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ABSTRACT

In this study of children's television viewing, 105 junior-high-school students reported the television programs they watched, the amount of time they spent each day watching television, and their reasons for watching television. The following results are reported: sixth graders watch more television than do seventh or eighth graders; sixth-grade females watch more television than do sixth-grade males; more television viewing occurs on Saturday than on any other day of the week; situation comedies are the programs most often viewed, followed by a group of program categories that include adventure, cartoon/fantasy, and game shows; and the reasons for watching television vary by sex and grade but do not indicate a maturing pattern of program selection. The report concludes by comparing its findings with other studies of children's television viewing and by suggesting topics for further research. (RL)

Television Viewing of Selected Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Grade Students[1]

by

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In 1948, there were only 100,000 television sets in American homes (Schramm, Lyle, & Parker, 1961). Since then, the popularity of television has greatly increased and more recent surveys have concluded that 99.9% of American homes wired for electricity have at least one television set (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1976).

As television became a significant American pastime, intensive research of the television viewing audience began. Most of the early studies treated the audience as a unitary, homogeneous group (Glick & Levy, 1962), and some researchers still speak in terms of the "mass audience" (Marshall, Eiseben, Duncan, & Bogarin, 1974). There have, however, been some television researchers who have recognized and examined divisions in the viewing audience (Seldes, 1950; Skornia, 1965; Bower, 1973). Similarly, it is the assumption of this paper that the viewing audience is a heterogeneous group which can be categorized at least in terms of the amount of time spent viewing television, the types of television programs watched, and the reasons for watching television.

The particular division of the viewing audience dealt with in this paper is children. Youngsters spend one-fourth to one-half of their waking hours watching television (U.S. President's Task Force, 1969), and the average child will watch 15,000 hours of television by the time he or she graduates from high school (Potter, 1971). Television has become a means of educating children "both in the sense of providing specific items of information and in broadening the outlook of the viewers" (Belson, 1969, p. 235). If television is in fact a means of educating our children, it follows that the

video "curriculum" tuned into by our children should be studied (Belson, 1969; Gerson, 1966). This study should include an analysis of the "course of study" selected by children, not only because it would tell us what they are learning, but also because the selection represents their values and goals (Proefriedt, 1971).

Despite the strong force that television exerts on the education of today's youth, there are relatively few studies which analyze the child's viewing habits. The conclusions drawn by these studies have been largely incomplete or conflicting. Furthermore, none of the studies analyze both the statistical aspects of how much television is watched and what program selections are made, and the motivational aspect of why children watch television.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the viewing habits of sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students, approximately ages ten through fifteen. Specifically, this study will determine for each of the three grades and both of the sexes, the amount of time spent viewing television, the types of programs selected, and the motivation for watching television.

Review of Literature

Amount of Television Viewing

The review of this and other literature will be restricted to the age and grade groups which are involved in this study, and only occasional reference will be made to either older or younger children for comparison.

Lyle and Hoffman (1971) enumerated characteristics distinguishing the sixth grader's viewing habits from the younger viewer, including increased video time on Sunday, watching television as late as 11:00 p.m., and except Sunday, showing similar viewing patterns for both sexes. Witty (1951) also noted that the differences between boys' and girls' viewing was not in the

amount of television they watched, but rather in the programs they selected.

Many of Jaronik's (1975) results reinforce the points made by previous studies. For example, she agrees with Rubenstein, Comstock, and Murry (1971) that sixth graders watch at least five and one-half hours of television on school nights. She also concurs with Lyle and Hoffman that one-third of this audience is watching television after 11:00 p.m. Jaronik, however, conflicts with Lyle and Hoffman's findings that the heaviest television viewing for this age group occurs on Sundays. She states that Saturday viewing by sixth graders is one to two hours longer than any other day of the week, that Sunday viewing exceeds weekday viewing by one-half to one hour, and that Wednesday programming has the largest weekday following. She also found, in contrast with Witty, as well as Lyle and Hoffman, that ten to eleven year olds (6th graders) do watch a great deal of television during the week, 25.6 hours. Jaronik also discovered that the amounts watched by each sex were not the same, with boys usually watching slightly more television than girls.

Information concerning seventh and eighth graders is almost non-existent. It has been noted, however, that upon entering the teen years, the eighth grader becomes more aware of social life and, as a consequence, television viewing begins to decrease, becoming especially apparent by sixteen (Shulman, 1973).

Types of Programs Watched

Audiences do attempt to select television programs, and they make their selections based on the show's theme and the way that theme is handled. This process of selection begins very early in the course of a child's viewing career (Glick & Levy, 1962).

It has been generally assumed that children are great fans of "fantasy programs" and that children have great appetites for violence and other fast moving action on television. However, several researchers (Skornia, 1965; Schramm et al, 1961) have suggested that it is very difficult for children to make informed, free selection of television shows because there is a relatively limited variety of shows available at the times when children are free to watch. It should, therefore, be kept in mind that the limited inventory of available programs may dictate children's choices.

Past studies of sixth graders have noted their budding maturity in terms of their viewing habits. Morris (1971) has indicated that there is still a strong, but declining, interest among sixth graders in cartoons and fantasy shows; and that drama has become one of the favorites for this group. Streicher and Bonny (1974) note that ten to twelve year old girls have gained considerable interest in the situation comedy and the drama. In contrast, Lyle and Hoffman (1971) find the adventure show making significant gains with the males of this age group.

The results of Jaronik's (1975) more recent study differ in many respects from those mentioned above. While Jaronik agrees that dramatic programs greatly increase in popularity with the sixth grader, she did not find any great interest in cartoon or fantasy programs. Furthermore, Jaronik found that dramatic programs are as strong a favorite with the boys of this age group as they are with the girls. In agreement with other studies, the adventure program does enjoy significant gains with the males of this age, and an overwhelming gain in male viewing is made in sports programs. With this age group Jaronik also found that a small number of females had become interested in educational programs and that a few males had begun watching the news.

Seventh graders, entering their teen years, exhibit more mature taste in their program selections. According to Lyle and Hoffman (1971), the trend for teenagers is away from the situation comedy and toward more dramatic programs. The Philadelphia study of the American Research Bureau (1969) points out that some of the shows that were ranked relatively high for the sixth grade age group are also popular among seventh and eighth graders; however, important differences between these groups are also apparent. For example, the popularity of television movies dramatically increases for seventh and eighth graders and there is a significant decrease in the popularity of situation comedies.

Reasons for Watching Television

As previously noted, television watching has an educational outcome for the juvenile; however, the educational value is rarely the cause of either the quantity of television watched or the selection of program. Education by television is not a matter of choice, but rather is usually a sort of "incidental learning" (Schramm et al, 1961). Entertainment, also, is not the sole contributing factor in children's television viewing. There are many inducements for watching television and some of these factors can be related to age categories.

Initially, the youngest child resorts to the tube as a means of companionship; television may become a playmate (Glick & Levy, 1971). As a child ventures into the first full days of school, the reasons for watching television become more complicated. Greenberg (1973) indicates that this aged child watches television largely out of habit, for arousal, and as a way of passing time. This conclusion has been supported by Glick and Levy (1971) who labelled the television viewing of six to twelve year olds as an "in between" activity.

For the children in this age group, time spent in front of the television occurs in between school time, family time and play time. Glick and Levy also noted additional reasons for television watching among the sixth and seventh graders--television viewing can be as a family activity, a means of being aware of current trends, a topic of conversation among peers, and a reward for finishing school work or chores.

Once again, Catherine Jaronik's (1975) findings concerning sixth graders do not concur with the findings of others. Jaronik found sixth graders to be highly selective viewers. When responding to her questionnaire, 74 of 100 students answered that a "Special Program I Wanted to See" was their primary reason for viewing television. "Television Relaxes Me" was the second highest reason.

Eighth graders are subject to social influence outside the home which pull the teenager from the television (Glick & Levy, 1971). A close examination of Greenberg's (1973) survey discloses that none of the reasons for watching television mentioned by the younger children have much appeal among teenagers. This can possibly be explained by a general lack of real dedication to television by this thirteen and over age group. Glick and Levy, again reinforcing Greenberg's findings, believe that, in the teen's attempt to escape family situations, they tend to stay away from the television set also, returning only when it become convenient to do so to avoid family activities or pressures.

Methods

Subjects

The sample for this study consisted of 105 students from a midwest, suburban junior high school. Specifically, there were 15 males and 17 females in the sixth grade group; 17 males and 20 females in the seventh

grade group; and 19 males and 17 females in the eighth grade group. These children were participating in their first, second, or third level speech communication class. Based on observation as well as conversation with their teachers, these students seemed to be average to low achievers. They are generally from middle to upper-middle class families, often with both parents working. A high number of these children are of German extraction and all are Caucasian.

Measurement

Amount of Television Viewing and Types of Programs Watched.

A list of all programs offered during the week was constructed from the TV Guide for that week. Participants could record their program selections and indicate that approximate amount of time spent on each program (All, Most, Some). From these program lists two measures were derived.

First, using 100%, 67%, and 33% to define All, Most, and Some of each program, totals were created for how many minutes of television a child watched on each day.

Second, each of the programs was placed in a category. The categories were based on those used by Lyle and Hoffman (1971) and Jaronik (1975). The following categories were used in this study:

The adventure program usually has a simple theme, frequently dealing with the solving of some infraction of the law. The hero or heroes control events and overcome all obstacles. Examples are, "Police Woman" and "Starsky and Hutch."

The cartoon/fantasy programs are done with either animated or comical, imaginary characters, or in the nature of fanciful or romantic themes. Such shows are "Speed Buggy" or "Monster Squad", or "The Wonderful World of Disney."

The documentary program is a factual show not presented at recurring times. An example of such a program would be "The Last Voyage of the Argo Merchant."

The drama program is of a serious nature and is shown at a scheduled time each week. The examples for such a program are "Little House on the Prairie" and "Emergency One."

The dramatic sequel program, like the drama, is serious in nature; however, this program is presented within a relatively few programming slots. The plot and characters of these programs continue to develop over the short programming time span. Examples of these programs are, "The Captain and the Kings" and "Roots."

The educational program attempts to emphasize materials which will help educate the viewer both mentally and morally. Unlike the documentary, these programs are presented at a regular time. Such programs are "Sesame Street" and "Wild Kingdom" and "700 Club."

The game show deals with any type of non-athletic competition. "The Gong Show" and "Let's Make a Deal" are two examples of such programs.

The movie programs encompass both the recently made-for-television movies as well as the edited versions of films which were originally shown in movie theaters. These movies are usually shown at a particular time each week of ten designated with a label such as, "The Movie of the Week," or "The Eight O'Clock Movie."

The news programs relate the events which have occurred at the local, state, national or international level. This type of show is aired a number of times a day, every day.

The situation comedy is a humorous program with a plot. These shows appear at regular intervals, usually one a week. Such programs are "Gilligan's Island" and "Maude."

The special program can deal with a wide variety of themes. It is, however, seen only once during the television season, such as, "The Oscars" or "The Shirley MacLaine Special."

The sports shows present events which deal with athletic commentaries, events and endeavors. "The Wide World of Sports" and "Grandstand" are examples of such programs.

The talk show's format concentrates on the interviewing of guests by a host. "Johnny Carson" and "Dinah" are examples of such programs.

The musical-variety program specializes in light-hearted entertainment such as songs, dance and comedy skits. Examples of these programs are, "American Bandstand" and "Carol Burnett."

Reasons for Watching Television

Children's reasons for watching television were determined by a self-report ranking questionnaire. The reasons which were presented to the children were based in part on Greenberg's (1973) study. The motivational categories formulated by Greenberg were: to relax, for companionship, to learn about things, it is a habit, to pass the time, to help me learn about myself, and for arousal. The reasons for watching television presented to the subjects in this study were: (1) because you have nothing else to do, (2) because it is one of your favorite things to do, (3) to help you forget something that is bothering you, (4) to learn something, (5) because it is otherwise too quiet, (6) as a habit, (7) to relax, (8) when you're alone, (9) to help you get away from someone, and (10) because someone else had turned it on. The reasons were randomly ordered, and the children were asked to rank them all in order of their importance to the child as reasons why he or she watches television.

Data Gathering

The data were collected during regular school hours and the students were told that the knowledge acquired from the questionnaires would be shared with them in connection with their class work on mass communication and television later in the year (this was done).

The data gathering was divided into two phases. First, the students received and completed a questionnaire asking them to rank the reasons for watching television, as well as to supply some basic biographical information. All data was collected anonymously.

The second phase of the data gathering occurred one week later. The program lists were passed out each school day for one week, beginning March 17, 1977. The program lists for Wednesday's viewing were completed on Thursday, and Thursday's lists were completed on Friday. On the following Monday, students were asked to complete program lists for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Due to high interest on the part of the students, many had made mental notes to help them recall their weekend viewing.

Initially it had been decided to assign one coded number to each student's set of papers which he or she would receive during the data gathering. However, some students became suspicious when the same number which appeared on the first program list had also been present on their questionnaires. When the students recognized the identification scheme, it was decided to sacrifice the coding process in order to protect the validity of the responses.

Data Analysis[2]

The first research question (How much time does each age and sex group spend watching television?) was to be analyzed using a three-way analysis of variance, two levels of sex by three levels of grade by seven days of the week, with repeated measures on each day.

The planned analysis of the second research question (What categories of programs are favored by each age and sex group?) was to be conducted in two steps. First a series of fourteen two-way analyses of variance (sex by grade) were to be used to compare the percentage of time spent in each of the fourteen program categories. Second, another two-way analysis of variance with repeated measures (subjects by categories) was planned comparing the percentage of time spent on each category by each child.

The proposed analysis of the third research question also involved two steps. First, the Friedman Test was to be performed in order to compare the rankings assigned by each child for all ten reasons. Second, a series of ten two-by-six Chi Square tests would be performed, comparing the frequency with which each grade and sex ranked each of the ten reasons above and below the median at which all children ranked the reason.

Due to the problem of not being able to code and identify each student's program lists from day to day, several of the analyses were performed differently than initially intended. The analysis of the first research question was performed as a three-way ANOVA with only a single replicate. The error term for the analysis was composed of the residual plus all interactions except grade by sex. The second research question was also analyzed through a three-way ANOVA with a single replicate, comparing grade and sex across categories. Since the higher order interactions were expected to be significant and interpretable, the residual value alone was used for the error term. The intended analysis of data for the third research question was not affected, and the analysis was conducted entirely as anticipated.

Results

Amount of Television Viewing

The results of the ANOVA (see Table A) revealed the existence of a significant main effect for sex ($F = 4.86$; df 1/30; $p < .05$). An examination of the cell means (see Table B) shows that females watched more television than males (239.3 minutes per day for females versus 203.5 minutes per day for males).

TABLE A

ANOVA—QUESTION 1

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Grade	84879.45	2	42439.73	15.34	.01
Sex	13451.13	1	13451.13	4.86	.05
Day	119819.49	6	19969.91	7.22	.01
Grade X Sex	54658.38	2	72329.19	9.88	.01
Error	82994.87	30	2766.50		

TABLE B

AVERAGE VIEWING TIME FOR EACH

GRADE, SEX, AND DAY OF THE WEEK

Variable	Level	Mean*
Grade	6th	284.9
	7th	188.0
	8th	191.3
Sex	Male	203.5
	Female	239.3
Day of the Week	Monday	179.8
	Tuesday	197.8
	Wednesday	171.1
	Thursday	240.5
	Friday	246.1
	Saturday	333.4
	Sunday	181.0

TABLE C

AVERAGE VIEWING TIME BY

GRADE AND BY SEX*

	6th	7th	8th	
Male	216.17	192.93	201.55	203.60
Female	353.82	183.10	181.12	239.30
	284.90	188.00	191.30	

*Values are average no. of minutes of television watched per child per day. Grand mean = 221.45 minutes.

A highly significant main effect for grade was also discovered ($F = 15.34$; df 2/30; $p < .01$). Further analysis consisted of the relatively liberal planned comparison post hoc test. This test was used instead of the more desireable Scheffe test because of the inability to identify each individual student's responses produced cell sizes of one, and Scheffe requires division by $(n - 1)$, which is impossible. The computed value of the contrast of seventh and eighth graders combined in relation to sixth graders was $F = 30.6$, which exceeded the tabled value of $F_{1/30}(.01) = 7.56$. Sixth graders seem to be watching slightly more than one and one-half hours more television per day than seventh and eighth graders.

The ANOVA also revealed a highly significant main effect for day of the week ($F = 7.22$; df 6/30; $p < .01$). The post hoc test indicated that significantly more viewing occured on Saturday, but there were no other significant differences between any of the other days. Again, the reduced cell size may have disguised other real differences. The mean viewing time for each of the test days can be seen in Table B.

The final result of this ANOVA revealed a highly significantly effect for grade-by-sex interaction ($F = 9.88$; df 2/30; $p < .01$). Table C shows more clearly the interaction of grade and sex. While sixth grade females markedly exceed sixth grade males in time spent viewing television, seventh and eighth grade males slightly exceeded the females in viewing time.

Types of Programs Watched

Since percentages of time spent viewing television by each grade and sex would all total 100%, one category was dropped from the analysis so the Column totals would not be identical. The analyses which were computed for grade and for sex, therefore, could not possibly have been significant

and were not of interest in this analysis.

As can be seen in Table D, there was a highly significant main effect for category ($F = 31.97$; df 12/24; $p < .01$). The planned comparison post hoc test was again used to discover differences between the categories. A significant difference occurred between the category "situation comedy" and all other categories. Also, categories "adventure," "cartoon/fantasy" and "games" exceeded all remaining categories. The means for each category are contained in Table E.

The sex by category interaction also shows a significant difference ($F = 2.28$; df 24/24; $p < .05$). An examination of male and female mean percentages for each category is possible in Table E.

The sex by category interaction was not significant.

Reasons for Watching Television

This final research question was approached in two ways. First, the Friedman test was computed to determine if, for each grade and sex combination, there are any differences in the way the subjects ranked the ten reasons. As indicated in Table F, the computed values for the Friedman test for each grade and sex group exceed the tabled Chi Square value with "Reasons minus one" degrees of freedom at the $p < .01$ level of 21.67. It is concluded that for all grade and sex groups, the reasons are not equally important. A non-parametric post hoc test was then conducted to discover exactly where the rankings differences were within each sex and grade. The following results were obtained:

TABLE D

ANOVA--QUESTION 2

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Grade	.00003	2	.00001		ns
Sex	.00000	1	.00000		ns
Category	.55825	12	.04652	32.30	<.01
Grade x Sex	.00004	2	.00002		ns
Grade x Category	.03728	24	.00155	1.08	ns
Sex x Category	.03945	12	.00329	2.28	<.05
Error	.03451	24	.00144		

TABLE E

Percentage of Viewing Time for Males and Females in Each Category

Category	Male	Female	Overall
Adventure	12.66	9.70	11.18
Cartoon/Fantasy	13.55	10.55	12.05
Documentary	2.15	2.23	2.19
Drama	6.17	7.92	7.04
Educational	1.50	2.23	1.86
Game	3.48	3.36	3.42
Movie	14.74	8.26	11.50
News	3.06	2.09	2.58
Situation Comedy	27.07	40.74	33.90
Special	1.66	2.14	1.90
Sports	5.37	2.07	3.72
Talk	1.73	2.30	2.02
Musical	5.35	4.65	5.00
Dramatic Sequel	1.51	1.76	1.64
TOTAL	98.49	98.24	98.36

Sixth Grade Females	Reasons 1 and 2 combined (as listed in the measurement section of this paper) were ranked more favorably than the combination of reasons 4,5, and 6.
Sixth Grade Males	Reason 6 was ranked more favorably than both reason 5 and reason 9.
Seventh Grade Females	Reason 1 and 7 was ranked more favorably than reason 9.
Seventh Grade Males	Reasons 1 and 7 combined were ranked more favorably than reasons 3 and 9 combined.
Eighth Grade Females	Reason 1 was ranked more favorably than reasons 4,5, and 7, and reason 3 was ranked more favorably than reason 4.
Eighth Grade Males	Reasons 1 and 7 combined were ranked more favorably than reasons 6, 9, and 10 combined.

Secondly, a Chi Square analysis was used to assess whether, for each reason, there were any significant differences between the frequencies that each grade and sex group ranked the reason above or below the median at which all students ranked the reason. There were no significant differences in the ranking of reasons 1, 2, 5, 8, 9, and 10 for each group of students. The greatest Chi Square value here was 8.00 ($df = 5$; $p > .15$). Reasons 3,4,6, and 7 did show significant differences in rankings for each category of students.

For reason 3, "Television helps me forget something," the computed Chi Square value was 11.30 ($df = 5$; $p = .045$). The seventh grade females, as well as both eighth grade females and males, considered this reason especially descriptive of their motivations for watching television. Their rankings tended to place this reason above the median. Seventh grade males and sixth grade males and females ranked this reason below the median.

TABLE F

FRIEDMAN TEST VALUES

Grade	Sex	X^2	p
6	F	32.10	<.01
6	M	80.72	<.01
7	F	73.72	<.01
7	M	28.57	<.01
8	F	29.92	<.01
8	M	36.20	<.01

For reason 4, "I watch television to learn something," the computed Chi Square value was 12.75 (df = 5; p = .026). Sixth grade males, seventh grade males and females, and eighth grade males ranked this reason important. The females in both sixth and eighth grades tended to rank reason 4 below the median.

For reason 6, "I watch television as a habit," the computed Chi Square value was 16.76 (df = 5; p = .005). Males in sixth and seventh grades and females in eighth grade ranked this reason above the median. Sixth grade females and eighth grade males more often ranked this reason below the median.

For reason 7, "I watch television to relax," the computed Chi Square value was 24.02 (df = 5; p = .0002). The seventh grade females and males ranked this reason above the median, while the females in both sixth and eighth grades tended to place this reason below the median.

Discussion and Conclusions

Amount of Television Viewing

Several differences between this study and previous research were discovered with respect to the amount of television viewing. Witty (1957) and Lyle and Hoffman (1971) indicated that the amount of television watched by both sexes was approximately the same, while Jaronik (1975) discovered that males were watching slightly more television than females. In this study, females were watching more television than males overall, though this difference was strictly among sixth graders. Shulman (1973) found that a reduction in television viewing time occurred in the eighth grade or with the beginning of teen years. This study seemed to indicate that the reduction of time that students spend watching television occurs between the sixth and seventh grades, during the pre-teen years. This study concluded that participants viewed significantly more television on Saturday than on any other day. In contrast, Lyle and Hoffman found that Sunday television viewing surpassed all other days, and Jaronik found that Saturday

viewing exceeded Sunday which exceeded the other five days of the week.

There are, however, some interesting similarities between these results and those of other authors. Jaronik found that students of the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades are watching approximately two hours more television on Saturday than on other days of the week. We are also in accord when she notes that these students are watching approximately five hours of television on school nights. Lyle and Hoffman, Shulman, and Jaronik each noted that many students in these grades were watching television as late as 11:00 p.m. on school nights. Our findings indicate that these students are indeed watching television at 11:00 p.m., and a substantial number of the students continue to watch television at even later hours.

Types of Programs Watched

The findings of this study with regard to the types of programs watched are also interesting when compared to previous research. The most apparent finding here is that "situation comedy" is the overwhelming favorite of the participants at all grade levels. The next most popular program categories are "adventure," "cartoon fantasy," and "movies." The popularity of these categories concurs with earlier research. There are, however, some major differences between these findings and those of previous authors. Morris (1971), Lyle and Hoffman (1971), Streicher and Bonny (1974), and Jaronik (1975) all found that "drama" programs enjoyed a progressive popularity as children become older. Although this study found that drama has a generally high following among all of the study's grades, it did not seem to appreciably increase in preference among older students.

The second Philadelphia study (American Research Bureau, 1969) found that television movies are more popular with the children of seventh and eighth grades than those of the sixth grade, but our results indicate that the ratings for the category "movie" do not vary significantly from grade to grade. An interesting result concerns the preferences of students toward the "educational" and "news" program categories. A small number of sixth, seventh, and eighth grade females watch educational programs, but the popularity of these programs is even lower among the male students. On the other hand, a small number of male students watch the news, while virtually no females in this sample did so. Jaronik arrived at the same conclusions for her sixth grade sample.

Reasons for Watching Television

The results of this study generally indicate that the motivations for watching television are different for each sex and grade, but we were not able to discern any apparent maturing pattern as the children grew older. This finding may conflict with Lyle and Hoffman's (1971) hypothesis that children of this age group mature in the way they use television as they grow older.

Perhaps the most obvious area for further research is that a more detailed analysis be made of the motivational factors for making individual program selections. Such a study would give television producers a better indication of why certain programs are more popular than others, advertisers a better knowledge of their audience, and television researchers a clearer understanding of how and why program selections are made. Secondly, longitudinal research is clearly needed, also including additional grade levels. A year-long study may indicate seasonal differences in students' viewing habits, allow for the influences of school activities to be discovered, and account for the effect of the introduction of new programs. The inclusion of more grade levels would allow a better comparative analysis of the different age groups and a better opportunity to see the development of television viewing preferences from childhood to adulthood. Perhaps, also, following a particular group of children for some number of years might yield even more interesting developmental information. Third, further study of the relationship between various aspects of television viewing and school achievement is clearly needed.

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Notes

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