

TELEVISION VIEWING AND MARITAL ADJUSTMENT

A THESIS

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ROBERT A. SMITH

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Texas Woman's University
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We hereby recommend that the thesis prepared under
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be accepted as fulfilling this part of the requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts.

Committee

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To protect individuals we have covered their signatures.

Dedication

To Howard Beale

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Television Viewing and Marital Adjustment

In the relatively short span of 30 years, television has become an integrated fixture in American culture. It is the primary source of information for viewers in areas where they lack first-hand experience. What real-world experience viewers do have, television either confirms or denies.

McLuhan (1967) described this phenomenon of commonly shared information and mediated experience that transcends previous social, cultural, and geographical barriers as leading humanity towards a "global village." Just how pervasive this commonly shared media experience has become is aptly shown by television viewing statistics. Ninety-nine percent of all homes in the United States contain at least one television set. More than 80 million people watch it on an average evening, 30 million of whom view the same show. On occasion, 100 million people will be watching the same program at the same time (Mander, 1977). Americans also spend more of their time watching television than in any other waking activity at home (Gorney, Loye, & Steele, 1977). Children between the ages of 2 and 6 are exposed to almost 30 hours of television a week, while

persons in their mid-fifties watch over 40 hours a week (Key, 1973). By virtue of its preeminence in the average viewer's daily homelife, television would seem likely to have some impact on the family system.

Kay (1973) commented on television's role as a primary regulator of family interaction:

For a large proportion of the roughly 50 million U.S. families, television controls both time and space. Television is a major consideration as to when the family goes to bed (after the 11:00 P.M. news), when the family eats meals or snacks, what family activities will be on weekends (relative to games, program schedules, and sports seasons), when parents do or do not have sex (who wouldn't be tired after a night's hard work in front of the tube's window, pushing beer and potato chips down one's throat?). (pp. 65-66)

There are other considerations, though, concerning television's impact on families, such as its effect on the development of values, behaviors, self-concept, images of others, perceptions of reality, social skills, and communication patterns. It is no secret that television is used to sell goods and services to the viewer, promote candidates for public office, and sway public opinion in many other ways. Television, inadvertently or not, might also be selling the social messages of its noncommercial programming.

Television Role Models

Much of the research on television viewing has concerned its violent content and its effect on the viewer (e.g., Bandura, 1973; Gerbner & Gross, 1976a, 1976b; Surgeon General's Scientific Advisory Committee on Television and Social Behavior, 1972). While far from unanimous, most studies have agreed that televised violence does increase the probability of viewer aggressiveness, though the seriousness of the effect is open to widely different interpretations (Comstock, 1975).

Gerbner and Gross (1976a) have analyzed prime-time programming on the three major networks since 1967, and found violence to be the most prominent theme, involving more than half of all television characters. Frances (1977) observed that interpersonal conflicts shown on prime-time television were intended to be resolved by violence 82 percent of the time. He claimed also that the more a person watches television, the more likely that person is to condone violence as an acceptable method of resolving interpersonal conflicts. Gorney, et al. (1977) found that aggressive mood and hurtful behaviors of adult men toward their wives and families were related to their exposure to television programming that was either helpful (prosocial) or hurtful (violent).

The argument for television's influence on the behavior of viewers has already found its way into more than one courtroom. In 1974, the mother of a 9 year-old girl who was sexually assaulted with a beer bottle by four youths, filed an \$11 million negligence suit against the National Broadcasting Company. Four days previous to the attack, NBC had broadcast the made-for television movie, Born Innocent, which depicted an adolescent girl being gang-raped with a plumber's helper. A superior court judge, however, dismissed the suit, citing that it was necessary to prove willful intent on the part of NBC for viewers to imitate the sexual attack (Meyer, 1978). In a 1977 court case, the parents of a Florida youth convicted of murder, sued the three major television networks for \$25 million, claiming that their son had been exposed to over 50,000 television murders. He had previously pleaded unsuccessfully to having been a victim of involuntary television intoxication (Meyer, 1978).

Television role modeling isn't limited to just aggressive behaviors. In the area of sexual intimacy, Fernandez-Collado and Greenberg (1978) observed that implied or acknowledged intercourse between unmarried partners was the predominant sexual act portrayed on 1976-77 prime-time and Saturday morning shows, occurring seven times more often

than intercourse between husband and wife. The second most frequently portrayed sexual act was prostitution.

Fernandez-Collado and Greenberg concluded that "the basic fact of intercourse as suggested by television content is that it occurs quite often, but seldom among those who are married to each other. Further, it can be bought and paid for if not obtained otherwise" (p. 36). Silverman, Sprafkin, and Rubenstein (1979), in a content analysis of sexual behavior and messages on 1977-78 television, noted an "increasing tendency to 'tease' the audience behaviorally (through flirting), verbally (through innuendo), and visually (through contextually implied intercourse)" (p. 42). They noted, too, that television content was loaded with sexual stereotyping, with female characters more likely than males to act seductively, while males were more likely than females to act aggressively. Unfortunately, research in the area of television's sexual messages and their relationship to viewer sexual behavior has been neglected in favor of a concern about violence, leaving one only to imagine the possibilities of applying social learning theory to the sexual modeling done by television.

Viewer Perceptions of Reality and Expectations

Television programming is not only loaded with messages of how to behave, but what to expect from others and the real world. Gerbner and Gross (1976b) found that heavy

viewers were more likely than light viewers to have exaggerated beliefs about what they saw on television, were more apt to view the real world as more dangerous than it really is, and were more wary of trusting other people in general. They concluded that television can "alter, confirm, and/or reinforce the way people relate to others" and that it forms an "essential part of the general system of messages that cultivates prevailing outlooks and regulates social relationships" (p. 45). Doob and Macdonald (1979), however, attempted to replicate the Gerbner and Gross study and found virtually no relationship between television usage and fear of crime when they controlled for the actual incidence of crime in the viewers' neighborhoods.

Televised marital and familial roles were found by Fisher (1974) to be usually free of violence, conflict, concerns about finances, child rearing problems, or housework. Spouses were instead affectionate, caring, and helpful to each other. He considered television as providing married viewers with a model for socially approved family roles, as well as solutions to marital problems, and non-married viewers with social and cultural expectations and obligations. Key (1973) has taken issue with the viewpoint that these are useful models of familial roles, and argued instead that this idealistic version of American family

life may have harmful psychological consequences for viewers by asking them to compare and assess themselves and others in their family with television's unrealistic characters. "These fantasy families are not clearly recognized as fantasies. They are unconsciously accepted as the real thing or as models of what the real thing should look like" (p. 69). At a meeting of the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences, a 17 year-old high school student told a panel that "after watching family TV shows, I felt that my parents were 'inadequate' and that I didn't have the perfect family life I saw on TV. It caused many fights and my growing apart from my family" (Kagan, 1979). Gerbner and Gross (1976b) noted, too, the contrast between real life experience and roles and those of television's characters. They observed that "the stars of primetime network TV have for years been cowboys, detectives, and others whose lives permit unrestrained action. Except in comic roles, one rarely sees a leading man burdened by real-life constraints, such as family, that inhibit freewheeling activity" (p. 44). These unrealistic television experiences carry over into the area of sexuality as well. Baran (cited in Comstock, 1975) reported that television contributes to much of adolescent frustration and dissatisfaction with sexual pleasure and performance by raising viewer expectations with

its portrayal of sexual relationships. He found also that television's usual treatment of male-female relationships heavily emphasized sexual intercourse as worthy of considerable effort.

The argument that viewer frustrations may arise from the media's creation of idealized expectations and images of marriage and family life, when contraindicated by the real-life experience of the viewer, might be especially true considering demographic information about television's heaviest viewers. They are generally young; black; of low socioeconomic status, academic achievement, and I.Q.; and more likely to have a life-style of daily crises. The lower social classes watch more television, easily feeding their already present resentment of their own situation. These are the same viewers who are more likely to perceive television programming as accurately portraying real life (Comstock, 1975). Philport (1975) found a negative correlation between television consumption and socioeconomic status and education. Fox and Philliber (1978) observed, too, that social class was a clear determinant in relating television usage to viewer perception of affluence in the real world. Education level has been found to be strongly related to the belief that daytime serials portray reality. Thomas (1977) noted that less-educated women subjects were

far more likely to identify with, learn from, and seek out value reinforcement from soap operas than those women who were college-educated. The capacity, though, to confuse television programs with reality isn't just due to social factors. A report by the National Institute of Mental Health entitled Television and Social Behavior (cited in Mander, 1977) observed that adults aren't that much better than children at separating television imagery from real-life. In fact, most adults seem to consider dramatic and situation comedy programs as true to life, as well as pertinent and useful in dealing with similar problems of their own.

This process of accepting and acting upon mediated versions of real life experience may even extend beyond simple learning theory, as something far more insidious. Emery and Emery (cited in Mander, 1977) found that the very nature of the televised medium, by affecting the neural pathways, causes the integrative function of the left-brain to quit processing entering images. Instead, these images are allowed to enter directly into the brain's memory banks as information that is unavailable for conscious recall, resulting in a different type of learning than is commonly assumed. The Emerys referred to the television viewing process as "at the conscious level of somnambulism" (cited

in Mander, 1977, pp. 206-207). Peper (cited in Mander, 1977) observed that television viewing produces passive alpha-wave patterns in the brain, as opposed to the faster beta-waves produced by reading and used to orientate towards the world. Peper also noted:

The horror of television is that the information goes in but we don't react to it. It goes right into our memory pool, and perhaps we react to it later, but we don't know what we're reacting to. When you watch television you are training yourself not to react, and so later on you're doing things without knowing why you're doing them or where they came from. (p. 211)

Viewing As Avoidance Behavior

Another area of television's inclusion into the family system is its use in interfering with relationships and communication. Rosenblatt and Cunningham (1976) have attributed the use of television by spouses and their families as a method of avoiding tense interaction, having found a strong positive correlation between the amount of household television use and family tension. They observed that television viewing is used more often in order to avoid tense interaction than as a source of frustration, and noted, too, that this "may be harmful where the sources of tension lie within the relationship, are recurrent, and either are not reduced or are aggravated by avoidance interaction" (p. 111). These findings support research by Maccoby (1954) that studied television viewing as a means of conflict

avoidance between children and their parents. This type of avoidance behavior may extend into other areas of interpersonal relationships, severely affecting the social skills of the viewer. Bronfenbrenner (cited in Winn, 1980) observed that "the primary danger of the television screen lies not so much in the behavior it produces--although there is danger there--as in the behavior it prevents: the talks, the games, the family festivities and arguments through which much of the child's learning takes place and through which his character is formed. Turning on the television set can turn off the process that transforms children into people" (p. 121). Television viewing, in circular fashion, might then be used as a substitute for any unfulfilled emotional and social needs brought about because of a lack of social skills due to having spent large amounts of time watching television instead of interacting with others.

Television has also been used in the marital dyad as a substitute by one spouse for performing or joining other activities. Thirty-eight percent of the female respondents surveyed in one study indicated resentment concerning the amount of time their husbands spent watching television (Kagan, 1979). In a 1980 American Women's Opinion Poll, 21 percent of the respondents stated that watching television

was a major source of friction between themselves and their husbands, more than problems with in-laws or sex (Schoenstein, 1980).

Purpose

Television, thus, appears to not only project certain social messages about behavior, roles, interpersonal relationships, and expectations to married partners, but is also used to avoid, substitute for, and regulate social interaction. These considerations lead to the purpose of this study: to determine if a relationship exists between the amount of time married partners spend watching television and marital adjustment. Marital adjustment (Spanier, 1976) shall be defined as "a process, the outcome of which is determined by the degree of: (1) troublesome dyadic differences; (2) interpersonal tensions and personal anxiety; (3) dyadic satisfaction; (4) dyadic cohesion; and (5) consensus on matters of importance to dyadic functioning" (p. 17).

It was hypothesized that the amount of time married partners spend watching television is negatively correlated with marital adjustment, and that the magnitude of discrepancy in amounts of viewing time between spouses is negatively correlated with marital adjustment.

Method

Subjects

Parents attending a school meeting, members of a married couples church group, and marital partners attending a second church, all in a large metropolitan area, collaborated in the study, not as "subjects," but as "research volunteers," using the terminology advocated by Smith and Argyris (cited in Gorney et al., 1977). The school provides special education services for handicapped students ranging in age from 3 to 21 years old. Though Catholic sponsored, there are no attendance restrictions based on race, sex, or religion. There is great socioeconomic diversity in the families of students attending the school, as many are contracted by and/or reside in the dozen or more surrounding school districts.

No prestudy data were available on the research volunteers associated with the churches. Seventeen couples volunteered from the parent-school group, 14 from the church social group, and 22 from the church attendees, for a total of 53 couples.

Instruments

Research volunteers were requested to complete a television log estimating the number of hours per day, within certain time blocks, they spent watching television during

an average week (see Appendix A for television log).

Demographic information as to the respondent's age, number of years of education, number of children living at home, length of present marriage, and household income was collected by questionnaire (Appendix B).

The Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) was used to determine the research volunteers' levels of marital adjustment (Appendix C). Developed by Spanier (1976a), it is a 32-item scale, yielding a single total scale score, as well as four subscale scores in the areas of dyadic consensus, satisfaction, cohesion, and affectional expression. Using factor analysis, Spanier was able to determine the presence of these components of dyadic adjustment. Construct validity for the DAS was assessed by correlating it with one of the most frequently used instruments in this area of interest, the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Scale. The correlation between these scales was .86 ($p < .001$) (Spanier 1976a). Reliability of each subscale, as well as total scale score, was measured by using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha. Subscale reliabilities ranged from .73 to .94, with total scale reliability assessed as .96 (Spanier, 1976b).

Besides its use as an overall measure of the process of marital adjustment, the DAS was constructed so as to be

used with nonmarital dyads as well. Other advantages are that it can be completed in just a few minutes, is easy to score, and permits the use of only one subscale when needed, without losing confidence in the reliability or validity of the measure (Spanier, 1976a).

Procedure

Research volunteers were informed beforehand of the complete anonymity and confidentiality of their individual responses. They were told that this was a thesis study involving television viewing and the behavior of married partners. Research volunteers were requested to sign a consent form (Appendix D) and told that a copy of the results would be made available to them if they wished to see it.

Each research volunteer was given an envelope containing a television log, demographic questionnaire, and the DAS, which were randomly sequenced in an effort to counterbalance any effect test order might have on the results. Research volunteers were instructed to work alone at their own speed, to complete the test items to the best of their ability and in no particular order, and to place them back in the envelope and to seal it when finished. The two completed envelopes from each couple were then stapled together. There was no coding or marking of any kind on

the instruments or envelopes. Research volunteers were given a debriefing statement (Appendix E) upon completing this procedure, which lasted approximately 15 minutes.

Statistical Analysis

Only after all data from the entire sample of 53 couples had been collected, was it analyzed. Since the data collected were all continuous variables, a correlation matrix was produced.

Eleven stepwise multiple regression equations were also generated. The criterion variables were measures of marital adjustment. Marital adjustment was measured by each partner's scores on the four Dyadic Adjustment subscales (consensus, satisfaction, cohesion, and affectional expression), each partner's total Dyadic Adjustment Scale score, and the combined total scores of both spouses.

Predictor variables were the sum of the husband's and wife's television viewing times and the difference between those viewing times. Demographic information as to age, years of education, number of children living at home, length of present marriage, and total household income also served as predictor variables. Different responses by marital partners as to the number of years married or household income were averaged.

T-tests for dependent samples were calculated to compare husbands' and wives' scores on the DAS subscales and totals, and to compare husbands' and wives' television viewing times.

Results

Fifty-three married couples participated in the study. Due to the failure of some marital partners to complete the entire DAS, data collected from three couples were unusable and discarded. The mean age of the research volunteers was 39.8 years for the husbands and 37.7 years for the wives, who watch a combined average of 34.3 hours of television a week (see Table 1).

From the data collected, the correlations between the amounts of television watched by married couples and the husbands' and wives' total DAS scores were not found to be statistically significant ($N=50$, Pearson's $r=.06$, n.s., and $N=50$, Pearson's $r=-.12$, n.s., respectively). The relationships between the differences in viewing times of the husbands and wives, and the total DAS scores of each spouse were not found to be significant either ($N=50$, Pearson's $r=.01$, n.s., and $N=50$, Pearson's $r=-.02$, n.s., respectively).

Of the 44 correlations between the viewing times and differences in those times of spouses, and the DAS subscale

Table 1
Means and Standard Deviations of Variables

Variable	<u>N</u>	Mean	Standard Deviation
HAGE	50	39.82	10.56
HYS	50	16.66	2.52
WAGE	50	37.70	9.60
WYS	50	15.84	2.06
NOC	50	1.30	1.27
YM	50	12.82	9.93
INC	47	49138.30	34566.05
HTV	50	14.93	10.06
WTV	50	19.43	12.48
TOTTV	50	34.32	19.49
DIFTV	50	8.67	8.96
HDC	50	47.20	4.66
HAE	50	8.28	2.20
HDS	50	39.06	4.04
HDCOH	50	15.20	3.21
HDAS	50	109.74	10.86
WDC	50	49.16	4.82

Table 1 (Continued)

Variable	<u>N</u>	Mean	Standard Deviation
WAE	50	8.80	1.84
WDS	50	40.34	3.92
WDCOH	50	16.76	4.10
WDAS	50	114.52	9.55
COMDAS	50	224.20	17.57

Note. See Appendix F for variable key.

and total scores of both spouses, only the relationship between the husband's television time and the wife's dyadic consensus subscale score was found to be statistically significant ($N=50$, Pearson's $r=-.37$, $p < .01$) (see Appendix G for complete correlation matrix). Of the 13 other significant correlations involving DAS scores, eight of those were found to be with the ages of the spouses. As shown in Table 2, all of the significant correlations between spouses' ages and the DAS scores are in a negative direction, and involve only the husbands' DAS scores and the combined total scores of both marital partners.

In the 11 stepwise multiple regression equations that were generated, none of the television variables loaded as statistically significant predictors of marital adjustment.

Table 2
Significant Correlation of DAS and Demographic Variables

DAS Variables	Demographic Variables				
	HAGE	WAGE	YM	HYS	WYS
HDS	-.37*	-.40*	—	—	—
HDCOH	-.50*	-.57*	-.45*	—	—
HDAS	-.29*	-.35*	—	—	—
WDC	—	—	—	—	.30*
WDCOH	—	—	—	.41*	.40*
WDAS	—	—	—	.29*	—
COMDAS	-.28*	-.36*	—	—	—

Note. See Appendix F for variable key.

N=50

* $p < .01$

As shown in Table 3, six of those equations did, though, have at least one significant predictor variable. In four of those six regression equations, the wife's age was found to be the single significant predictor ($F > 4.06$, $p < .05$).

T-tests for dependent samples were calculated to compare husbands' and wives' scores on the DAS subscales and

Table 3
Statistically Significant Predictor Variables in Eleven
Stepwise Multiple Regression Equations

Criterion Variable	Predictor Variable	Beta	F ^a
HDC	—	—	n.s.
HAE	—	—	n.s.
HDS	WAGE	-0.473	12.946*
HDCOH	WAGE	-0.590	24.050*
HDAS	WAGE	-0.411	9.127*
WDC	—	—	n.s.
WAE	—	—	n.s.
WDS	—	—	n.s.
WDCOH	HYS	0.315	10.270*
	WYS	0.306	4.814**
WDAS	HYS	0.293	4.215*
COMDAS	WAGE	-0.389	8.011*

Note. See Appendix F for variable key.

^an.s. denotes "not significant."

* $p < .05$ (df=1 and 45)

** $p < .05$ (df=1 and 44)

totals, and to compare husbands' and wives' weekly television viewing times. As shown in Table 4, the wives' mean scores were higher than the husbands' mean scores on all six of the scales, with all t values being statistically significant ($p < .05$).

T-tests were used to compare husbands' and wives' DAS scores to normative data for married couples supplied by Spanier (1976). Of the 10 possible comparisons between the spouses' DAS scores and the norms, six were found to be significantly different. Four of these six scores were below the norms.

Discussion

Analysis of the data collected found little support for the hypothesis that the amount of or difference in television viewing done by spouses is significantly related to marital adjustment. Nor were any of the television variables found to be significant predictors of either spouse's level of marital adjustment. The data do suggest, though recognizing that the criterion variables are not independent of each other, that the age of each spouse is negatively related to some components, as well as overall marital adjustment of the husband, and to the total marital adjustment of the dyadic unit.

Table 4

Comparison of Husbands', Wives', and Normative DAS Subscale
and Total Scores, and Hours of Weekly Television

	Husbands (N=50)		Wives (N=50)		Norms (N=218)		Husbands & Wives	Husbands & Norms	Wives & Norms
Variables	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>t</u>	<u>t</u>	<u>t</u>
DC	47.2	4.7	49.2	4.8	57.9	8.5	2.14*	8.60**	6.98*
AE	8.3	2.2	8.8	1.8	9.0	2.3	2.02*	1.96*	.58
DS	39.1	4.0	40.3	3.9	40.5	7.2	2.36*	1.33	.19
DCOH	15.2	3.2	16.8	4.1	13.4	4.2	2.55**	2.85**	5.19**
DAS	109.7	10.9	114.5	9.6	114.8	17.8	3.15**	1.94*	.12
TV	14.9	10.1	19.4	12.5			2.75**		

Note. See Appendix F for variable key.

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

While open to widely different interpretations, these findings may reflect a cultural phenomenon that, though not directly related to television, is indeed part of its overall social message. The medium can be a very persuasive authority for the viewer as to what the prevailing social and economic reality is. Since television's world is one of sexually appealing and available women, as well as widespread material and personal success, this information can provide viewers with unrealistic standards by which to gauge their lives (e.g., Comstock, 1975; Gerbner & Gross, 1976b; Kagan, 1979). The incongruity between a person's real life situation and television's version of what it could or should be, can be very frustrating for the viewer (Key, 1973). This may be especially demonstrated in this study, given the average age of nearly 40 for the husband research volunteers and the cultural expectations often put on males at that age to be either close to or to have already achieved social, material, and occupational success. As both spouses grow older, it is unlikely that the wife will resemble the nubile women in television's world, nor will the husband likely have as exciting and successful a life as the medium conveys. The dissonance between what the husband could or should have and his actual situation, may be related to the findings of this study of a negative

correlation between some of the husband's marital adjustment scores and his and his wife's ages.

Another explanation for this correlation may be the idea that as the length of marriage increases, so does the recognition of differences between the spouses. The findings of this study might also reflect the U-shaped relationship between marital satisfaction and length of marriage that Cameron has noted (cited in Williams, 1977). Whatever the reasons, it may be of interest in future studies that examine marital adjustment, to include both television viewing and aging as factors.

The data collected in this study showed the wives' DAS subscale and total scores, and television time to be significantly higher than the husbands'. The wives' higher DAS scores may be due to such social factors as the large personal investment women often make in the success of their marriages, i.e. women's achievement is often measured by the men they marry (Williams, 1977). That wives generally spend more time at home than husbands, may account for their higher viewing times.

Spanier (1976) has avoided any qualitative classifications of DAS scores, but has supplied the means and standard deviations from the original study on which the scale development was based. Spanier (1979) recommended

relying on this descriptive information until a larger body of published research which uses the scale becomes available.

The differences found between collected and normative data may be due in part to the type of sample used in this study, as it appears to be a highly selective part of the viewer spectrum. It is difficult to generalize these results to the married viewing population, given an unusually high household income of \$49,138.29 for the research volunteers and an average of 16 years of schooling. Another indication of the restricted range of this sample is the reported average weekly viewing times of 14.9 hours and 19.4 hours for the husband and wife research volunteers respectively, compared to a weekly average of 23.3 hours for American adults (Winn, 1980).

These differences in viewing times may be due to one of the many problems inherent in any research involving television usage (Ball, 1976; Fowles & Horner, 1975). Since viewer logs are reactive measures, they are likely to be influenced by the experimental meaning given to them. It is easy to imagine persons underestimating the amount of television they watch, either inadvertently or out of a sense of embarrassment. Despite its widespread usage, lots of television viewing by adults is still not socially heralded. In spite of the problems associated with this

method, however, direct observation of the viewer, metering the television signal into the viewer's home, or controlling the amount and type of television programming an individual watches is not very feasible. With all its imperfections, self-report television logs still remain the most practical measure of television viewing.

A more experimentally perfect television study might involve a pretest-posttest control group design. It would be nearly impossible, though, to find a control group for this kind of research, and in the event that some non-viewing married couples were found, it would be extremely difficult to factor out television's pervasive effect on our social, economic, and political structure. Whether or not one watches television, it still permeates the fiber of American culture and greatly influences it.

It may also be useful in future studies involving television and married couples to categorize the types of programming viewed according to content. More than a few spouses commented that they only watched the educational television network, PBS, whose program content one would assume to be more pro-social than that of the commercial networks. The different kinds of programming watched by married couples may be more related to their behavior than the amount of television they watch.

The present trend in mass merchandizing and public acceptance of increasingly sophisticated video technology, cable television (with its unedited violence and sexual content), and video recorders, suggests that even more massive consumption of television programming lies ahead. The implications for potential social, political, and economic control and manipulation of viewers make it particularly important to understand both the psychological and physiological consequences resulting from exposure to the medium.

Further research concerning television's role in the functions of the marital dyad and family unit would be beneficial to better understanding the perhaps controlling the power of the medium in social relationships.

APPENDIX A

TELEVISION VIEWING LOG

Television Viewing Log

Indicate the average number of hours you spend watching television on an average week, within the time blocks for each day.

	Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
7 a.m. - 12 noon							
12 noon - 5 p.m.							
5 p.m. - 10 p.m.							
10 p.m. - 7 a.m.							

APPENDIX B

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Demographic Questionnaire

Please fill-in the following information:

Age _____ Sex _____

Number of children living at home _____

Number of years married to present spouse _____

Number of years of high school completed _____

Number of years of college completed _____

Number of years of graduate school completed _____

Approximate yearly household income _____

APPENDIX C

DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCALE

Dyadic Adjustment Scale

DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCALE

Most persons have disagreements in their relationships. Please indicate below the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your partner for each item on the following list.

	Always Agree	Almost Always Agree	Occa- sionally Disagree	Fre- quently Disagree	Almost Always Disagree	Always Disagree
1. Handling family finances						
2. Matters of recreation						
3. Religious matters						
4. Demonstrations of affection						
5. Friends						
6. Sex relations						
7. Conventionality (correct or proper behavior)						
8. Philosophy of life						
9. Ways of dealing with parents or in-laws						
10. Aims, goals, and things believed important						
11. Amount of time spent together						
12. Making major decisions						
13. Household tasks						
14. Leisure time interests and activities						
15. Career decisions						
	All the time	Most of the time	More often than not	Occa- sionally	Rarely	Never
16. How often do you discuss or have you considered divorce, separation, or terminating your relationship?						
17. How often do you or your mate leave the house after a fight?						
18. In general, how often do you think that things between you and your partner are going well?						
19. Do you confide in your mate?						
20. Do you ever regret that you married? (or lived together)						
21. How often do you and your partner quarrel?						
22. How often do you and your mate "get on each other's nerves?"						

(DAS continued on next page)

Dyadic Adjustment Scale (cont.)

	Every Day	Almost Every Day	Occa- sionally	Rarely	Never	
23. Do you kiss your mate?	All of them	Most of them	Some of them	Very few of them	None of them	
24. Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together?						
How often would you say the following events occur between you and your mate?						
	Never	Less than once a month	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Once a day	More often
25. Have a stimulating exchange of ideas						
26. Laugh together						
27. Calmly discuss something						
28. Work together on a project						

These are some things about which couples sometimes agree and sometime disagree. Indicate if either item below caused differences of opinions or were problems in your relationship during the past few weeks. (Check yes or no)

	Yes	No	
29.			Being too tired for sex.
30.			Not showing love.
31. The dots on the following line represent different degrees of happiness in your relationship. The middle point, "happy," represents the degree of happiness of most relationships. Please circle the dot which best describes the degree of happiness, all things considered, of your relationship.			

Extremely Unhappy	Fairly Unhappy	A Little Unhappy	Happy	Very Happy	Extremely Happy	Perfect
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32. Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about the future of your relationship?

_____ I want desperately for my relationship to succeed, and *would go to almost any length* to see that it does.

_____ I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and *will do all I can* to see that it does.

_____ I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and *will do my fair share* to see that it does.

_____ It would be nice if my relationship succeeded, but *I can't do much more than I am doing* now to help it succeed.

_____ It would be nice if it succeeded, but *I refuse to do any more than I am doing* now to keep the relationship going.

_____ My relationship can never succeed, and *there is no more that I can do* to keep the relationship going.

APPENDIX D

CONSENT FORM

Consent Form
TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY
HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW COMMITTEE

(Form B)

Title of Project: Television Viewing and Marital Adjustment

Consent to Act as A Subject for Research and Investigation:

I have received an oral description of this study, including a fair explanation of the procedures and their purpose, any associated discomforts or risks, and a description of the possible benefits. An offer has been made to me to answer all questions about the study. I understand that my name will not be used in any release of the data and that I am free to withdraw at any time. I further understand that no medical service or compensation is provided to subjects by the university as a result of injury from participation in research.

Signature

Date

Witness

Date

Certification by Person Explaining the Study:

This is to certify that I have fully informed and explained to the above named person a description of the listed elements of informed consent.

Signature

Date

Position

Witness

Date

One copy of this form, signed and witnessed, must be given to each subject. A second copy must be retained by the investigator for filing with the Chairman of the Human Subjects Review Committee. A third copy may be made for the investigator's files.

APPENDIX E

DEBRIEFING

Debriefing

Thank you for participating in this study to determine if a relationship exists between the amount of television viewing done by spouses and their marital relationships. With television's increasing role in many family routines, it would seem likely to have more and more of an impact on the relationships of its members. The information given today may help give an indication of directions to go in studying television's effect on individuals and their relationships.

APPENDIX F

VARIABLE KEY

Variable Key

HAGE	age of husband
HYS	number of husband's school years
WAGE	age of wife
WYS	number of wife's school years
NOC	number of children living at home
YM	years married to present spouse
INC	total yearly household income
HTV	number of hours per week husband watches TV
WTV	number of hours per week wife watches TV
TOTTV	husband's and wife's total weekly TV
DIFTV	difference between husband's and wife's weekly TV
HDC	husband's dyadic consensus subscale score
HAE	husband's affectional expression subscale score
HDS	husband's dyadic satisfaction subscale score
HDCOH	husband's dyadic cohesion subscale score
HDAS	husband's total Dyadic Adjustment Scale score
WDC	wife's dyadic consensus subscale score
WAE	wife's affectional expression subscale score
WDS	wife's dyadic satisfaction subscale score
WDCOH	wife's dyadic cohesion subscale score
WDAS	wife's total Dyadic Adjustment Scale score
COMDAS	husband's and wife's combined DAS score

APPENDIX G

CORRELATION MATRIX

Correlation Matrix

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
1. HAGE	-	.04	.96	-.18	.07	.72	.13	.02	.21	.14	.33	.03	-.08	-.38	-.50	-.29	-.04	-.08	-.21	-.20	-.19	-.28
2. HYS		-	.01	.42	-.02	.09	-.19	-.07	-.28	-.21	.18	.01*	-.18	.08	.11	.04	.12	.22	.21	.41	.29	.18
3. WAGE			-	-.17	.11	.77	.08	.11	.22	.20	.26	-.01	-.14	-.40	-.57	-.35	-.08	-.10	-.26	-.25	-.25	-.36
4. WYS				-	-.33	-.20	.02	-.27	-.32	-.35	-.05	-.02	.11	.01	.27	.10	.30	.09	.05	.40	.24	.19
5. NOC					-	.24	-.02	-.04	.06	.02	-.14	-.01	-.24	-.13	-.23	-.17	.18	-.17	.05	-.13	.09	-.06
6. YM						-	.22	-.04	.20	.10	.24	.10	-.11	-.11	-.45	-.15	.06	-.12	-.16	-.06	-.11	-.15
7. INC							-	-.02	.02	.01*	-.03	-.19	.08	-.09	-.11	-.13	-.05	.01*	-.23	.19	-.06	-.12
8. HTV								-	.49	.83	-.01	-.12	.09	-.07	-.16	-.11	-.37	-.04	-.03	-.21	-.26	-.21
9. WTV									-	.89	.61	-.02	.16	.03	-.13	-.01*	-.06	.10	.11	-.19	.03	.02
10. TOTTV										-	.39	-.07	.14	-.02	-.16	-.06	-.23	.04	.06	-.23	-.12	-.10
11. DIPTV											-	.03	.06	.03	-.09	.01	-.01	-.05*	.05	-.09	-.02	-.01*
12. HHC												-	.54	.54	.26	.82	.07	.29	.47	.04	.33	.69
13. HAE													-	.43	.32	.69	-.04	.61	.42	.20	.36	.63
14. HDS														-	.51	.84	.11	.20	.54	.09	.35	.71
15. HDCOH															-	.66	.07	.25	.35	.32	.37	.61
16. HDAS																-	.09	.40	.59	.19	.45	.87
17. WDC																	-	.10	.42	.16	.77	.47
18. WAS																		-	.39	.21	.54	.55
19. WDS																			-	.08	.77	.80
20. WDCOH																				-	.35	.31
21. WDAS																					-	.83
22. COMDAS																						-

Note. See Appendix F for variable Key.

^a denotes .01 <

^b denotes -.01 <

N=50

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