers did feel, however, that the potential usefulness to them personally of the Channel 5 resources was good to excellent (65.11 percent of the viewers; $\bar{x} = 4.95$).

Further Analyses. Several subsequent analyses were run comparing various aspects of the questionnaire. Nearly eighty-two percent of the people that said they were familiar with the Video Access Center are people who have watched a program on Channel 5. As to which term the people are most familiar with (Video Access Center or Channel 5), 38.7 percent are not familiar with either term; 28 percent are not familiar with the Video Access Center but are familiar with Channel 5; 28 percent are familiar with both terms.

The people familiar with Channel 5 differed significantly from those not familiar on only one statement--it is possible to get a program you produced on television. People familiar with Channel 5 agreed; those unfamiliar disagreed.

Because there was some feeling that people in the community who were more problem conscious and organizational-prone may have a higher regard for public access than those who were not, questions were asked about the problems in the community and the organizations in which people took an active part. The problems cited were categorized into one of the following areas with the frequency breakdowns and examples in parentheses: specific social/economic problems (38) (e.g., poor streets, housing); general problems (14) (e.g., energy; taxes); luxury wants (15) (e.g., tennis courts; better restaurants); youth oriented (21) (recreation and entertainment); no problems or don't know (49); more than one of the above (6); and other (7).

The people were then asked whether they belonged to any organization and in which did they take an active part. Slightly more than 56 percent belonged to an organization. For purposes of analysis, the organizations were categorized as the following (frequency of mention in parentheses): primarily religious (23); primarily social, fraternal or professional (31); primarily civic (3); primarily artistic, creative or historical (3); and more than one of the above (20).

Analyses were then conducted to see if those who were more problem conscious (especially of social/economic problems to which reasonable solutions could be reached) and those more active (especially in the socially-conscious and cultural activities) were different from those not problem conscious.

There were no discernible relationships between problem conscious individuals and knowledge of or attitudes toward television, public access or the Video Access Center. The civic, artistic and those who belonged to more than one organization (organizations which were mentioned mostly by the professional or professional/self-employed categories and which the researchers thought were organizations which were more community-oriented) have more awareness of the term public access, although not to a significant degree. They also show a slight tendency to be more knowledgeable of Channel 5, and the Video Access Center but, again, these results were not significant.

Coupled with this, community spirited groups knew who originated the programming (significantly so) and they tended to be among those who had watched Channel 5. These results have some degree of interest because the community spirited groups did not tend to be heavy cable subscribers (the

group mentioned earlier as most knowledgeable of Channel 5, VAC and public access).

People who belonged to organizations did tend to be more aware of Channel 5. Sixty-two percent of the people who belong to organizations are familiar with Channel 5; 48.4 percent of the people who do not belong to organizations are familiar with Channel 5--a difference which is promising but not statistically significant.

Other comparisons were made as well. An analysis comparing interviewees position on quality of the picture received on cable with knowledge of and attitude toward the Video Access Center was conducted. The people who were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the quality of the cable picture felt the VAC picture was the same or had improved. Only one dissatisfied person (out of 22) stated that he felt the programs on Channel 5 were much worse--all others thought they were the same or improved. No other relationship was apparent.

No other major analyses were conducted. All further minor analyses of the questionnaire answers were not significant, meaningless or both.

Footnotes

1. Caron's Columbus (Bartholomew County, Ind.) City Directory, 1973. Taylor, Mich.: Caron Directory Co., 1973.

2. 1970 United States Census, Bartholomew County, Indiana

3. Comanor, William S. and Bridger M. Mitchell, "Cable Television and the Impact of Regulation," Bell Journal of Economics and Management Science, 2:1 (Spring, 1971), 154-212.

4. The Wired Island: The First Two Years of Public Access to Cable Television in Manhattan. New York: Fund for the City of New York, Sept. 1973. p. 33.

5. Ibid.

6. Video Access Center: Videogram, 2:4 (July 12, 1973), 2-3.

7. Steiner, Gary, The People Look at Television.

SUMMARY

This research was undertaken in order to provide information from which others could evaluate the success and potential of the Columbus Video Access Center. As input for such decisions, the researchers did not feel the study should present conclusions beyond the data or offer recommendations.

There are areas, however, in which conclusions can be made as summary to the descriptive and analytic results already reported. The first three conclusions are the results of such analysis; the last two are positions based on the data but are inferred from previous research and study by the research team.

1) The Columbus Video Access Center appears far and away superior in facilities, equipment, staff, hours of operation and funding to any public access center in a comparable or larger market situation. This relative success is a credit to the people who have planned, funded, organized, promoted and operated the system.

2) The audience of the Video Access Center is small and undifferentiated. There is no evidence of a small, loyal group of VAC viewers. There is no evidence of a particular aspect of VAC programming (such as time of cablecasting, type of show, format or promotion) which is responding to a clear audience need and so provides a basis of service on which to build. There is no evidence that the audience will grow as present programming develops in quality.

3) It appears that a venture such as VAC will never successfully counter mass appeal programming. Yet the Columbus adult audience shows little interest in alternative programming such as offered by WTIU and VAC. WTIU's largest appeal appears to be children's programming. The most clearly defined adult audience need in Columbus is regular local news. Columbus viewers are higher than average consumers of news and information, yet no available station offers news of local affairs and issues.

4) VAC can most readily build an audience by selecting a specific audience and one audience need (such as the unsatisfied interest in televised local news), and programming consistently, directly to this target. Once that particular audience is secure, then VAC could add to its total audience by continuing to serve the first group while mounting new programming and promotion to another target group. Granted, public access implies access to and by all publics; nonetheless, the shotgun approach to programming will not build an audience; and without a developing audience there eventually will be no programming.

5) Future success of the VAC will depend on community support. To achieve this, VAC must promote itself, identifying itself as a useful, important aspect of the community which offers a variety of services and opportunities and is in Columbus to stay. One name for

the system--whether public access, video access, Channel 7 or whatever--should be chosen and used in all promotional contact with the public. When viewers are aware of its service to the extent that they tune to VAC for particular information, entertainment or communications--and these expectations are satisfied--then an audience will form. At this point, when viewers consider VAC as a viable alternative to other television fare, community access will attract the kind of support, input and vitality needed for the next phase of development.

Institute for Communication Research
Indiana University
Video Access Center Attitude Survey

INTERVIEWER: DO NOT SHOW INTERVIEWEE THE QUESTIONNAIRE. ASK QUESTIONS AS STATED; THEY ARE IN LOWER CASE TYPE. YOUR INSTRUCTIONS ARE IN ALL CAPS.

No. _____

Hello, I'm _____ from the Institute for Communication Research at Indiana University. We are studying the way people in Columbus use television. Your name was selected for the study. It will only take a few minutes and I have some interesting questions for you. Do you have a moment?

1. What are your favorite television shows--the ones you hate to miss? (NOTE TITLES)

2. Where do you generally get information about television programs--such as the time they are on and when special programs are coming? (MARK THOSE MENTIONED)

   TV Guide_____
   Daily Newspaper_____ (IF SO, ASK WHICH ONE) _____
   Newspaper TV Supplement_____
   Friends_____
   Station Promotion_____
   None_____

3. Do you now subscribe to Columbus Cable Television? (DESCRIBE CABLE SERVICE, IF NECESSARY)

   (CIRCLE ONE)

   YES | NO (IF NO, GO TO 8)

4. How long have you subscribed to cable? (MARK ONE)

   0 to 6 months_____
   7 to 12 months_____
   13 to 24 months_____
   over 24 months_____

5. Which category describes your satisfaction with the quality of the picture you receive on cable? (READ)

   Are you very satisfied_____
   satisfied_____
   indifferent_____
   dissatisfied_____
   or very dissatisfied_____

6. These are reasons people usually give for subscribing to cable service. There is one statement on each card. Please read them and put them in order according to the importance for you. Put the most important reason for being on the cable on top, the second under it, and so on. Only include those reasons which apply to you.

(GIVE CARD SET A. WAIT. WHEN CARDS ARE RETURNED, GO ON. NOTE VALUES HERE AT END OF INTERVIEW. GIVE TOP CARD 7, SECOND 6, ETC. THOSE EXCLUDED LEAVE BLANK. IF INTERVIEWEE HAS DIFFICULTY READING OR APPEARS CONFUSED, ASK IF YOU MAY READ STATEMENTS FOR HIM.)

Card A_____ Card C_____ Card E_____ Card G_____
Card B_____ Card D_____ Card F_____

7. Do you have any other reasons for being on the cable? YES NO

(IF YES) What are they? _____

8. Have you ever subscribed to Columbus Cable Television or any other cable system?

(CIRCLE ONE)

YES | NO (IF NO, GO TO 10)

9. Why do you not subscribe now?

_____

10. How long have you lived in Columbus? (MARK ONE)

less than 6 months_____
6 months to 2 years_____
2 to 5 years_____
5 to 12 years_____
12 to 20 years_____
over 20 years_____

11. In your opinion, what are some of the major problems or needs of the Columbus area? (LIST BRIEFLY)

12. Do you belong to any groups or organizations? YES | NO (IF NO, GO TO 14)

13. In which ones do you take an active part? (NOTE NAME OF GROUPS)

(GIVE CARD H)

I'm going to make some statements about television and the community. Please indicate which category represents your response to the statement.

14. All television programs should be designed only for entertainment._____

15. Columbus should have a local television station of its own._____

16. Television would be more enjoyable without advertising._____

17. It is possible to get a program on television which you produced on your own._____

18. Television programs cannot be used to help solve community problems._____

19. All people should have the opportunity to express their views on television._____

20. Television news rarely gives good coverage to community problems._____

21. Training in television production should be provided by someone in this community._____

22. Television programs should not attempt to teach useful skills._____

23. I think local television programs are bad for the community._____

24. Television can help groups within a community relate to each other._____

Good. Just a few more questions and we'll be done.

25. Are you familiar with the notion of community or public access television?

YES NO

Community or public access is where anybody can put his own program on television. Public access television is usually less expensive than commercial television and the equipment is provided. Everyone has an equal opportunity to express his ideas. The Federal Government has encouraged cable television companies to provide public access service.

Here are some statements about this public access to television. Using the same responses as before, please tell me which is your answer to these questions.

26. People in Columbus need public access to television._____

27. Public access should be restricted to informational programs._____

28. Public access programs should be as high in quality as other shows on television._____

29. Public access to television would not increase awareness of problems in Columbus._____

30. Public discussion on television could help solve Columbus' problems._____

31. Programs on public access television are likely to be more interesting than programs on commercial television._____

32. Public money should not be used to help support public access programs._____

33. Are you familiar with Channel 5 on the Columbus cable system?

YES NO

34. Which one of the following organizations originates the programming on Channel 5?
(READ)

Columbus Public Schools_____
Columbus Cablevision Co._____
Columbus City Government_____
Columbus Video Access Center_____
Irwin-Sweeney-Miller Foundation_____

35. Are you familiar with the Columbus Video Access Center?

(CIRCLE ONE)

YES NO

36. Have you ever watched programs on Channel 5 carried by the Video Access Center?

(CIRCLE ONE)

YES | NO (IF NO, GO TO 57)

37. Do you watch Channel 5 of the Video Access Channel regularly?
(READ AND MARK)

3 programs or more each week_____
1-2 programs each week_____
1 program every 2 weeks_____
1 program a month_____
less than one program a month_____

38. Do you think the programs on Video Access are generally improving?
(READ AND MARK ONE)

Very much improved_____
Much improved_____
Improved_____
The same_____
Worse_____
Much worse_____
Very much worse_____

39. Can you name a program on Channel 5 that you remember as particularly good?

40. Have you ever participated in planning or producing a television program for Channel 5?

YES NO

41. Would you consider yourself likely to participate in a show on Channel 5 in the future?
(READ AND CIRCLE)

Extremely Likely	Very Likely	Quite Likely	Neutral	Quite Unlikely	Very Unlikely	Extremely Unlikely

42. How do you normally learn about programs carried on Channel 5?

1) Daily newspaper_____
2) Radio announcements_____
3) Friends_____
4) Announcements on Channel 5_____
5) Happen on to it while switching channels_____

43. Besides programming, what are some of the other services provided by Channel 5?
(NOTE RESPONSES)

a. Who do you think pays for programming on Channel 5?

b. How much do you think a typical half-hour Channel 5 program costs?

44. What age group do you think is most interested in watching the programs on Channel 5?
(READ AND CIRCLE)

Below 13 Years 13-17 Years 18-24 Years 25-39 Years 40+ Years

45. What age group do you think is most interested in producing the Channel 5 programs?
(READ AND CIRCLE)

Below 13 years 13-17 Years 18-24 Years 25-39 Years 40+ Years

46. What educational level do you think is most interested in watching Video Access Center programs on Channel 5?
(READ AND CIRCLE)

Completed Years of School: 0-8 9-12 13-16 17+

47. What educational level do you think is most interested in producing Channel 5 programs?
(READ AND CIRCLE)

Completed Years of School: 0-8 9-12 13-16 17+

Here are some more categories. Please indicate which one suits your response to the programs you have seen on Channel 5 or the Video Access channel.

(GIVE CARD J)

48. From the programs you have watched, how would you judge the technical quality of the picture on Channel 5 programs?_____

49. From the programs you have watched, how would you judge the technical quality of the sound on Channel 5 programs?_____

50. From the programs you have watched, how would you judge the creativity generally shown on Channel 5 programs?_____

51. How would you judge the general educational value of Channel 5 programs?
_____

52. How would you judge the ability of Channel 5 programs to build awareness of community problems?_____

53. How would you judge the general usefulness to the community of Channel 5 programs?_____

54. How would you judge the current usefulness to you of Channel 5 programs?
_____

56. How would you judge the potential usefulness to you of the resources of Channel 5?_____

57. That is all the questions. Now we need to know a little about you, and then we're finished.

What is the occupation of the head of the household?_____

58. In what year were you born?_____

(GIVE CARD K)

Which group on this card corresponds to the household income?_____

59. SEX M F

60. RACE W B OTHER

Thank you for your cooperation. The results of this study will be released in April but, of course, we won't use your name. I hope you have found this interesting. Good-bye.

Reasons for Subscribing to Cable

CARD A We subscribed to cable to get more educational television programs like WTIU from Bloomington.

CARD B On cable we get much better reception.

CARD C We subscribed to cable to get more commercial programs like those on WGN from Chicago.

CARD D With cable we avoid the expense and fuss of an antenna.

CARD E We subscribed to cable to get more local programs like sports and news.

CARD F On cable we get more channels.

CARD G We subscribed to cable to get more local programs like those from the Video Access Center.