Literature-based children's programs on Iowa Public Television

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University of Northern Iowa

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Literature-based children's programs on Iowa Public Television

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Abstract
The purpose of this content analysis was to determine whether literature-based television programs on the Iowa Public Television (IPTV) channel have the type of content that would encourage children to read. The research included determining the content of the programs: what types of literature were reviewed, if persons of both sexes and various races were portrayed, the production quality of the programs and whether students were directly encouraged to read through the programs.
LITERATURE-BASED CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS
ON IOWA PUBLIC TELEVISION

A Research Paper
Presented to the
Faculty of the Library Science Department

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

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April 20, 1990

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Date April 20, 1990
# Table of Contents

List of Tables ......................................................................................................................... ii

Chapter

1. Introduction ........................................................................................................................... 1
   Purpose of Study ..................................................................................................................... 1
   Problem Statements .............................................................................................................. 2
   Hypotheses ........................................................................................................................... 3
   Definition of Terms .............................................................................................................. 4
   Assumptions ......................................................................................................................... 6
   Limitations ............................................................................................................................ 7

2. Literature Review
   History of Instructional Television ....................................................................................... 9
   Capabilities of Instructional Television ................................................................................ 11
   Relationship Between Television and Reading ..................................................................... 16
   Popularity of "Television Tie-In Books" ............................................................................. 20
   Reading-Based Programs on Instructional Television ....................................................... 23

3. Methodology ....................................................................................................................... 26

4. Data Analysis ...................................................................................................................... 28

5. Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations ............................................................... 47

Bibliography ............................................................................................................................ 52

Appendices .............................................................................................................................. 58
   A. Selection Sources used to Evaluate Program Content ................................................. 59
   B. Programs Analyzed and Checklist .................................................................................. 60
List of Tables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Production Techniques</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Outside Resources Recommended</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Fiction or Nonfiction Title Reviewed</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Sex of the Human Protagonist</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Ethnic Group of the Protagonist</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Presenting a &quot;Tie-In&quot; to Books</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Recommendations of Program's Books Found in Eight Sources</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Single or Multiple Book Format</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Production Quality</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Viewer Performance Suggested by the Program</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this content analysis was to determine whether literature-based television programs on the Iowa Public Television (IPTV) channel have the type of content that would encourage children to read. The research included determining the content of the programs: what types of literature were reviewed, if persons of both sexes and various races were portrayed, the production quality of the programs and whether students were directly encouraged to read through the programs.

Thirty-six programs aired during the 1989-1990 IPTV season were analyzed. Selected programs were intended for elementary-age viewers and were of varying program lengths. None was intended to teach actual language skills or teach children to read.

A variety of production techniques, program formats and overall production qualities were observed as were protagonists of both sexes and of different ethnic origins. Various programs used different techniques to directly relate the televised stories with their book counterparts, and a variety of methods were employed to encourage viewers to read the featured books or other recommended titles. The programs, however, did not consistently encourage the utilization of libraries or resource persons.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Few professionals involved in the teaching of reading would take issue with the assertion that children learn to read by reading. Motivating children to read, generating genuine excitement about and for the printed word, and helping children develop a lifetime reading habit, is one of the hardest tasks educators face. Providing children with stimulating reading materials that are both demanding and varied during their leisure time should be a continuing concern of educators in view of the potential implications for future reading habits.

Television (TV) has some unique features that can enhance the printed message and result in valuable educational experiences that cannot be realized by either medium independently. From previewing many instructional television (ITV) shows, and from reading the literature about the benefits of instructional television, the researcher became aware that there are a variety of reading-motivation/literature-based television programs aimed at elementary-age students. These programs have the ability to promote active rather than passive viewing and to encourage follow-up activities by students that will facilitate leisure reading.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

The purpose of this research study was to analyze the content of a selection of literature-based programs on Iowa Public Television (IPTV). None of the literature-based TV
programs reviewed were intended to teach children how to read. No attempt was made to evaluate whether the TV programs were "good" or "bad", but to analyze the content of the programs and identify certain features that have the potential to make the programs a vital part of the total reading curriculum in elementary schools. Several reviews of a number of the individual programs were found, but no compilation of the contents of all the programs to be included in this study was found. Therefore, this research study could serve to inform educators in Iowa about the spectrum of reading-based programs that can be viewed on IPTV. By being aware of the program's content, educators could better utilize the various programs in their reading curriculum.

**PROBLEM STATEMENTS**

Are the literature-based programs on IPTV an end in themselves or do they motivate students to read the featured books or other suggested titles?

Do the literature-based programs on IPTV present a variety of literature types (fiction and non-fiction), with protagonists of both sexes and a variety of ethnic groups?

Do the literature-based programs on IPTV utilize quality literature for elementary school students as the foundation for the program content?

Do the programs present suggestions so that upon the program's conclusion some selection, judgment, or
performance related to the literature-based program's content is required of the viewer?

Are the literature-based programs on IPTV professionally produced with high quality technical components?

HYPOTHESES

1. A majority of the literature-based programs will incorporate a combination of production techniques (e.g. animation and live action) within each program to enhance interest and aid pacing of the presentation.

2. A majority of the literature-based programs will encourage use of resources which are outside the range of the classroom, such as libraries or resource persons.

3. A majority of the literature-based programs will feature fiction titles.

4. A majority of the human protagonists featured in the literature-based programs will be males.

5. The ethnic group of the protagonist that will be represented in the majority of the literature-based programs will be persons of the white race.

6. A majority of the literature-based programs will make it clear that there is a book "tie-in" by showing the actual book or by telling the author's/illustrator's name.

7. Eighty percent of the titles presented (with the exception of adaptations of fairy or folk tales) will be
ones that are recommended in at least one of eight widely recognized selection sources (see Appendix A).

8. A majority of the literature-based programs will utilize a single book format that concentrates on only one literary selection in its entirety or in part to stimulate the viewer to conclude the story independently.

9. Eighty percent of the literature-based programs will exhibit production quality that is excellent.

10. A majority of the literature-based programs will require viewer performance related to the program’s content.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Animation is a filming and video technique that brings inanimate objects or drawings to apparent life and movement by very brief or single-frame exposure. Animation can be accomplished using drawings, figures and shapes constructed from modeling clay or other materials, or by creating computer images.

Children, students and learners are synonymous in this study and will be used interchangeably throughout. This study will be specifically concerned with curricula for elementary school children, between the ages of 5 and 12, or those who would be found in traditional K-6 organizational settings.

Commercial television includes all programming aired by the major networks: ABC, CBS and NBC, and all local stations which enter into contracts with sponsors to air commercials in exchange for monetary considerations.
Curriculum refers to the planned activities in schools for children aged 5 to 18, or those found in K-12 settings. All curricula, whether stated in specific behavioral terms or open-ended designs, provide an opportunity for learners to come in contact with a stimulus. The curricular strategies to utilize TV proposed in this study were formulated to be adaptable with this definition in mind.

Home television (TV) refers to any TV viewed by students away from school, including commercial and public TV, daytime and prime-time, received via airwaves or cable.

Instructional TV (ITV) refers to TV which is viewed by students in school; the programs are produced for the specific purpose of achieving predetermined educational objectives. Many instructional programs can be viewed at home.

Iowa Public Television (IPTV) is Iowa's non-commercial TV station. Revenues are provided by individual subscribers, foundations, state funding and the federal government's Corporation for Public Broadcasting. The schedule is generally divided into daytime educational programs broadcast for use by schools, and nighttime programming which provides adult-oriented programming for cultural, educational or entertainment purposes.

Literature-based TV programs refer to those TV shows aired on non-commercial TV stations, for this research study those aired on IPTV. These programs are targeted for elementary audiences (grades K-6) and are based on literary works written for that population. The programs dramatize
children's stories (in entirety or part), and expand on a predetermined literary theme, or a combination of these factors.

**Live-action** is a sequence of film utilizing images of real people and scenery rather than artificial effects, such as animation or titles.

**Magazine format** describes a TV program design that features a children's book or story and a medley of other segments which relate to the feature book's theme.

**Production quality** describes the technical elements of a motion picture production, such as the lighting, sets, costumes, sound, and effective use of special effects that are enhanced to increase audience appeal.

**Program content** is the substance, content, or messages transmitted by TV images and narratives.

**Quality children's literature** refers to books that excel in story content and/or illustrations. This judgment was based on the literature's inclusion in at least one of a number of recognized book selection bibliographies listed in Appendix A.

**ASSUMPTIONS**

The major assumption which served as the central theme for this study is that TV is a powerful communication medium which educates and is used extensively by children. As such, its examination, analysis and effective utilization should be incorporated into elementary school curricula. Most educators are not aware of the strengths and/or limitations of TV for instructional purposes.
Another assumption is that all literature-based programs on IPTV share some common characteristics which can be placed into categories to be analyzed for this research study.

LIMITATIONS

The analysis of the literature-based programs was limited by the researcher's understanding of multi-media presentations and the interpretation of their content. No attempt was made to survey educators or elementary students to find out actual use of IPTV in Iowa classrooms or to determine if students really take some action after viewing these programs, such as reading the books or seeking additional information.

The research was limited to the literature-based programs targeted for elementary-age students in kindergarten through sixth grades shown on IPTV, which were only a representative sampling of what is available nationally. By sheer makeup of the Instructional Television Schedule, only a limited amount of programs are shown in each curriculum area in any given season. Through teacher feedback and evaluations of the programs, the schedule changes annually so, what is shown now, may not be shown a year from now.

The programs included in this study were those shown on IPTV from Monday, November 6, 1989 through Monday, February 5, 1990. There were a total of eighteen programs listed as Language Arts programs in the Curricular Areas Table of Contents in the Instructional Television Schedule of IPTV.
for the school year 1989/1990. Of these only six fit the researcher's criteria for inclusion in this study. Ten of the remaining programs were either designed for junior high or high school audiences or were focussed on teaching some specific reading or writing skill. The last program entitled *From the Brothers Grimm* would have fit this study, but the series was being broadcast from March 13, 1990 through May 15, 1990, so it did not fit the time restrictions of this study. From each of the six series of literature-based IPTV programs, six episodes were randomly selected and viewed by the researcher.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

History of Instructional Television

The arrival and wide acceptance of television (TV) in the United States a generation ago brought with it the belief that humans were entering a new era in communications. In his history of modern America, Boorstin (1973) characterizes the effect of the arrival of TV as not merely a "revolution" but a "cataclysm" (p. 24). This new technology was thought to be an event equal in importance to the development of the alphabet and the printing press. The implications for education excited the minds of educators across the nation; few at that time, however, foresaw the rather disappointing role television would play in formal education.

The optimism prevalent in 1953 was clearly reflected by the remarks of Milton S. Eisenhower, Co-Chairman of the National Colleges' Committee for Educational Television: "We can develop the education and commercial opportunities of television as complementary partners, as associates in one of the grandest opportunities any group of men or women ever had to provide intellectual leadership" (Dieuzide, 1977, p.24).

Unfortunately, the "grand opportunity" slipped away. Television for the most part became predominantly a commercial entertainment medium while education, its "complementary partner," became an incidental or accidental function at best.
Furthermore, the school as the dominant institutional mode of formal education has shunted the medium to the margins of its instructional programs. There has been no concerted or sustained attempt by educators to weave the analysis, use and understanding of TV into the fabric of the school curriculum. Some schools have taken advantage of ITV offerings during the school day, but few have systematically linked their curriculum to the thousands of hours of home viewing each child engages in during his or her school years. Fewer still have thought of the medium as a new communication mode which requires the identification, development, acquisition and practice of new skills (Kaplan, 1986).

Many educators were initially threatened by the thought of TV as superior teacher and the havoc which would result should a massive reorganization of the educational system occur. Once again, the school demonstrated its ability to resist change, and TV's extensive use in the educational process has never been fully realized (Manley-Casimir, 1987).

Even more damaging to the medium's acceptance than teacher-resistance were those educators who did use TV but failed to recognize its specific strengths and limitations in the educational process and simply "superimposed a new technology on an existing structure" (Ide, 1974, p. 354). Bruner (1966) asserts that:

The greatest mistake educators could make is to put TV to work sanctifying the traditional. Simply filming lectures, panels or seminars ties TV to all
the blarney of old academic techniques. TV can even serve as the quality control for the entire educational system, building and maintaining taste to a level never before imagined. (p. 97)

Success in school has always centered on success in oral, print and mathematical modes. Educators were not sure how to use the medium within the traditional school and classroom. Was it to be used as an instructional tool or process? Was it to be used as a supplement to instruction? Was the TV monitor to be used at all in the classroom? These are some of the critical questions whose answers still determine TV's acceptance or rejection, effective use or misuse in schools today.

Capabilities of Instructional Television

It is useful for educators who are developing classroom activities using instructional television (ITV) to know the viewing habits of their students. Numerous studies provide data concerning the amount of TV school children view, their preferences and other activities which accompany or are replaced by TV viewing. The landmark work of Schramm, Lyle, and Parker (1961) provides initial baseline data, much of which is still valid. Children, they found, begin viewing regularly by kindergarten age. Viewing time reaches a peak just before the child enters school; drops as the school day impinges on available time; increases steadily to a maximum peak around early adolescence; then declines during the high school years. Data compiled from several studies show that children, prior to entering school, view, roughly, two and one-half hours per day on the average. By age ten, viewing
increases to three and one-half hours per day and climbs to an average of four hours per day at age twelve, slowly declining at that point as students enter later high school years (Beentjes & Van Der Voort, 1988, p. 391). Lehr (1986, p. 501) found that TV viewing consumed half of the total leisure time of suburban 5th-grade children and occupied more than ten times as many hours as reading.

ITV forms the most obvious link between TV and the school curriculum. ITV programs are designed to be viewed in school and to achieve a wide range of predetermined educational objectives which more often than not coincide with traditional curricular offerings. The research indicates that children can learn effectively from ITV and that it can be used to teach any subject and encourage development of skills in all domains where one-way communication will contribute to learning (Chu, 1975). Despite the evidence and the increasing quality of ITV series, the whole subject of classroom TV remains "a quagmire of misinformation and misimpression, as well as a battleground for contending viewpoints" (Morris, 1989, p. 50).

Survey research (Bostick, 1987) indicates that 97% of the nation's teachers could utilize ITV programs if they chose to do so. Thirty-two percent of the elementary and secondary teachers regularly use ITV series. (Regular use is liberally defined as using 75% or more of all the lessons in at least one ITV series.) Why do more than 65% of the nation's teachers who could use ITV choose not to do so?
Among the possible answers to this question are (1) the general lack of knowledge on the part of educators concerning the capabilities, substance, availability and quality of ITV programs, and (2) the failure of school professionals to develop strategies of how and when to incorporate ITV series within existing curricula (p. 32).

A common argument raised by parents and educators alike is that ITV should not be used in classrooms because children already watch too much TV. This argument makes the gross error of equating ITV, which is produced to take advantage of TV's unique capabilities for instruction, with commercial TV, which is produced primarily for entertainment and its ability to deliver audiences to sponsors.

TV has capabilities like other instructional modes which can contribute to the educational process. These are the capabilities which creators of ITV series attempt to exploit when formulating objectives upon which programs are based. Cater and Nyhan (1976) stated that the medium of ITV can:

1. Promote inquiry, stimulate children to think critically, raise questions, pose problems, open up a large range of alternatives on differing points of view or ways of dealing with a problem,...spark a learner's curiosity to want to know more about the topic.
2. Help learners perceive things differently, leading to changed behavior and attitudes.
3. Make learners rational participants involved in the learning situation rather than passive receptors.
4. Promote interaction among learner, teacher, and other students.
5. Allow learners to make decisions as the program progresses.
6. Motivate continued learning when the program is over.
7. Explore in-depth a segment of a topic—or each of
the alternatives in an issue—rather than surveying superficiality.
8. Present the whole as a backdrop to consideration of its parts.
9. Allow the learner to feel a high degree of identification with others who are viewing.
10. Help learners to see the relationship between bits of information and slices of reality.
11. Provide learners with raw data on the screen from which to make generalizations rather than be given conclusions.
12. Provide information and material which the classroom teacher cannot: dramatizations, presentations of new developments, distinguished people, important events, far-away places. (p. 62)

Knowledge of the aforementioned strengths and capabilities of ITV programming does not guarantee their effective use in classrooms. Educators must also be aware of the source, availability and substance of specific series and their relevance to existing curricula.

ITV series are produced and are made available through a variety of organizations and cooperative ventures. The Agency for Instructional Television, Children's Television Workshop, Learning Corporation of America, Great Plains National Instructional Television Library and Western Instructional Television are among the major organizations which produce and distribute ITV series. "Many series have become sophisticated productions involving subject matter specialists, writers, visuals researchers, psychologists, graphic artists and reproduction experts" (Coelho, 1981, p. 6). Some series undergo rigorous formative and summative evaluation to determine if their educational objectives are being achieved. Others do not benefit from such activities (Ackerman & Lipsitzeds, 1977).
Once ITV series are complete, they are selected and scheduled for broadcast usually by local public TV stations. Series are secured through purchase, lending or consortia arrangements from the producing agency. Consortia arrangements are particularly interesting in that they allow local stations, state departments of education and educational organizations of every kind to collaborate in all phases of the project—planning, experimental production, evaluation, validation, and final production stages (Schneider, 1987).

Public stations which broadcast ITV series during school hours usually have educational services divisions which provide a wide range of services proportionate to their financial resources. These services divisions select series and develop the schedule. In conjunction with the schedule, educational services divisions often provide teacher manuals which include the year's schedule of programs, program content, educational objectives, suggested grade levels and information concerning videotaping rights for each series (Gough, 1979, p. 459).

It is important to remember that not all ITV is of equal quality. As a final check before utilizing a series in a classroom, teachers should preview the programs when possible (Dorr, Graves & Phelps, 1980, p. 71). Once educators are aware of the capabilities, availability, content and quality of ITV series and their supportive materials, they may begin to develop strategies to integrate ITV into the school's curriculum.
One of the major criticisms of TV is that it engenders passive viewing. The third general strategy of ITV (stated previously) is to motivate students to do something following the program. Active and critical viewing skills begin to replace passive viewing, which may carry over to home TV viewing. "Teachers who can use ITV and choose not to are ignoring a powerful teaching tool which brings special events and resources into the classroom that would otherwise not be available and which perform a variety of instructional functions" (Holtzman, 1981, p. 92).

Series, such as Cover to Cover, are designed to "leave viewers a little hungry" and encourage activity at the program's conclusion. The success of Cover to Cover, which dramatizes the first part of a book and prompts the viewer to read the rest to find the ending, suggests that TV can be widely used to promote reading (Keyes, 1988, p. 20). "It's clear that TV, especially commercial TV, can sell the entire spectrum of consumer products, instill political ideologies, and reinforce or alter attitudes and beliefs. Why can't TV's potential to sell be harnessed to promote love for and enjoyment of reading?" (Howe, 1983, p. 50).

**Relationship Between Television and Reading**

At this point, it may be useful to discuss the relationship between TV and reading. Critics have blamed TV for the deterioration of reading and writing skills among students. They argue that for every hour a child watches TV he/she is not reading (Moody, 1980). The estimate that by the end of the high school years children will have spent
more time watching TV (15,000 hours) than attending school (11,000 hours) is an oft-quoted statistic that has both alarmed and intrigued researchers for the National Institute of Mental Health (1982, p. 6). Several recently published reports show that, indeed, children would rather watch TV than engage in leisure reading pursuits.

A questionnaire on reading and TV consisting of two pages for grades 4 to 6 and one page for grades 2 and 3 was distributed in the fall of 1987 by Weekly Reader to 100,000 students. "How much do you like to read books?" was one question posed by the survey. The responses were "like a lot", "like a little", and "don't like". Although 65% of second graders reported that they liked to read a lot, that figure decreased as the grades increased until only 39% of 6th graders made that selection. By contrast "How much do you like to watch TV?" found 80% of students stating that they liked TV watching "a lot", and this response remained consistent across grade levels. The comparison between TV and reading was more directly made in the question: "When kids your age are home, which might they do most often?" The choices were "watch TV", "call someone on the telephone", "play", "listen to the radio" or "read". For the combined grades 4-6 "TV watching" was more popular than the other four choices combined. Reading as a voluntary activity was the least popular response with 6% of the total. However, the question is phrased so that children are reporting not on their own preferences, but on their perception of the preferences of their peers (Johnson,
In a much smaller study of 5th grade reading habits, it was found that out of nine leisure categories, reading ranked seventh, representing only 5.4% of overall leisure time (Greaney, 1980, p. 337). It is generally theorized that such an ubiquitous phenomenon is bound to have effects on reading and other home and leisure activities.

The remaining research literature to a large extent consists of small-scale studies conducted with different age groups using diverse methodological strategies. The relationship between viewing TV and school achievement is the most popular subject (Meringoff, 1980; Morgan, 1980; Roberts, 1984; Winick & Wehrenberg, 1982; Zuckerman, 1980). There has been a lack of convergence across studies regarding the relationship between the two media. As in other fields of inquiry, however, two schools of thought have emerged: one which claims that there are no apparent effects, and a second which holds that the strength of the effects has not been recognized due to flaws in research designs.

These are indeed difficult phenomena to study. Television and reading activities tend to be episodic in nature. The amount of time devoted to each activity is likely to vary considerably from week to week, depending on such factors as availability of materials, current interests, and time of year. Another factor limiting the progress in the field of TV and reading research is what Hornik (1978, p. 1) described as the "fly by night" character of the research. Thus, the field tends to attract "instant
experts" (Comstock, 1982, p. 33): those who claim that without TV, children would "calmly spend more time looking for something good at the library" (Winn, 1977, p. 58). Evidence on the amount of time children spend viewing TV, however, suggests that the issue is far more complex. How much time children perceive as free from other activities is often dependent upon the number of alternative attractions. Available time is not the only determinant of viewing. Many children who "should have little available time nevertheless watch a great deal of TV; conversely, some children who would seem to have a great deal of time watch little TV" (Dorr, 1986, p. 54).

The influence of the home environment is one obvious source of variation in media-related behavior. Such influences may be exercised by parents who spend time interacting with their children, establish hours of viewing time, read to their children, encourage multiple alternative activities, or through personal example, choose a variety of stimulating leisure pursuits. One study by Neuman (1986) found a striking difference in the amount and type of media use across various family types. Children who came from families that were actively involved in work and leisure pursuits tended to choose more demanding media, including news, information, documentaries, and serious literature in adult life. Others, from homes characterized by a sense of powerlessness and an authoritarian view of society, were oriented toward media for strong stimulation and stereotypic formats (p. 173).
Studies of TV viewing and reading, however, have generally focused on the relationship between the number of hours viewed and performance scores on reading achievement tests. Beentjes and Van Der Voort (1988, p. 391) researched the puzzling question of how it is possible that one finds both competent observers who argue that TV viewing favors the child's development or reading skill and those who take the very opposite view. They concluded that the key to this question probably lies in the fact that TV can simultaneously play different roles in the child's life, some of which are likely to further and others to hinder the acquisition of reading skills. The contradiction between these opinions results, then, from the fact that in each explanatory hypothesis full regard is given only to one possible role of TV. They present a "book-reading promotion hypothesis" (p. 391). According to this hypothesis, "TV promotes the reading of books by broadcasting both movies of which a book version exists and programs in which the audience's attention is drawn to new publications" (p. 392). TV, it is argued, thus produces an increase in the time spent on reading, resulting in additional practice, which in turn is supposed to further the child's development of reading skills.

Popularity of "Television Tie-In Books"

Few of the critics, who see TV as an enemy to reading, have explored the possibility of using TV to promote reading. Librarians and bookstores alike will attest to the tremendous demand for books which have been dramatized and
shown on TV (Morris, 1989, p. 50). "Tie-ins"—books which originated from a TV series, e.g. the Star Trek series—have long been popular with students (Hamilton, 1975, p. 67). Indeed, movies tend to make certain books popular with children. A survey of sixth, seventh, and eighth graders in New Jersey showed that 40% of the books they chose to read were tied to TV or movies. In England, in the 1950s, it was found that both TV and radio dramatizations, some serialized, caused many children to read the dramatized books, many of which were classics (Potter, 1982, p. 24). Himmelweit (1958) states that "TV or film is an addition to print, not a substitute for it" (p. 78).

One of the most consistent findings in the literature on media in education is the superiority of multimedia over single-medium presentation. Bailey (1983) states:

There are various reasons why it should be of value to have the same material presented through more than one medium. Each medium, because of its code of representation and its technical capabilities, must emphasize different kinds of information. For example, film or TV emphasizes action and simultaneous events happening in parallel. Print, in contrast, emphasizes a linear, sequential relationship between ideas or events. Thus, to receive information on the same topic through different media is to learn about the topic from different points of view. (p. 121)

Greenfield (1984) asserts that TV's strength is in conveying feelings, while print is good for facts:

Discussion not only provides the active element so essential for learning, it also helps transform the specifics observed on TV into generalizations. One limitation of TV is its tendency to use concrete examples, easily shown in visual images, and to avoid generalizations. Print and discussion, however, lend themselves well to abstract generalization, precisely because they
can be divorced from concrete images. Combining TV with these other media can turn TV's weaknesses into a strength, as it provides the concrete examples that make abstract generalization meaningful. (p. 167)

Although few research studies have been done in this field, there is little doubt that, as a rule, the sale and borrowing from libraries of books discussed or directly recommended in TV programs rises after their broadcast. As shown by some research studies, a similar effect may result from the broadcast of films and TV series for which book versions exist. Hamilton (1974) showed the relationship between televiewing and reading interests of seventh grade pupils. He supplied a large group of first year secondary school students during six weeks with a great number of books, some so-called TV tie-ins among them. The majority of the students appeared to prefer the TV tie-ins. In Splaine's 1978 survey (p. 15) of the most popular books in United States school libraries, a similar result was found. The top-15 list contained not fewer than nine TV tie-ins among them. But statistics on children's televiewing habits do not tell the whole story. "Ask any children's librarian which books rarely gather dust on the shelves, and one answer invariably will be books that are TV-related" (Adams, 1989, p. 72). In a study of 595 Virginia students in grades 2-12, Feeley (1978, p. 19) found that 89% had watched at least one program on commercial TV that caused them to read a book. TV had demonstrated its power to motivate reading.

This power comes in part from children's familiarity with TV. They are attuned to and often personalize the
medium; most also trust its message. Eighty percent of low-ability 7th and 8th graders in Feeley's 1978 study, for example, accepted as true whatever they heard on TV (p. 37).

Reading-Based Programs on Instructional Television

Now "ITV is using this popular and trusted medium to lure children to the bookshelves" (Ploghoft, 1981, p. 44). Besides its ready acceptance by youngsters, ITV has certain other advantages. First, ITV programs are designed by educators; they draw on the expertise of content area, curriculum, and child development specialists and generally undergo evaluation by classroom teachers and children during the production stage, while changes in format or content are still possible (Kaplan, 1986, chap. 2). Second, book-related ITV programs provide regular book introduction over an extended period. Third, since many ITV programs are telecast more than once during the school week, the teacher has some flexibility in using them. Major noncommercial, non-profit ITV distributors also make off-air recording and extended use rights available to schools through local ITV agencies (such as public TV stations). Finally, unlike commercial TV, ITV can entice children to read books by presenting exciting and entertaining excerpts, without divulging the entire plot.

But what, exactly, can ITV do that the reading teacher cannot? To answer this question, look at some of the methods reading teachers use to show children the pleasure of good books, to whet and widen reading interests, to introduce unfamiliar literary forms, and to erase the
discrepancy between children's reading abilities and the books they can appreciate and enjoy. Most reading teachers use storytelling, oral reading, book talks and displays, or some combination of these techniques to achieve these goals. For at least two of these methods, storytelling and book talks, ITV has certain advantages.

Storytelling takes a great deal of preparation and practice, often more than teachers are able to devote to it. In addition, storytelling requires certain qualities of voice and a dramatic flair not possessed by every teacher (Jones, 1988, p. 37). ITV's advantage is that it can bring skilled, professional storytellers into every classroom. This is an obvious asset for the teacher who does not feel comfortable with storytelling; for the teacher who does, it expands the repertoire of offerings and gives greater variety to the reading motivation program.

ITV also has special capabilities that make book introduction tantalizing. First, it can dramatize exciting excerpts to make a book come alive. Second, it can give viewers a "personal brush with a book's creator, not otherwise possible in most classrooms" (Keyes, 1988, p. 20). Third, ITV is able to use a wide variety of related arts: paintings, drawings, pantomime, puppetry, dance, background music, sound effects. All of these can enhance a book's introduction, but most teachers lack the time and the resources to make each book introduction a multiple-arts experience. Finally, "for younger children, ITV can
capitalize on an affinity for cartoon-type characters
developed by Saturday morning commercial TV" (Howe, 1983,
p. 66).

That TV has a magic for children is undeniable. That it
has capabilities beyond those of the classroom teacher also
seems obvious. It is time teachers stop denying TV's
existence, and instead harness this popular medium to a
worthwhile goal, the bringing together of children and
books. ITV can be a valuable resource in the classrooms
across the nation. When properly used, it can be "the
missing link between school life and real life, allowing
each to illuminate the other." (Cater & Nyhan, 1976,
p. 106)

Edward R. Murrow, the news correspondent and TV news
pioneer, once remarked, "This instrument can teach, it can
illuminate, it can even inspire, but it can only do so to
the extent that humans are determined to use it to those
ends. Otherwise, it is merely lights and wires in a box."
(Lazarsfeld, 1940, p. 4)
CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

The research technique for this study was content analysis. Busha and Harter (1980) define content analysis as "a procedure designed to facilitate the objective analysis of the appearance of words, phrases, concepts, themes, or characters contained in printed or audiovisual materials" (p. 171). By breaking down the content of material into meaningful and pertinent units of information, certain characteristics of messages can be discerned. The observed data can be categorized and then quantified.

To compile a list of literature-based TV programs to analyze, the 1989/90 Instructional Television Schedule was used and literature-based IPTV programs that are designed for use by elementary-age students were chosen. Using the time period from Monday, November 6, 1989 to Monday, February 5, 1990, six episodes of six different programs were previewed. Where more than six episodes were available, six episodes were randomly selected. An appendix is included which gives a complete citation of the programs viewed. The programs were recorded on videocassettes from Channel 12 (Station KRIN) and were watched in their entirety. The literature-based programs that were analyzed were Books From Cover to Cover, The Folk Book, Gather 'Round, Reading Rainbow, Readit, and Storybound.

Each of the programs was analyzed using a checklist. Ten categories of elements were analyzed in quantitative terms (see checklists), not only to determine if an instance
occurred, but also how often in order to study the extent of occurrence in each program. All the elements were compiled on the basis of research studies and opinion articles read for the literature review.

Most of the elements that were analyzed were such that they could easily be put into definitive categories specified on the checklist. The one exception to this was the item evaluating the program's overall production quality. That was a subjective evaluation made by the researcher taking various components of production quality into consideration. These included the technical aspects of the motion picture production, such as lighting, sets, costumes, sound, and effective use of special effects that led to a total production that had general audience appeal. The researcher determined if, as a whole, the production had a refined, professional feel about it or if it appeared to be a program made by amateur producers. This element was rated on a scale from excellent to poor, with intermediary ratings of fair and good.
CHAPTER 4
DATA ANALYSIS

Thirty-six children's literature-based reading programs were analyzed for this study. A checklist with ten elements was used as the instrument in analyzing these programs; the elements focused on determining the production techniques of the programs, the overall production quality, what type of literature was reviewed on the programs, and whether the literature selections were quality pieces. The gender and nationality of the protagonist was noted, and whether the program promoted the use of libraries or encouraged the viewer to read or undertake some action after viewing the program.

To clarify some points that may arise during presentation of the data, brief descriptions of the various programs are given. "Books From Cover to Cover gets students to read by enticing them into books" (Roll, 1987, p. 2). It is designed for children in the middle elementary grades. On each program, the series host, John Robbins, gives a brief introduction to a book, then presents a dramatic reading of a portion of the story, accompanied by music, sound effects and on-camera illustration. The reading stops at a crucial point in the story in the hopes that the viewer will seek out the book and finish the story. The series contains a good mixture of humor, mystery, reality and fantasy. The stories take place in the United States, Canada and Europe; in the inner city, the suburbs and the country; in times past, contemporary times and the
far distant future. The books present a wide variety of characters in a rich assortment of circumstances both familiar and unfamiliar to young readers. It is produced by WETA-TV in Washington, D.C. and is distributed nationally.

**The Folk Book** is a series of fifteen 20-minute programs on ethnic folklore, designed to promote interracial, intercultural, and interethnic understanding among students in the primary grades. The Folk Book uses dance, drama, storytelling, puppets, animation, and a variety of other art forms to present folk tales from around the world. Each program is organized around a single theme or motif found universally in folklore and contains two or more stories representing different cultures. "Every child knows folk narratives--fables and nursery rhymes, fairy tales and stories of folk heroes. These exert an unobtrusive but strong influence on us all and help to shape what we become" (Littig, 1980, p. 4). One of the main purposes of **The Folk Book** is to extend this influence, promoting in children a sense of the simultaneous diversity and universality of human experience, and leading them to perceive relationships between other world cultures and their own background and heritage. The **Folk Book** is designed to give viewers a feeling for the art and artifacts of each culture portrayed. It is produced by Northeastern Wisconsin In-School Telecommunications (NEWIST), in association with the Agency for Instructional Television, at the facilities of UWGB Educational Communications, University of Wisconsin, Green
Bay. The series is made available by the Agency for Instructional Television.

Gather Round is marketed as a series of 16 storytelling programs designed to familiarize children in the lower elementary grades with traditional classic folktales and to promote the enjoyment of listening to well-told tales. "The aim is to expand the listeners' experiences and let them share in the joy of the great volume of the world's literature. The storytelling must also respect the minds of children and never underestimate their powers of understanding" (Gladfelter, 1983, p. 2). Its format is a comfortable one. Paul Lally, the host, introduces the tale and an illustrator creates artwork on camera to illustrate what is being described in the story. The tales are told in their entirety. It is produced and made available by the International Instructional TV Cooperative.

Readit is a series of sixteen 15-minute programs in reading motivation for students in grades three and four. "If they have established a connection between fun and reading during the primary years, they will build on this foundation toward a lifetime of reading enjoyment" (Moskowitz, 1982, p. 3). John Robbin's unique blend of video, art, and storytelling provides an excellent connection between books and fun for all viewers regardless of individual reading ability. Mystery and adventure, as well as fantasy and humor, are represented. The programs are produced with cliff-hanger endings that hook viewers and encourage them to find the book and finish the story. It is
produced by Positive Image Productions and distributed by the Agency for Instructional Television of Bloomington, Indiana.

"Reading Rainbow is a wonderful thirty minutes of stories, book reviews, vignettes, wonderment and exploration" (Nachbar, 1987, p. 44). The combination of interesting themes, graphics, soundtrack and acting, with respect for children's curiosity and interests, produces a well-paced, fascinating show. Each episode of Reading Rainbow revolves around a single picture book serving as a jump-off point. The show begins with the host, actor LeVar Burton, asking a question. This initial segment introduces the audience to the feature book that addresses his pondering. While the book's original illustrations are the visual focus, the story is read dramatically and accompanied by music and sound effects. Reviews of books by children that fit the episode's theme end the program. The primary objectives of this magazine format series is to encourage primary level, beginning readers to adopt positive reading habits. It premiered in 1983 and is a continuing production of Great Plains National Instructional Television in Lincoln, Nebraska and WNED-TV in Buffalo, New York, and is produced by Lancel Media Productions of New York City. Funders of the series include the Kellogg Company, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, B. Dalton Booksellers and public television stations (Turner, 1984, p. 53).

Storybound is a reading motivation series of sixteen, 15-minute television programs for grade six. The wide
variety in books selected and production techniques used in this series introduce and bind student interest in each of the Storybound programs. Cliffhanger endings encourage youngsters to check out the books from their local libraries in order to find out how the stories end (Moskowitz, 1980, p. 2). Additional titles of general interest are suggested for further reading in the program notes at the end of each segment. This program is very similar to Readit and Books From Cover to Cover in format: a brief booktalk-type introduction and the creation of on-camera artwork to illustrate what is being narrated. It is produced and distributed by Children's Television International of Falls Church, Virginia.

The data related to each of the ten hypotheses were separately tabulated. A majority consisted of percentages that were 50 percent or above, and these figures were used to accept or reject the hypotheses.

Table 1

Production Techniques

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technique(s) Used</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Live-action</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puppets</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live-action and still pictures</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live-action and puppets</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live-action, still pictures and puppets</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL                                       | 36  | 100 |
Hypothesis 1: The majority of the literature-based programs will incorporate a combination of production techniques (e.g., animation and live-action) within each program to enhance interest and aid pacing of the presentation. As shown by Table 1, 94 percent of the programs used two or more production techniques. On the basis of this percentage, Hypothesis 1 was accepted.

The most popular combination of techniques was live-action and still pictures which really served to "personalize" the programs that incorporated the technique by letting the audience see the host and then creating the impression that someone is reading to them while showing the book's pictures. Books from Cover to Cover, Gather 'Round, Readit, and Storybound used these techniques solely in all of their programs. All of these programs have the same type of format; the host provides an introduction to that episode's theme or story; then a narrator reads excerpts or the story in its entirety accompanied by music, sound effects and on-camera illustrations. At some point in each one of these programs, one gets to see the illustrations actually being drawn: just started in the rough sketch stage, being colored or shaded, or the finishing touches being added. This added immensely to all the productions, as it is a change of pace from the still pictures being shown, and the audience feels a part of the actual illustration process. It reminds the viewers that a person is truly responsible for creating the art work that the consumer of any book enjoys. Three episodes of The Folk
The Folk Book featured live-action and puppetry as the means for bringing three folk tales alive in each episode. Only two individual programs offered only one type of production technique. One episode of The Folk Book highlighted three versions of Cinderella stories from three different countries, but all the stories were brought to life using puppetry. One other episode of The Folk Book entitled "Monsters and Magic" featured two tales that were enacted by two different theatre groups which constituted the entire program being live-action.

HYPOTHESIS 2: A majority of the literature-based programs will encourage use of resources which are outside the range of the classroom, such as libraries or resource persons.

As shown by Table 2, 89 percent of the programs did not directly encourage the use of either libraries or resource persons. On the basis of this percentage, Hypothesis 2 was not accepted.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource(s) Recommended</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource person</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>36</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the 36 programs viewed, only four encouraged the viewer to visit the library. Three of the comments were
made in *Reading Rainbow* by the host, LeVar Burton, during the wrap-up section of the program where he emphasized that the books recommended by the child reviewers were good, and that there are all sorts of book adventures waiting for the viewer at the library. The one episode of *Reading Rainbow* entitled "Abiyoyo" might do more than any other program reviewed to encourage reluctant readers to visit a library. By highlighting the rap group RUN DMC and interviewing the leader of the group, the audience is told how the group collaborates and writes their rap songs. They conclude this segment by singing a rap song about reading saying "If you look into a book there's fun to find--find a book with a good beat" (Liggett, 1989). They also show a portion of a rock video that takes place in a library making an attempt to show that reading is "cool". One other program of the series *ReadIt* in an episode entitled "The Whistling Teakettle", encouraged the viewer to seek a library and find some other books that were collections of short stories.

**Hypothesis 3:** A majority of the literature-based programs will feature fiction titles. The researcher counted both feature titles and those recommended for further reading. Fairy and folk tales were tabulated as fiction. The review sources consulted were used as the authority for classifying the titles as either fiction or nonfiction. As shown by Table 3, 91 percent of the titles were fiction. On the basis of this percentage, Hypothesis 3 was accepted.

*Cover to Cover* had one nonfiction book that was recommended for further reading included in an episode that
had pioneer life as a theme. The book is an account of the author's ancestor's experiences on the Canadian prairie toward the end of the 19th century. *Reading Rainbow* was the only other program that highlighted nonfiction titles, both as the featured title and as recommended titles for further reading. In 1986, via an underwriting grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the National Science Foundation, science-related books were introduced in order "to get children excited about science and reading about science at an early age" (Nachbar, 1987, p. 45). This trend would account for the books used for the episode "The Life Cycle of the Honeybee" which documented the world of bees, and "Keep the Lights Burning, Abbie", which focused on sea travel. The main theme of the episode "Abiyoyo" was music, and "The Paper Crane" explored the Japanese culture.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Titles</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fiction titles</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonfiction titles</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>76</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Hypothesis 4:** A majority of the human protagonists featured in the literature-based programs will be males. Only the main story in magazine format programs was used, and because one episode of *Storybound* included two works of literature and devoted equal emphasis to each, the total number of
programs equalled 46. Of these four programs had animals as the protagonist, leaving 42 programs with humans as protagonists. As shown by Table 4, 55 percent of the human protagonists were female. On the basis of this percentage, Hypothesis 4 was not accepted.

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex of Protagonist</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female protagonist</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male protagonist</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With the percentages being so close in this category, it is evident that the producers of these programs are making a concerted effort to make their programs appeal to both sexes, and to encourage both boys and girls to read. While it is not necessarily a fact that boys only read about boys and vice versa, it would seem that in some instances it would be easier for children to identify with a protagonist of their own sex.

Hypothesis 5: The ethnic group that will be represented in the majority of the literature-based programs will be persons of the white race. In this category, also, only the main story in magazine format programs was used, and because one episode of Storybound included two stories with equal emphasis on each, the total number of programs equalled 46. As shown by Table 5, 66 percent of the protagonists were of
the white race. On the basis of this percentage, Hypothesis 5 was accepted.

Table 5
Ethnic Group of the Protagonist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Persons of a variety of ethnic groups were represented in all of the different programs, except Gather 'Round which features favorite well-known fairy tales. This is not surprising considering most of the fairy tales well-known by youngsters today have their roots in European culture. Naturally, the protagonists are going to be white persons. The program that really did a superb job of introducing its viewers to folk tales from around the world was The Folk Book. Each program is organized around a single theme or motif found universally in folklore and contains two or more stories representing different cultures. This program accounted for seven of the non-white protagonists. The other occurrences were distributed equally among the remaining series. This trend can probably be explained by
the multi-cultural, non-sexist emphasis in children's publishing. Because these literature-based programs use so many of the newer, high-quality materials being published, they are bound to pick selections that are indicative of this favorable trend.

**Hypothesis 6:** A majority of the literature-based programs will make it clear that there is a book "tie-in" by showing the actual book or by telling the author's/illustrator's name. As shown by Table 6, 67 percent of the programs did both, actually showing the book to the viewers and naming the author and, where applicable, naming the illustrator, also. On the basis of this percentage, Hypothesis 6 was accepted.

**Table 6**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method(s) Used</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Showing the book &amp; Naming the author/illustrator</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The remaining programs did neither, leaving the viewers to realize these were stories, but not necessarily from books. *Gather Round* and *The Folk Book* simply presented the stories without directly tying them to a literature base. Perhaps these two programs were relying more on the fact that the tales were part of the oral tradition of the
various cultures. This fact would lead to a great expansion of imagination and respect for oral traditions, but does very little to promote literature in its written forms. These programs could combine their purpose of introducing children to oral traditions and other cultures with reading by recommending various versions of the basic tales that appear in book form. In *The Folk Book: A Guide for Teachers* (Littig, 1980), they do just that: following each episode’s cultural notes and suggested activities with a bibliography of book titles to supplement that episode.

**Hypothesis 7:** Eighty percent of the titles presented (with the exception of adaptations of fairy or folk tales) will be ones that are recommended in at least one of eight widely recognized selection sources (see Appendix A). As shown by Table 7, 80 percent of the titles were reviewed in at least one of the eight selection sources. On the basis of this percentage, Hypothesis 7 was accepted. Of the 76 books whose reviews were sought, 22 of those were fairy or folk tales, so that left 54 titles for which to seek reviews.

This result shows that the producers of the programs are interested in providing quality literature as the basis for their programs. *Books From Cover to Cover, Storybound, Readit,* and *Reading Rainbow* have advisory committees that consist of a representative sampling of some well-known leaders in the children’s literature field who help select the books for each episode. Perhaps the reason for the 15 percent not being found in the review sources was that they
were new enough titles to not have been included in the chosen selection sources.

Table 7

Recommendations of Program's Books Found in Eight Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Sources</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>54</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Hypothesis 8:** A majority of the literature-based programs will utilize a single book format that concentrates on only one literary selection in its entirety or in part to stimulate the viewer to conclude the story independently. As shown by Table 8, 67 percent of the programs utilized a format that concentrated on only one book, either in part or in whole. On the basis of this percentage, Hypothesis 8 was accepted.

The most popular format was the partial book format where excerpts of full-length books were read, or a shorter book was started by the narrator and then the viewer was left in suspense, whereby necessitating that they finish the book themselves. This cliff-hanger format was the most
compelling as the narration is always halted at a point where the viewers are left vulnerable, having been introduced to the character and getting wrapped up in the plot just enough to have their interest piqued. The single book in its entirety format was employed by Gather 'Round. The fairy and folk tales have been condensed to fit nicely into the 15-minute format.

Table 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Format</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single book/whole</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single book/part</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several books/same topic</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazine format</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>a101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentage does not equal 100 due to rounding error

Hypothesis 9: Eighty percent of the literature-based programs will exhibit production quality that is excellent. As shown by Table 9, only 17 percent of the programs exhibited excellent production quality. On the basis of this percentage, Hypothesis 9 was not accepted.

This finding can be attributed to the fact that money is a big determinant in the quality of a production. Reading Rainbow was the only program that was consistently of excellent production quality. It is evident that the featured book is adapted specifically for the medium of
television. The program segment takes the viewer to exciting, theme-appropriate settings, such as the Philadelphia Zoo and the Port of Charleston in South Carolina. The shows are enhanced with animation, dramatizations, interviews, and music. Funders of the series include the Kellogg Company, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, B. Dalton Bookseller; they are also assisted by grants from the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the National Science Foundation (Nachbar, 1987, p. 44; Turner, 1984, p. 53). None of the other series benefits from outside funding or grants. Roginski states that to control costs for Books From Cover to Cover, they often use John Robbins’s living room or the WETA-TV studios. Even so, it is not cheap—there are a lot of elements to consider for each story: the opening graphics, sophisticated camera work, location shooting, and the filming of the art. In all, an average fifteen-minute segment will cost about $27,000 (1987, p. 18).

Table 9
Production Quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The program that was the most inconsistent in production quality was The Folk Book. At best, any given episode was fair, with three episodes being deemed poor. The concept of the show is admirable, and the stories presented are worthwhile, exciting pieces, but the manner of production is very unprofessional. From program to program, different person's talents were utilized as the focus of the show. Drawing theatre groups, dance companies, and puppet masters from various locations, such as Chicago, Minneapolis, and Milwaukee, these shows definitely have potential, but the utilization of inferior camera work, sound effects, and poor use of props and costumes made this series' production quality poor.

The programs Books From Cover to Cover, Gather 'Round, Readit, and Storybound basically rely on the same type of production techniques, and most of these episodes had good production quality. Aside from a few lapses, such as poor narration, or feeble, unprofessional attempts to "animate" one portion of a still picture, such as making a dog's tail or a character's mouth move in one portion of the presentation, these shows remained quite consistent in production quality. Common would be the best way to describe these four programs; they were straightforward and unpretentious, with one purpose in mind, to interest the viewer in the books being presented.

Hypothesis 10: A majority of the literature-based programs will require viewer performance related to the program's content. As shown on Table 10, 72 percent of the programs
suggested further performance by the viewer at the show's conclusion. On the basis of this percentage, Hypothesis 10 was accepted.

Table 10
Viewer Performance Suggested by the Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Viewer Encouraged to</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read the featured book</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read other recommended titles</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read a book of their choice</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read featured book &amp; recommended others</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read featured book, recommended others &amp; encouraged choice</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL | 36  | 100 |

The "other" viewer participation behaviors included: at the end of the episode of The Folk Book entitled "Who is the Real Cinderella?", the narrator pointed out that there are other stories from other places and cultures, so potentially this could urge the viewer to seek out some of these other stories. In another episode of The Folk Book entitled "Just for Fun", the narrator asked "What silly things do you know that are just for fun? Songs, riddles, or jokes; share a silly story with a friend" (Littig, 1989). During the episode "Monsters and Magic", the host who was dressed up as a wizard stated "It's good to look in books—you can learn a
lot. I hope you look in books" (Littig, 1989). This could be construed as a cue for children to use books, especially young children who could be influenced by the desires of a wizard might pick up on this. The most common viewer performance encouraged by the programs was to read the featured book or other recommended titles. This is really what the researcher hoped to find—entertaining programs that would result in children wanting to read, and producers meeting the challenge of using the technology of television to stimulate children's interest in the wonderful world of books.
CHAPTER 5
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The intent of this content analysis was to determine if the literature-based television programs on IPTV had certain components that would have the potential to make the programs a vital part of the total reading curriculum in elementary schools. The research also included determining if the programs displayed production qualities that were excellent, and what types of production techniques were employed to make the programs of interest to child viewers.

From the data gathered, the following results about the literature-based television programs used in this study were found by the researcher:

1. The majority of the literature-based programs incorporate a combination of production techniques within each program to enhance interest and aid pacing of the presentation. The most widely-used combination of production techniques is live-action and still on-camera illustrations that allow illustrations to be shown while stories are being told or read to the viewer.

2. Most of the literature-based programs do not directly promote the use of libraries or outside resource persons. Even though they promote reading and finding the books, they never actually make suggestions as to where to get them, be it a school, public library or by asking assistance from a teacher or media specialist in a school, or a librarian in a public library.
3. Most of the literature-based programs feature fiction titles, with fairy tales and folk tales making up a large number of the titles.

4. Both sexes are represented in the literature-based programs, but females are represented slightly more than males.

5. The majority of the protagonists are of the white race, but a real effort is made to include persons of all races in the programs.

6. A majority of the literature-based programs show the book and tell the name of the author, and where appropriate, the name of the illustrator.

7. Most of the titles presented were ones that are recommended in at least one of eight widely-recognized selection sources. This shows that the producers are trying to present quality literature to the viewers via these programs.

8. Most of the literature-based programs utilize a format that deals with one book, either in part or in its entirety. The most common format is one whereby the host "book-talks" a book, excerpts are read, and then at an opportune place it is stopped, leaving the viewers in a cliff-hanger situation in hopes they will have their interest piqued and want to finish the book themselves.

9. Most of the literature-based programs have production quality that is good.

10. A majority of the programs encourage viewer performance related to the program's content. The most
common factor is encouragement of the viewer to read the featured book, or one of the others that are recommended.

Conclusions

From the results found, the producers of the literature-based programs appear to be presenting quality literature on a wide variety of topics and representing characters of both sexes and many cultures. The hypotheses were based on what should occur if these programs were going to be a valid addition to classroom learning and as reading motivators. Only two of the hypotheses were rejected. One of the strongest points of the programs analyzed was that they can offer a motivation for children to read by presenting situations and techniques that only the technology of television can lend to the situation. By bringing the illustrations to life through having an artist draw while the story is being read is a marvelous change of pace, especially considering that some of the novels for older students do not even include illustrations, except for cover art. Through the use of sound effects and professional narrators, the literature also takes on a different perspective; even the oldest students would appreciate having someone "read to them" while they have the freedom to conjure up all sorts of images in their minds while they listen.

Recommendations

Additional studies of literature-based television programs would be valuable to determine if the results from this content analysis were valid. These additional studies
could involve programs that were not used in this analysis, perhaps series such as the ABC After School Specials, or similar programs that are on commercial television channels. Also, some programs are certain to be produced in the future that would be valid subjects for study.

Other possibilities exist for further studies about the content of the various programs. The checklist utilized in this study could be used to analyze the same programs or a different sampling strictly by target age or genre type. For instance, to just focus on the programs that use one format like the programs that use the cliff-hanger approach. Since the Folk Book and Gather 'Round were found to be programs that mostly relied on the oral tradition of literature, these could best be left out of further similar studies. They serve a purpose of introducing children to other cultures and ideas, but are not necessarily reading motivators. Reading Rainbow, started in the summer of 1983, would be interesting to see whether it has evolved to focus on certain issues or areas, or, has broadened its scope. It would also be wise to watch more episodes aired over a longer period of time to be sure they are samplings from the different seasons of each series.

Most valuable of all for further research would be to study whether these programs really do motivate students to read. Field studies could be done to monitor the students who actually viewed the shows to see if they did seek out the titles or the recommended ones for their leisure
reading. This would be the true test of whether these programs really do accomplish the intended purpose.


Lazarsfeld, Paul F. Radio and the Printed Page. New York: Duell, Sloan and Pierce, 1940.


APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

SELECTION SOURCES USED TO EVALUATE PROGRAM CONTENT

This is a list of selection sources that are evaluative bibliographies written by individual experts or committees and are generally recognized in the Library Science field as reliable and accurate selection tools for the acquisition of quality children's books.


APPENDIX B

PROGRAMS ANALYZED AND CHECKLIST


APPENDIX B

Literature-Based TV Program Checklist

Title of literature-based TV program ________________________________________
Title of episode __________________________________________________________
Date show aired on IPTV ___________________________________________________

1.) The program employs the following production technique(s):
   ___ Live-Action  ___ Animation  ___ Puppets
   ___ Live-Action & Puppets  ___ Live-Action & Animation  ___ Other

2.) The program encourages the use of these outside resources:
   ___ Library  ___ Resource person (specify)

3.) The title(s) featured are (specify numbers of each)
   ___ Fiction  ___ Nonfiction

4.) The human protagonist is:
   ___ Male  ___ Female

5.) The human protagonist is of this ethnic group:
   ___ White  ___ Black  ___ Native American
   ___ Hispanic  ___ Asian/Pacific Islander  ___ Other (specify)

6.) The program makes it clear that there is a book "tie-in" by:
   ___ Showing the book  ___ Naming the author/illustrator

7.) The presented titles were reviewed in at least one selection source.
   (list each title and where recommended)
   _____________________________  Yes___ No___
   _____________________________  ___ ___
   _____________________________  ___ ___

8.) The format of the program is:
   ___ Single book presentation (whole)  ___ Several books on the same topic
   ___ Magazine format

9.) The program's overall production quality is:
   ___ Poor  ___ Fair  ___ Good  ___ Excellent

10.) The program encourages the viewer to:
     ___ Read the featured book  ___ Read other recommended titles
     ___ Read a book of their choice  ___ Other

Comments: ______________________________________________________________