

TELEVISION

VOLUME IX NUMBER 3

SUMMER 1970

QUARTERLY

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THE JOURNAL OF  
THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF  
TELEVISION ARTS  
AND SCIENCES

Published by The National Academy  
of Television Arts and Sciences in  
cooperation with the School of Public  
Communication, Boston University

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# TIME LIFE BROADCAST

major voices and integral parts of

- 7** **Denver**  
KLZ-TV-AM/FM
- 10** **San Diego**  
KOGO-TV-AM/FM
- 23** **Bakersfield**  
KERO-TV
- 6** **Indianapolis**  
WFBM-TV-AM/FM
- 8** **Grand Rapids**  
WOOD-TV-AM/FM

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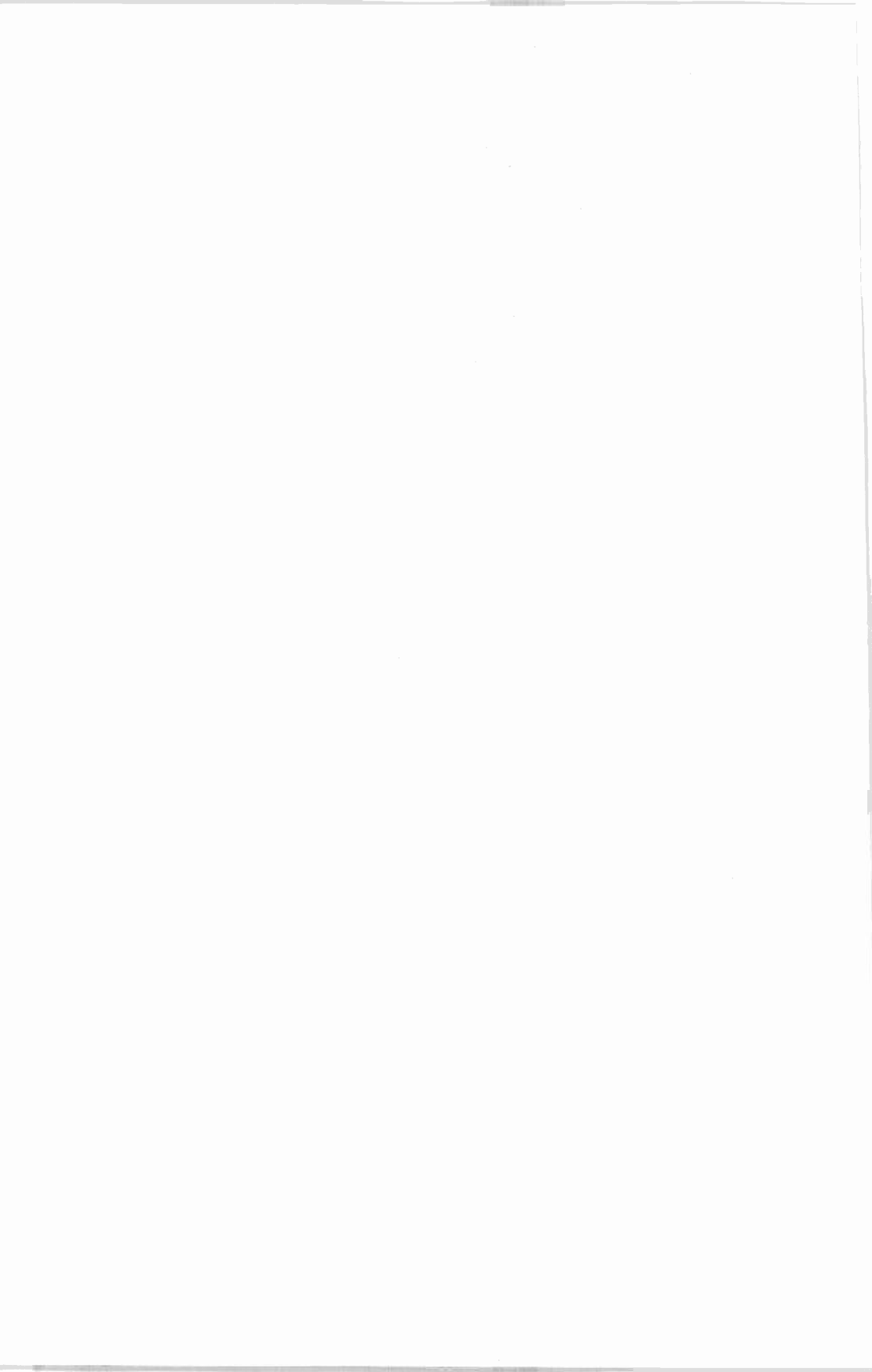
## NEW DIRECTIONS IN CHILDREN'S TELEVISION

*Guest Editor:* JOHN M. CULKIN, Director  
Center for Undersanding Media, Inc.

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# INTRODUCTION: *A CHILD WENT FORTH*

*“There was a child went forth every day,  
and the first object he looked upon,  
that object he became,  
And that object became part of him for  
the day or a certain part  
of the day,  
or for many years or stretching cycles of years.”*

— WALT WHITMAN

Most children don't go forth to do their beholding anymore. They just go into the living room. And whether they become what they behold is a determination now entrusted to scientific research rather than to poetic intuition. Children and television spend a lot of time together—as much as 50 hours a week. If we accept the premise that children are our most important resource and that television is our most powerful modern medium, then one has to have some fairly high expectations for children's programs.

Morris Ernst observed a while back that no culture can be much better than its mass media. The corollary of this thesis would be that children won't be much better than the media either. This is heresy of course to the elite culture which often fails to realize that television belongs to a mass audience whose taste levels are measured daily in the closest thing we have to a continuing plebescite. It is heresy, too, to those who cherish the “no significant difference” kind of research which disclaims any kind of relationship between television viewing and anything else. This latter attitude is particularly visible in discussions of children's programs. It is a lamentable commentary on the custodians of history's most powerful communications medium that they so often measure TV's impact on children in negative terms—the inability of others to prove conclusively that television is doing positive harm.

The consumer side doesn't fare much better. Parents and educators are long on lamentation about television but short on taking positive steps to make children more selective and perceptive viewers of the medium which occupies so much of their time. The quality of the medium has its effect on the audience, but the quality of the audience also has its effect on the quality of the medium. Whitman again: "To have great poets there must be a great audience." Quality programming makes its demands on both the producers and the consumers. This special issue of *Television Quarterly* is designed to provide the living rooms of the country with better programs and with more active viewers.

Discussions about children and television seem to be in order this year. In July the Center for Understanding Media sponsored the First National Conference on Films and Television for Children. In October the First National Symposium on Children and Television was held in Boston under the joint sponsorship of Action for Children's Television, the Kennedy Memorial Hospital for Children and the School of Public Communication of Boston University. And in December the White House Conference will be devoting several sessions to films and television for children. At both the New York and Boston conferences there were strong and strident voices berating the exploitation of children by commercial broadcasters and advertisers. The debate gives every promise of becoming a sport for all seasons as more and more parents become aware of the needs of their children and of the enormous potential of television to serve those needs.

The times encourage new kinds of thinking. Merely rearranging things in their old boxes is like polishing brass on the *Titanic*. It is time to examine the boxes themselves—the structures which shape most planning and decisions. We really don't have to accept the tyranny of ratings, the greed of the stockholders, the stupidity of the public, the exploitation by sponsors as any kind of transcendent, immutable state of things. *Sesame Street* has scrambled the conventional wisdom in all of these categories. Although no network or sponsor would have picked it up for eight million dollars two years ago, there are few now who wouldn't have been delighted to have spent twice that much to be identified with the series. Hopefully all concerned with children's television have gotten the message that there is a public out there who will respond consistently to quality and to caring. *Sesame* has injected new hope into the



movement and has proven that one no longer has to be naive in order to be optimistic.

A few years back, film director Roberto Rossellini remarked in conversation: "Italian children know that they are loved." How nice. Notice that he didn't merely say that Italian parents love their children, but that the kids feel, experience and are aware of that love. While convinced that most American parents love their children, I couldn't say flat out that American children know they are loved. It may seem a little unfair to extend his remark beyond the family to the schools, to the media, to society in general—but if we really care about kids, we should be willing to have all of our efforts on their behalf measured against the best that reside in us. We should resolve all doubts on the side of the kids. It is a tradition among the Hopi Indians that children are the concern of all the members of the tribe. What a nice custom for all of us to take up in the global village.

J.M.C.

The idea for this issue of *Television Quarterly* emerged from the spring meeting of the Editorial Board. Much of the material was developed in conjunction with the First National Conference on Films and Television for Children which was held in New York last July. More than 600 delegates attended to interact with creators of children's films and television, such as Joan Ganz Cooney, executive director of the Children's Television Workshop; Bob Keeshan of *Captain Kangaroo*; Fred M. Rogers of *Misterogers' Neighborhood*; film-producer Robert Radnitz; film-animators Faith and John Hubley; and the heads of children's programming for the TV networks.

This issue contains articles by *Joan Ganz Cooney* and *Fred M. Rogers*, which are based on their presentations at the Conference. *Dr. Caleb Gattegno*, who is president of Schools for the Future, has been a long-time crusader in the use of a variety of media in early childhood education. He has given us permission to quote generously from his book *Towards a Visual Culture*. In a complementary article *Paul Klein*, formerly a vice-president at NBC and now president of Computer Television, Inc., explains how Dr. Gattegno's ideas were translated into a new vehicle for teaching reading through TV.

The new opportunities for reaching children through cable-TV are explored in a survey of the field by media researcher *Shawna Tropp*; and in a practical how-to-do-it piece by *G. Scott Wright, Jr.*, who documents a project in which kids are their own program producers. *John M. Culkin* outlines the conspiracy to have the schools train children to become critical viewers of film and TV.

The public debate about children's television is represented by *Evelyn Sarson* in her description of the consumer campaign initiated by Action for Children's Television (ACT), a group of which she is president. A further challenge to the broadcasting industry is given by *Dean Burch*, Chairman of the FCC.

A survey of European policies in children's programs, conducted for the European Broadcasting Union by *J. D. Halloran* and *P. R. C. Elliot* of the University of Leicester; and a selected reading list complete the issue.

This special number of *Television Quarterly* is not, as it could not have been, any kind of a definitive or complete look at a topic which will be with us as long as there exist both television and children. Hopefully it will add a few more ingredients to the stew.

# *SESAME STREET:* THE EXPERIENCE OF ONE YEAR

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JOAN GANZ COONEY

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Teachers, principals, school superintendents, school boards, parents, and the children themselves must no longer live with the impression that education and television are enemies, that classrooms are for learning, and that television is for entertaining. Teachers and television must become the best and most trusting of allies.

If television can sell extra millions of boxes of breakfast cereal, it can most certainly enhance the learning of the millions of young children who eat that cereal.

Although we are now looking at the future, not bemoaning the past, I want to submit one very disturbing fact: the United States and the great majority of people who live in it have pretty much ignored the obvious; they have watched their children gaze at television from the time they could barely hold their heads up, right through their teens and never—or rarely—realized what a great teaching tool TV could be.

Let's not continue this passive disaster.

Many within the field of education may consider television in general an educational interloper—an electronic Pied Piper that lures youngsters away from more worthwhile pursuits and leaves them dull-witted, passive, red-eyed little pitchmen for TV sponsors. That's been often heard. I won't completely agree or disagree, but I will say that education still has been the loser. Educators have got to

stop sitting back and stop making articulate moans about the bad influence of television, and get cracking. Teachers can and must begin making more demands on television producers for quality, useful, needed children's programs, both for home and classroom viewing. *Sesame Street* certainly has had an influence in improving this quality and in providing hope to many people that those who make and telecast children's programs are not beyond listening to them.

Lots of people like to believe that the only monsters bigger than the ones children watch on Saturday mornings are the television executives responsible for these shows. Those in the industry and interested in it know that it is not true. In addition to the Children's Television Workshop, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting is taking a great and deep interest in the future of television for children, and the commercial networks all are taking steps to improve the quality of their children's programming.

I'd like to refrain from using the expression "educational television." It's come to mean too many things to too many people, and lots of these things are not exactly exhilarating. Let's talk about television entertainment being a remarkable tool, a totally workable supplement to the learning American children are going to get from the nation's teachers.

There are 12 million children in the United States today between the ages of three and six. Few of those who are three and four receive any schooling. Couple that with the fact that between birth and age four, half of all growth in human intelligence occurs, and you can see what an immense responsibility we have—a responsibility that, ignored, could cheat literally millions of children—a responsibility that, tackled with honesty, ingenuity, and the proper resources, could mean far more fulfilled lives for these same millions of children.

By the time most pre-schoolers get to the first grade, they have watched some kind of television for at least 4,000 hours. The better quality that TV programming is, the better off will be the boy or girl, the teacher, the parent, and the society these children will subsequently enter into on adult terms.

I am suggesting, in fact urging, that the techniques developed by commercial television, the techniques which have kept our young as well as the adult population in front of the TV receiver for what is now two or three generations, must be taken and used as the most effective teacher's helper in history.

Don't be frightened by the word "entertainment." *Sesame Street* was and still is an experiment in television, an experiment that lifted, borrowed, and stole entertainment techniques to teach preschoolers at least beginnings of language and reading, numerical skills, reasoning and problem solving, awareness of self and the world around us, and some basic human values as well.

Briefly, this is how *Sesame Street* accomplished what it did.

First of all, we hired or sought advice from the best—the best researchers, educators, psychologists, and then proposed to marry them to the best producers, writers, directors, animators, and so on. The bride, the groom and especially the parents all were at least a little queasy before the wedding. It seemed like a wonderful idea, but it had never been done before. This all began more than two years ago and we realized only recently that the marriage is going to stick. Rather than have our TV people and educational research people stand back from each other at respectable professional distances, both groups learned the other's language. And that pretty much is what I am asking the nation's teachers of our young to do with television. Teachers don't automatically become first-rate television producers any more than one would expect a TV producer to become a first-rate teacher, but cooperation and mutual desire to blend the best of both areas of knowledge can and has worked wonders.

Educators and educational researchers have acted with both generosity and inspiration for us. I know that those who create TV programs can do the same for them and for the children whose development is in their hands.

*Sesame Street* was created for viewing at home. In its first season it reached some seven million children daily, in their homes and also in neighborhood viewing centers, Head Start and day-care centers, and in classrooms across the country up to and including the second grade.

The program is aimed at what for the want of a better word is called the "disadvantaged" child. There is no tidy label for these children. It is disturbing that the expression "disadvantaged child" is bandied about so much in the press. But it is also a hopeful sign, for it means that the country can no longer put a neat label on them and then forget about them.

We want to reach these children wherever they may reside, and the fact is that most of them live in the large urban centers of

America. We want to reach them for some very good and very troubling reasons.

Middle-class children and those above the middle class pretty much can fend for themselves intellectually. Their homes tend to be more stable; books, games, and parent-contact are more available. Good nursery schools are proliferating throughout the country to serve these children, and the vast majority can look forward to success in school.

It's another story with our poor children. Researchers have concluded that a given individual may end up with an IQ of 80 with a less than optimal environment, and the same person may end up with an IQ of 120 with a good environment.

These may just be numbers, but they translate very simply to tragedy, on one hand, and to fulfillment, on the other. We are optimistic enough to want to do everything we can to wipe out the tragedies. We also are realistic enough to know there's a long way to go and a great deal of human, technical, and financial resources that will have to be brought to bear.

Consider *Sesame Street* the gremlin in all this, if you will—a prodder, a talented little character who has the power to entertain and teach at the same time, and whose biggest job by far is to get a great number of other people and organizations to do the same. I suggest this analogy partly because so little is really known about how to use television for teaching.

*Sesame Street* begins its second season this fall and will continue for 30 weeks of daily programming. Our format will be the same as the one that worked for us in our first year, and our target audience will most certainly be the same, but there will be some innovations.

We are going to expand our curriculum, and we will have new production features aimed at: (1) preparation for reading, including specific emphasis on letter sounds and selected sight vocabulary; (2) more advanced numerical skills, including the teaching of sets and simple addition and subtraction; (3) a more comprehensive approach to the teaching of reasoning and problem-solving, and (4) new material designed to better reach key ethnic groups, specifically, the teaching of English vocabulary to Spanish-speaking children.

The Children's Television Workshop, which produces *Sesame Street*, also will increase its efforts to reach the children of the inner-city. We will mount major promotion and utilization efforts in a number of large cities in an attempt to expand our viewing audiences in areas where we feel it counts the most.

And we already have begun a feasibility study that is expected to lead to a TV program in the fall of 1971 beyond the current scope of *Sesame Street*. This new program will focus on the subject of reading, and perhaps other skills, and will be aimed at children from age seven to ten.

Now, we will take credit for tampering with the standards that until recently were generally associated with children's TV programming. We're not without pride over what we've done so far, but there's so much more to do.

Children's programs on the Public Television network, or the three big commercial networks, or on your local stations, or on the traditionally undernourished Instructional Television operations, must have a common goal: In accepting the limitations of television, we must also strive for what television can accomplish for our youngsters and not deprive them and ourselves of its benefits just because it hasn't been done before or just because that wasn't the way things were done when we were five years old.

Good quality TV for children is in competition with stale (and often ill-conceived) cartoon shows, ancient Westerns, and other vapid material. It needn't be that way. Nobody really, not even the toy and cereal makers, have any real investment in supplying our children with bad television. But for the resources to become available for something that is better, it has to be made known that we insist on something better for the nation's children.

To sum it all up, with new technology, with enthusiasm, and acceptance from our nation's teachers, we can put television to use on our own terms so that we end up further fulfilled in the job we do ourselves, and take joy and pleasure from this: that we have helped prepare our children, better than any other generation of the young in the past, to meet their world with confidence and skill—and that no child of the future ever again will suffer the adult mind of a moron just for the want of intellectual stimulation and interesting entertainment, when he was very young.

# TELEVISION AND INDIVIDUAL GROWTH

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FRED M. ROGERS

---

*Misterogers' Neighborhood* is more an adult-child relationship than a children's television show. It is an expression of our conviction that children grow best when they are encouraged by an understanding adult to fully develop their own uniqueness and creativity. And this doesn't mean becoming more like the adult. Children have the right to be childlike, before we superimpose on them the task of memorizing the adult world and all its symbols and systems.

They need first of all to recognize their own feelings—their fears and hopes—and to express them. But they can only do this when they trust that a caring adult will treat their feelings with respect. That is why the relationship is so vital. Because adults in our society aren't always available to children who are watching television, a caring adult must be on the screen. Only in the context of a sustained, consistent relationship can a child safely explore what scares him, what excites him, what satisfies him. To mediate this kind of discovery is the true calling of the teacher, not to cram their heads full of data.

Children seem to trust that we at the *Neighborhood* won't abuse their feelings just to generate excitement on the program. I think they recognize that we know the real drama is going on *within* them, and the task of the program is to make that inner drama a creative, growing experience for them.

You can't do that, of course, if you don't know what is going on inside of children. That's why I feel so strongly that those of us who communicate with children in the mass media must attempt to understand the physical, emotional, and sociocultural aspects of children's growth and development. We at the *Neighborhood* spend



many hours each week in consultation with child-development experts. We design and refine virtually every aspect of each program to try to reflect children's developmental needs and to encourage constructive but open-ended responses.

Each child's unique endowment will suggest what response is right *for him*, if we take care to provide a climate of understanding. That is why each individual program centers about a single theme of concern to young children. One day it might be fears of being separated from loved ones. Other days, we might consider typical childhood concern about getting a haircut; or controlling angry feelings.

Our original intent in creating specific programs has been well supported by viewers' reactions. For example, we did a program on children's concerns about haircuts, in which we made it clear that a barber cuts only hair and nothing else. Among the many letters we received was one from a rabbi in Buffalo who reported that his son, after seeing me get my hair cut on that program, announced that he was now ready for his first trip to the barber—something he had fought against until then.

We have been very gratified to find so many of our themes really seem to meet the needs we are trying to address. It has certainly deepened our conviction that this is a prime responsibility of children's programming. When children understand that others have these feelings too, and that someone will help them find creative ways to express them, they are learning something very important. Only when we have used the mass media to encourage their growth as unique individuals can we hope to break the cycles of the past and give birth to a more hopeful future.

\* \* \*

Statement by Fred M. Rogers  
to the Subcommittee on Communications of the  
Committee on Commerce of the United States Senate  
S. 1242—May 1, 1969

Each person in the world is an unique human being, and each has unique human potential. One of the important tasks of growing up is the *discovery* of this uniqueness: the discovery of "who I am" in each of us—of "who I am" in relationship to all those whom I meet. It is the people who first feed us, hold us, play with us, and talk with us who help us to begin to understand who we are and

how we may become. A child's very birth cries out for acceptance and care. Without these, he cannot survive.

Each one of us develops from one phase of growing to another: from lying still to turning over, from crawling and toddling, to walking and talking. Our emotional phases are just as well defined. These phases of human growth and development are lawful processes no one of which can be skipped over. It is my understanding of the importance of these processes, joined with my belief that man can begin to realize his own potential for constructive living, which governs the creation and production of my children's programming for Public Television.

Fifteen years ago, I helped launch this country's first community television station in Pittsburgh. My first children's program had a budget of \$30. With the help of scores of volunteers, and some large but many small contributions, we have been able to keep our station serving as the community facility for which it was intended. Now, with the support of National Educational Television and the Sears, Roebuck Foundation as well as all the affiliated stations who carry our series, our daily program is seen by millions of children and now has a budget of close to \$6,000. From \$30 to \$6,000 per program! But, in an industry in which \$6,000 buys less than two minutes of cartoons and \$156,000 is budgeted for one Saturday morning show, audience expectations are high. It is still by the good graces of many gifted people who care, that our programs attain the kind of quality which affords them a Peabody Prize as well as the highest rating in a test city such as Boston (all commercial programs included!).

A word of explanation about the present funding of our program: Any educational television station which desires it and can afford it subscribes to the NET children's package. This subscription costs \$100 per week, and NET in turn provides 45 minutes of children's television each weekday. (Some stations have used part of their grants from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting to help pay for this subscription.) I believe this arrangement for funding is unique in Public Television: a network, a foundation as well as all participating stations supporting together what each separately feels is a valuable expression of care for children and their families.

I hope to see more cooperative ventures such as ours emanating from different stations throughout the country. With time and adequate funds, each station should have the chance to develop its own unique expressions rather than being forced to spend the greatest percentage of its energies meeting its monthly payroll. Perhaps

there is someone in Denver who communicates especially well with the elderly; maybe someone in Hawaii who could produce a new interest for teenagers. There might be someone in Atlanta who could really relate to sports-minded fans, and someone in Maine who might bring poetry alive. Public Television must find the means to discover, build and support its own personalities. Maybe there's someone here in Washington who could help make Government procedures comprehensible to the layman—in a personal way.

Those of us who are already closely identified with educational television plus all the others who should grow with it will be the ones who can provide the real network of communication with the public; a network of interpersonal relationships which treats the viewers with the dignity they deserve. In whatever we produce we *must* communicate the feeling that we really *care* about our audience. No matter whether we present a soap opera or an automobile repair show, whether we develop pre-school instruction or teach flower arranging, *our aim must be the building of self-esteem and greater self-understanding in our viewers*. It is our viewers who are the public. It is they who have invited us to their homes. *If* we can accept the invitation with mutual pleasure, then we should accept. *If*, on the other hand, we want only to superimpose our own unexplored prejudices upon our hosts, then we should regret.

It is no secret that commercial children's television has reached an all-time low. Unfortunately for our children's sakes, this outlandish fare is being created by people who are obviously dipping into their own unresolved childhood fantasies and, without appropriate thought for their young audience or control for their own inner needs, they are spewing unbelievable amounts of trash onto our children. At best most of these programs are a waste of time; at worst, some of them encourage pathology.

There are mild overtures of change: the Saturday morning syndrome is being analyzed once again. But these overtures come as a result of outside pressures, seldom as a result of deep conviction. Since people grow from within—and that right slowly—unless some long-range education is offered to everyone charged with producing children's programming (no matter what the network) there will be no permanent change.

It is an utter emergency to think of the effects of television on our society. Television is consistently an intimate part of practically every family in which children are growing up all over this country.

If we care about what our people are becoming, we cannot disregard it, because, as we are seeing: what is potentially a positive influence for self-realization can just as well be used destructively.

My chief identity is that of a man who has chosen to work with children. My aim in programming is to establish an atmosphere in which children can grow in a healthy way. Each weekday on television I welcome and express my acceptance of the viewing child; exactly as he or she might be feeling. Although through television I cannot see the children, my meetings with them all over the country as well as our correspondence from them and their parents have made me acutely aware not only of their particular needs but more especially of their great diversity. There is diversity in family traditions and in colors of skin. There are boys and there are girls. Some are affluent and others are much less so; nevertheless all have privations of some kind, and all have special fulfillments. Each one brings a unique variation to the general themes of childhood. Through original songs, clearly defined fantasy and very straightforward age-appropriate dialogue, I encourage the discovery that *feelings about yourself and others are mentionable as well as manageable*. Along with such themes as "I Like You As You Are" and "Everybody's Fancy" sometimes I sing:

What do you do with the mad that you feel  
When you feel so mad you could bite?  
When the whole wide world seems oh so wrong  
And nothing you do seems very right?  
What do you do?  
Do you punch a bag?  
Do you pound some clay or some dough?  
Do you round up friends for a game of tag  
Or see how fast you go?

It's great to be able to stop  
When you've planned a thing that's wrong  
And be able to do something else instead  
And think this song:

I can stop when I want to  
Can stop when I wish  
Can stop, stop, stop any time  
And what a good feeling to feel like this  
And know that the feeling is really mine  
Know that there's something deep inside  
That helps us become what we can  
For a girl can be some day a lady  
And a boy can be some day a man.

That is all about "the good feeling of control" which each well person has. One of the aims of Public Television must be to help people recognize this good feeling and develop it from within. The commercial cartoon approach to the same issue seems to be: when you're angry with someone, do away with him rather than try to understand him; knock him down, flatten him out, and you won't have the problem any more! But if you should feel too guilty about it, you just wish him back, he reappears and everything's all right. Doesn't this sound like what some of our young people are saying to us now: that solutions are pat and easy, that there is one answer and there shouldn't be any problem finding it! Everyone in these halls knows that this is not so. The real world cannot obliterate its problems with one sweeping magical wand. It must deal with them one by one, using the control which is uniquely human to solve them. It is staggering yet wonderful to think of the creative energy which is going into various deliberations all through this building right at this very moment—and that's what democracy is all about; people living together in mutual respect.

Television is an accessory of family education. Unless children are told otherwise, they believe that their parents condone everything that they see on television. Programming thus becomes an intimate part of the family tradition. If programmers consistently present human life as something of little value; the authority as someone to be feared; the rich as people to steal from; and children as little adults whose main objective in life is to outwit their parents, then all this becomes part of our American family tradition.

I'm sure you are beginning to see why I feel that our job in Public Television is so crucial. We need the Government's support to produce and promote through every imaginable channel our country's healthy tradition, a tradition of honest people interacting with each other in an honest way, a tradition which shows that two men struggling hard to work out their anger with each other is far more dramatic than gunfire, that people's feelings *are* mentionable *and* manageable, and that each human being does have value: an amazing unique value with great potential for constructive living. I trust that you will find it possible to continue to encourage and to support the work of Public Television.

# TOWARDS A VISUAL CULTURE — *EXCERPTS*

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CALEB GATTEGNO

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## EDUCATING TELEVIEWERS BY EDUCATING TELECASTERS

Sometime before he became a regular television viewer, the writer had worked on films for education (including films for teachers' education), asking himself what were the characteristics of knowing through sight, distinguishing this way of knowing from other ways of knowing and marveling at its efficacy. He also had studied images and imagery, children's drawings, dreams of all ages, and found in the dynamics of imagery a great source of ideas and new thoughts.

What struck him particularly in these studies was that his functionings usually went in pairs—taste and smell, speech and hearing—but that sight was alone. While his hearing controlled his speech and his smell his taste, there was nothing to “tell” his sight, except itself, what he was seeing. In fact, we all know the endless discussions that arise when people pose such problems as: “Do we see the same green?” For another person to know what you see, you have to tell him in words into which you put whatever you can of your vision, and he has to interpret your words. There are no means for one person to see what another is seeing.

At least that was what the writer thought until he realized that man, by inventing the cathode ray tube of television, had made himself capable of making people see what he sees and conversely. He realized then that television was much more than an easy way of having for a fee or for nothing (or rather for putting up with commercials) all sorts of spectacles at home. Rather, it was a man-made device that provided each of us with a visual respondent for one's vision.

At once many of the marvelous applications of this gift presented themselves. Since one was capable of visualizing so much in one's own ordinary mental functioning and, prior to television, was able only (as is being done here again!) to verbalize about such visual perceptions, it seemed clear to the writer, who experienced a new sense of freedom as a result, that an extraordinary power had been added to man's existing powers, one that could affect millions at once and in chosen directions.

Sight, even though used by all of us so naturally, has not yet produced its civilization. Sight is swift, comprehensive, simultaneously analytic and synthetic. It requires so little energy to function, as it does, at the speed of light, that it permits our minds to receive and hold an infinite number of items of information in a fraction of a second. With sight, infinities are given at once; wealth is its description. In contrast to the speed of light, we need time to talk and to express what we want to say. The inertia of photons is nil compared to the inertia of our muscles and chains of bones.

Man has functioned as a seer and embraced vastnesses for millenia. But only recently, through television, has he been able to shift from the clumsiness of speech (however miraculous and far reaching) as means of expression and therefore of communication, to the powers of the dynamic, infinite visual expression, thus enabling him to share with everybody immense dynamic wholes in no time.

Even if for some time speech will remain the most common way of letting others know what we know, we can foresee the coming of an era where the processing of visual material will be as easy as our comprehension of talk but swifter because of the former's lack of inertia; and through its spatialization by electrons, we shall be able to share vast conscious experiences at once. Today large novels are needed for this.

The future is requiring that we learn to consider ever larger wholes in whatever social position we find ourselves. As the world becomes more easily accessible, and its cultures affect each other more profoundly, and more people become involved in all sorts of functions in one situation, etc., we are finding that the meeting of complex situations is more the rule than the exception. A visual culture obviously is the answer to such a trend (which it did not create).

It is already with us, but our habits of thought, our very use of words make it difficult to notice. When we are shown a picture that has a caption, we run to the caption, understand the words first, and

only then look and only for a second—at the picture. Observing visitors to a museum of art will make this plain to all.

### THE MEDIUM OF TELEVISION

The practical men now cling to illusions while the seers create the hardware and the objective forms that become the new culture, perhaps very different from ideals held for short times. This reversal of orders creates a sense of revolution, but in fact it is only life teaching men to live at peace with what is made explicit by the change of time into experience. . . . Time is given man by life. But to live is to exchange this time for as much experience as it can buy. Television, using simultaneously at least two forms of time—the one that at the speed of light immediately changes reality into an image, and the one that unrolls a story at its own pace and the pace of speech—television is telling man that he may now, by his genius and knowhow, act upon the transformations and provide perhaps an economy for the exchange of time into experience that will move more and more experience from the present randomness to an understanding that is true to reality. This we are slowly learning via the complex medium of television.

Education today can be conceived as the study of this economy, of this exchange of time for experience where the tests, rather than being high-fidelity reproduction of the status quo, of the static, are the number of transformations at one's disposal for generating a great deal of awareness out of the shortest impact.

Man does not need to prove to himself that his mind is dynamic—a cursory look at any of his functionings will convince him of that at once. What seems to be a new challenge to him is that, in becoming aware of his self, he is finding means of replacing the technique of looking behind his back at his past by looking at what he needs to do with himself to permit the future to act upon both the past and the present so that these gain significance and meaning for the process of living. . . . Television has a role to play in making this awareness commonplace and according it its right place in the process of visualizing the future to help mold the present.

### WHO ARE THE VIEWERS?

Using our list of the activities with which children two to five are involved, we can therefore look at these children as viewers whose interest will easily be captivated if we offer them:



- experiences that permit them to increase their acquaintance with the world of sensations and mutual play,
- experiences that extend their familiarity with what they are engaged spontaneously in knowing and mastering, such as the realms of sound, light, form, etc.,
- experiences that use the mastered skills as springboards towards the conquest of successive unknowns,
- unformulated experiences which spring in the minds of creative people but can be entered into directly without the preparation of scholastic study, as may be the case in the arts,
- experiences by proxy contained in stories or adventures that extend the realm of the actually feasible to the realm of the virtually feasible where makebelieve is the measure of the need to transcend the limitations of the world in which one finds oneself,
- experiences which, starting with what everyone has, take one to a metamorphosis of the world when new powers are being endowed to one.

Children's interest in commercials comes from another of the characteristics of growth. It is the only type of material that gives the child an opportunity to test whether his mind can exhaust the content of a complex situation. No other program is shown as often as are commercials, nor is any other so short and so focused on one aspect of life. Children view commercials with eagerness not because of their content (bras, cigars, trips, etc., which, for children, are transcendental) but because they are opportunities to learn about one's self, one's memory, one's insights into the form of a message, the way material is used to obtain some ends, the order in which images follow each other, the words that are used and uttered.

## TELEVISION AND EDUCATION

A scientific enquiry may be entertaining if the presentation of it mobilizes the curiosity of viewers and keeps them in contact with the mystery of the studied area, thereby generating in them feelings which are genuine, even though they may be of awe or respect for what lies beyond their ordinary life.

It will be this definition of entertainment that we shall use in all that follows. Thus so long as we can induce someone to look and to keep him looking, we shall conclude that he is being entertained by what we are showing him.

As guides in our attempt to be entertaining, we shall:

- respect the means viewers use while viewing,
- respect the viewer's rules of participation, which we maintain are based on what they are making sense of at the stage they are in,
- leave a great deal of the expansion of the situations presented for the viewers to do on their own after viewing,
- involve each program, however short or long, in the realities of the various dialogues viewers have with the various universes of experience offered man.

That is: we shall keep each program linked with the senses, the emotions, the masteries achieved, and the functions the viewers are testing, all of which represents the past and present of the viewers. A hint of the future is provided insofar as more can be drawn out from every situation. To hint at the unformed, un-lived, unlimited is to be more realistic, truer to life, than is the illusory offering of complete coverage.

Because a new culture is emerging, one that is trying to reconcile what can be reconciled from among all the existing cultures, we are now looking at man as the maker of cultures rather than as their product, at knowing rather than knowledge.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The man of the new culture is ready to revise any and every one of his thoughts, ideas, attitudes, ideals, because he knows that his knowledge depends on his knowing and that this in turn depends on where he has taken himself on the road of perception. Because relativity is a universal attribute he has perceived in himself, in his knowing, and in what stands for his universe, he approaches every moment of life as one that is what it is, though he cannot say quite what.

To perceive a reality that changes in time is to perceive the real reality, not an unreliable set of illusions. The illusion is to believe in (and to believe one sees) an unchangeable or unchanging reality, for there is not a single example of such stability within or without.

The television set, once lit with its images, is a reminder of what we actually live in, a world in flux, an indefinitely renewable universe capable, once we become one with an image by surrendering ourselves to it, of generating a constant renewal of consciousness by acting on the sensitive springs within the viewer.

We now have the facility of knowing our self as time and to live its transformation into experience. Mastering the economy of the transformation of time into experience is one of the main jobs for the man of the new culture.

Looking at how we can educate through television, we find that we must see to it that as many people as possible recognize television for what it is. This is task number one.

When those who understand that television is a preeminent channel towards the visual culture are strong enough to be heard, they will display in their being the characteristics that will make them attractive, inspiring, and capable of generating change among others. Task number two is hence the formation of an elite of the new culture in the sense that some of those who know television for what it is find in themselves the means of expression that are conceived by others as a power worth possessing.

Task number three consists of the demonstration

- that those who are not yet committed to the values of the present cultures will not need much in order to become people of the new culture,
- that as people of the new culture they will function so much more easily in a much richer universe than their fathers did,
- that they will achieve returns for their thoughts and actions that are rarely realized at present.

From all this it will appear to all that the new culture is preferable to the previous ones.

The men of the new culture will remain uncommitted because the new culture, unlike previous ones, does not demand identification with one vision, one form, one static reality.

As to the people who, in the process of receiving their education, have been made to give up the consciousness of their role in grasping reality, it may be task number four to re-educate them. . . .

Whether we will be a handful or a multitude who can think together of what has happened to the world since the old cultures have adopted television for some of what it offers, we shall know soon enough.

# POP-UP

## A Solution to America's Reading Problem

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PAUL KLEIN

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On Saturday, August 22, 1970, education quietly entered a new era. On that date WNBC-TV and WKYC-TV, two NBC-owned stations, inserted one-minute reading films into their normal Saturday morning children's programs.

NBC has purchased these films, which are called *Pop-Up*, for play on a network basis. They are to be inserted into all NBC's children's programs replacing one minute of program content (not commercial content) and with no commercials allowed in these minutes. NBC is awaiting test results before it schedules the films nationally.

These reading films do not ask a child to "pay attention" nor do they provide an outlet for the mother who is guilty about sending off her child to watch TV. The films respect the child and allow him to learn to read by himself (the way he learned to speak) and at his own pace.

The whole thing started about ten years ago when Dr. Caleb Gattegno, who believes that we *owe* children the right to be responsible for their own learning, developed *Words in Color*, a system of reading that allows children to "figure out" reading by themselves through the use of color coding the same sounds and different sounds that apply to a sign or group of signs.

With *Words in Color* a teacher points out groups of symbols and the child makes the sounds, combination of sounds, sentences, etc. The teacher must subordinate himself or herself to the learner in order to accomplish the feat without "breaking" the child. The

breaking of a child takes place when the teacher attempts to impart knowledge (talking, lecturing) to and retrieve knowledge (testing) from the child. The child *stops* working with the powers he has and instead works either with his memory or drops out.

This year Dr. Gattegno decided to bypass the middle man (the teacher) and go directly to the learner by adapting *Words in Color* to television. Television eliminates the need to train teachers in the *Subordination of Teaching to Learning*<sup>1</sup>; the medium itself allows the child to “figure out” reading in the same way he “figured out” how to speak his native tongue.

There are people, educators in fact, who believe that children actually learn how to speak by *imitating* their parents: “Say ‘mommy’—look at how my mouth moves!” Yet, these people are constantly confronted by children who in their early talking stages say, “I broked it.” Who is the child imitating when he says “broked”?—surely not his parents. He, in fact, *never* heard the word “broked” but has instead figured out the past tense himself.

When a non-reader, a broken child, is viewing his favorite Saturday morning program he is not involved in his school problems and he is not fighting his teacher. He is relaxed, he is learning or in a position to learn. When Pop-Up pops up in this environment the child can go about figuring out what is going on on the screen. He is not “prepared” by an announcer (teacher) who says “Pay attention” or “Figure this out” or “This is an important reading lesson; you won’t get a good job unless you learn to read.”

We tell him nothing. He doesn’t know he is reading beforehand. He figures out first that it is reading. And because this is television and we cannot *predict* when a child will be watching, and because different children watch at different times, a child sees these reading lessons out of “sequence.” This means he may see the “hardest” or most advanced one first and the “easiest” one last. However, because of the use of the commercial format the child will see each Pop-Up many times in random order—just as he heard words and sentences, not necessarily in their “easiest” to “hardest” order when he was learning how to speak. So he gets to figure out for himself which Pop-Up constitutes the beginning, middle, etc.. In this way the child gets to *own* reading, instead of merely being exposed to it.

With Pop-Ups there is no testing. The child has nothing to fear

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<sup>1</sup>*Subordination of Teaching to Learning* is the system devised by Dr. Gattegno that prevents teachers from “teaching” and allows learning to take place.

by learning the stuff out of the traditional sequence. He can learn at his own pace with his own idiosyncrasies.

Only eight minutes of *Words in Color* have been adapted to Pop-Ups, and the child who figures out how to read from them won't be an accomplished reader. However, the child will be given, at home in a native and relatively safe environment, the *confidence* and *criteria* to overcome the failure he was experiencing in school.

When a child does not read he fails *everything* in school because schools are print-oriented. There is, of course, no reason for the non-reader to fail mathematics since mathematics can be learned without reading, but not in our schools. This failure in everything because of reading inability kills the child's confidence almost completely. He is moved on in school (what else can we do with him) and he continues to bear failure year after year. We must, therefore, *recreate* his natural ability to learn by allowing him to figure out for himself that he can succeed as judged by the highest court in the land, himself.

Pop-Ups, only the beginning of using TV as the tool of the learner, convey in only eight minutes the following principles of reading, *without* saying they are doing it and *without demanding* that the child memorize the points and "give it back to us":

1. Connection of a sound with a sign.
2. Left to right and horizontal principle of reading.
3. Top to bottom principle.
4. Repeat of sign correlates with repeat of sound. Different signs *may* correspond with different sounds.
5. Signs close together—sounds close together.
6. Consonants are blended with vowel sounds to produce syllables (and words). Consonants *only sound with* vowels.
7. *Same* sign can correspond with *different* sounds (buzzing and sharp *s*).
8. *Different* sign can correspond with same sounds (*ss* same sound as *s*).
9. Reading with appropriate inflection, emphasis and intonation (3 ways of saying "stop pat stop").

But the true beauty of the Pop-Up system is, as they say in sophisticated television circles, the *short form*. We do not ask children to sit through a whole education program in order to learn something. If we did he wouldn't sit. Or, if we wanted to trap him into sitting through a program, it would have to be an entertainment program

to hold his attention. With Pop-Ups we use the talent of the entertainment producers to get and hold the kids, and we use the commercial format, short and un-tune-out-able, to present the learning criteria.

Of course, foreign language, mathematics, music, etc. are now within our grasp, or at least children can get the criteria from TV that they need to continue to or re-start to learn with confidence.

# CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS ON CATV

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SHAWNA TROPP

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The cable television industry proudly celebrated its twenty-first birthday early in June with a full-dress Palmer House convention entitled "CATV Comes of Age." With maturity came new responsibility: the FCC has charged cable operators with the task of "originating" programs "in the public interest" by April, 1971. A variety of hardware and software dealers had descended upon the hotel, and, beneath the noisy chumminess in the hot corridors and the adjacent streets, one could sense a deep anxiety.

Should cable operators be in the programming business at all? This issue has been discussed cogently by others, notably Ralph Lee Smith in "The Wired Nation" (*The Nation*, May 18, 1970, a special issue devoted to CATV). Do cable operators want to be in on origination? Fortunately or unfortunately, most of them do. Long before the FCC ruling many owners had opted for such limited programming as local news to heighten the attraction of the service. Now all operators with more than 3,500 subscribers must originate, and the ruling is not likely to be changed, although constructive implementation will depend heavily on Federal clarification of such issues as copyright and "pay-TV." What kind of programming, local or syndicated, should be cable-cast? Here lies much of the anxiety. The cable operator wants to make money, to attract sponsors as well as subscribers. Yet this hard fact need not necessarily conflict with the view of the idealist, i.e., programming for those diverse, frag-



mented audiences whom broadcast television cannot or does not serve.

This concept has vastly different meanings for the affluent resident of a big city, bombarded by a mushrooming host of information and entertainment stimuli, and for the viewer on a lonely farmstead—to say nothing of the suburbanite, the citizen of a small college town, or the denizen of an urban “ghetto,” each curiously isolated from “the action” trumpeted at any given moment by the mass or underground media.

Yet there are at least two broad types of programming needed by virtually all these viewers. The first, of course, is “community development.” The coverage of local events, the exposure of local social services, the highlighting of local problems and resources, the airing of local issues and local views on national issues. All these services can stimulate the growth of a community from the aggregate of individuals who happen to live in a particular area. Communication and community are linked by more than etymology, as are city, citizen, and civilization. Most CATV operators agree to this in principle and practice their conviction at least by providing some form of local news service. As Scott Wright indicates, this kind of programming can easily be produced by young people, and stimulates their sense of social responsibility. The second clear, pervasive need is programming for children. With the exception of a few “senior citizen” settlements in the Southwest, it is hard to conceive of a market area without children, the most neglected and exploited segment of the broadcast audience. For good, ill, or naught, CATV happened to “come of age” in 1970, the Year of the Child.

Given a well-equipped studio, an eager and minimally trained technical crew and, hopefully, a remote coverage van, it is easy to originate many an hour of good, local, topical programming with a variety as great as the concerns of each citizen in the franchise area. Good programs for *children* (age one to ten) are another story—often a difficult and expensive one.

Children’s appetites, voracious and catholic, cannot be satisfied by low-budget studio shows alone. The young audience has long devoured complex, costly animation programs shot in exotic locations, and a good deal of drama, serial or “special” over broadcast channels. However good or ghastly these productions, they are all expensive—far too expensive for any local cable-caster to produce.

Providing this kind of costly programming means syndication, and syndication could mean that CATV for children would become a carbon copy of broadcast kid-vid.

Fortunately, two developments may militate against this possibility. First, even if the advent of *Sesame Street* has not made all things possible, it certainly has showed a great number of parents that the perpetuation of tired cartoon fare is intolerable and that the "baby-sitting" function of television can be immeasurably enriched. Since CATV subscribers pay directly for at least a part of what they get, they have far more potential power than broadcast viewers. They can threaten the local-station manager with cancellations or simply refuse to buy the cable hook-up.

Second, and perhaps more important, the cable operators have begun to resist the temptation of becoming shoddy duplicates of their broadcast counterparts, at least with respect to programming for adults. In many systems which had begun "originating" (providing non-broadcast programming) before the FCC ruling, old films and tired serials were recently taken off the air and replaced by coverage of local events. The CATV Program Development Convention in April, which drew syndicators as diverse as Bingo vendors and National Educational Television, was a dismal failure. Software dealers also fared badly at the National Convention in June. There the consensus of opinion was summed up by a California operator who said, "I'd rather look bad doing my own thing than put bad canned shows on." Coming of age, the industry had decided at least what it didn't want to be. What it will become, particularly for children, remains to be seen.

At present, offerings for youngsters are meager and, in the immediate future, kid-vid on the cable will probably be confined to the following:

- 1) Cartoon fare, old or new.
- 2) Instructional programming produced in conjunction with the local school.
- 3) The studio parent-surrogate series featuring a local version (usually female) of *Captain Kangaroo* or *Misterogers' Neighborhood*.
- 4) New syndications.

The last two categories require some amplification.

The studio program is an interesting phenomenon, in part because it recalls the simplicity and spontaneity of broadcasting's early

days and in part because it actively involves local kids. *Indigenous* and *intimate*: these are the wellsprings of the local studio program. Its budget is also modest, rarely exceeding \$200 per half-hour. Unfortunately, this type of program is still rare. Existing rural and urban models do not differ too much, but each deserves a commendation for effort.

A Wisconsin CATV system, Beloit Community Television Services, Inc., has hired a local lady puppeteer to become a teacher-guide on the cable. In *Tree House*, a weekly half-hour repeated once, "Miss Faith," a gentle, serene mother, spins tales from a story-board, engages in colloquies with two hand-puppets, and invites local youngsters, ten and under, to talk about their experiences and exhibit their own drawings for a studio bulletin board entitled the Picture Gallery. Alphabet blocks, local flora and fauna, and common household objects also find their way into *Tree House*. Except for the children's contributions, Miss Faith writes her own material and makes or collects her own props; the puppets are manipulated by her 16-year-old son. Most important, though, is contact with the local kids, the children of 6,100 subscribers. Not only do many appear on the program; Miss Faith corresponds with many more, encouraging them to express themselves visually and verbally. The program recently attracted the sponsorship of a local dairy. Understandably, and rightly, the owner of the Beloit system, American Television and Communications Corporation, is eager to see this model duplicated on its 34 other outlets.

The New York City version of the children's studio program is TelePrompTer's *Leslie the Shreve*, a half-hour taped daily, available morning and afternoon to the youngsters of 25,000 highly diverse subscribers in upper Manhattan. Unlike the serene, middle-aged, reality figure of Miss Faith, Leslie Shreve is a young, extremely charming and pretty, benevolent witch. Pets, plants, pots and the alphabet are all present on the studio set, and Leslie leaves the studio occasionally to do an hour's Special at some city location which her young viewers would do well to visit, but her staple is fantasy. She re-writes traditional folk and fairy tales, extracts useful maxims from them, and projects these in song. Her rapport with youngsters is electric; she answers all her heavy mail, encouraging and exposing a variety of youthful projects, and often brings her viewers onto the set.

In a literal age characterized by racism, inflation, recession and the daily crises which attend the urban implosion, Leslie can be, and

has been, faulted for her emphasis on fantasy. Given the rising tide of black and Latin consciousness throughout New York, it is unfortunate that she is blonde and blue-eyed and that most of the tales she tells derive from Northern European culture. Yet, as Freud said, children (among others) must be given some means of enjoying their fantasies without fear or shame, and New York City doubtless needs to be invested with some trappings of pleasant magic these days. A benevolent witch who provides some contact with and recognition for a good number of youngsters may not be altogether "relevant," but she satisfies a clear need.

However, other needs abound, needs which require the financial resources of a network or national syndicator. Some of the syndications now being developed for cable nod in the direction of the intimacy and interaction provided by a Miss Faith or a Leslie the Shreve. Bowing to the concept of local origination, a few cable syndicators are offering packages of sets, scripts, training services, and film segments to be used in conjunction with a local personality. Although most of these packages are now designed for adult viewers, several will be available for children as well during the next couple of years. A few syndication houses have taken cognizance of *Sesame Street* and have turned to educators for help. A group called Creative Associates in Grand Rapids, Michigan is trying to marry imaginative teachers and producers. National Telesystems Corporation, the California-based Dick Clark company, is producing a daily live-action and cartoon series to teach reading, arithmetic and problem-solving skills to children under eight. This *Green Valley Cable Nursery School* is based on one of the few compensatory learning programs judged successful by the United States Office of Education and will be supplied to CATV operators with a supplementary kit of workbooks, games and other materials for active involvement on the part of the child. The special incentive for the cable system owner is income from the sale of the kits. However, the kids may well reap significant benefits, too. Looking to an almost utopian future, Lloyd Morrisett, chairman of the Children's Television Workshop, looks upon the development of CATV as a key factor in creating an entire network devoted to children's programming during the next decade—a staggering concept.

The thought of even one channel for children is staggering enough. Yet it is a service which TelePromPTer may well offer within the next year. It would doubtless take a long time to produce enough good new material to fill fourteen hours every week—the

modest proposal which ACT has made to broadcasters. However, cable-casters could satisfy the desire for good programming *now* with existing productions. Their sources are as diverse and fragmented as the aggregate of CATV subscribers, yet the cable industry could find few better missions than coordinating these productions and bringing them to children.

Basically, existing materials fall into the following categories:

- 1) The fine short films currently marketed to schools and educational public service groups by multi-media publishers and by smaller distributors.
- 2) The wealth of film-cum-television (much of it wordless) aired by foreign broadcasting organizations whose government mandates call for fine programming for children.
- 3) Films made by children themselves.

Little of this material falls naturally into traditional broadcast time-slots. Nor does it conform to standard notions of series. Yet, beyond a slavish imitation of American broadcast conventions, there is no reason for the cable-caster to supply his young viewers with serials rigidly tailored to 15-, 30-, or 60-minute time-slots. European kids don't seem to mind watching all kinds of "specials"—even those which are seven or 22 minutes long.

True, it is extremely convenient to have 26 half-hour or hour programs for a season, and children do look forward to seeing a particular personality regularly on the video screen. But surely American ingenuity can rise to the challenge of packaging diverse productions together and providing background information for a local host. Indeed, precedents have been set by the networks themselves: CBS Children's Film Festival comprised diverse foreign productions of different lengths.

It is also true that European productions have become very expensive (foreign union and copyright problems dwarf our own) and that "educational" film distributors are geared to selling or renting prints to schools, libraries, museums and professional associations which differ radically from television organizations, broadcast or broadband. These films should and could reach a home audience. Packaged properly, they might be sold to cable-casters at a fixed charge per subscriber per quarter, half and whole hours or approximations thereof.

CATV need not confine its children's programming to "professional" productions either. With the help of a few sympathetic

adults, six-year-olds have produced animated films which fulfill a variety of functions: they satisfy the child's desire for self-expression in a major contemporary art form, they provide superb research material for adults, and they also furnish fine entertainment for other children. A few such films can be obtained easily. Two organizations are beginning to collect and distribute films made by children and youth: the Yellow Ball Workshop (62 Tarbell Avenue, Lexington, Mass. 02173) and the Young Director's Center (267 West 25th Street, New York, New York 10001). More importantly, though, other children can be encouraged to produce films just as they now produce paintings, sculpture and puppets. The expertise of film instructors can be transmitted by cable and complemented by a local workshop—a community young filmmakers teleclub, if you will. The same concept can be extended to other crafts and sciences as well and thereby transform the passivity which broadcast kid-vid has fostered into a powerful stream of activity. Regular group viewing with follow-up activity has been confined largely to closed-circuit school television in the United States. But it is a common community function abroad, particularly in settlements far from a major city or in "ghetto" areas of a city. Granted, these teleclubs have generally developed under government auspices in countries whose sole or major broadcasting organization is publicly supported, and they are unlikely, expensive propositions for the private broadcasters. But they may be feasible—even profitable—for the locally oriented cable-caster.

The foregoing suggestions, wild and wooly, represent only a few of the directions in which CATV might begin to serve children within the next year or two or three. Professional producers with fresh ideas for the very young should also, of course, be able to find their place on the cable, but this looks unlikely at the moment. The cable system owner is a conservative who will not put money "up front" for new, unconventional programming until he is assured of a market for it. Hopefully, his fear of repeating the shortcomings and failures of broadcasting, particularly with respect to the newly discovered audience of children, will steer him towards a variety of innovations. If subscribers and advertisers do respond enthusiastically to fine existing materials on which he can lose nothing, cable syndicators and networks will be amenable to financing new talent. As Joan Ganz Cooney has pointed out, neither national nor local advertisers have any vested interest in supplying children with pap or gore.

To hark back to the theme of this year's CATV convention, coming of age is both tortuous and joyous. For many a 21-year-old today, it no longer means the necessity of settling into a traditional pattern of responsibilities, but instead, freedom to experiment without formal parental sanctions. However pretty, analogies between individuals and collective bodies are usually ridiculous. Yet the cable industry is well aware that it must differentiate itself from its parent, broadcasting. It may not be too fanciful to suggest that CATV will not come of age until it learns to serve the child.

# THE ELECTRIC KIDS

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G. SCOTT WRIGHT, JR.

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"I didn't know they made cameras that small," said actress Bethel Leslie during a videotaped interview recently. Her reference was to the Sony camera being used for the show. Out of politeness she omitted adding, "And I didn't know they made *cameramen* that small either!"

For the size and the age of the personnel was actually more remarkable than their equipment. The entire crew was under 20—the head cameraman was 15. The studio was in Newburgh, New York—as unlikely a place for a television studio as Menlo Park, New Jersey was for a movie studio. But movies as we know them started in the Edison studios in Menlo Park in 1903. It is possible that the studio in Newburgh may be the beginning of a whole new movement in television.

The day-glo orange doors on Ann Street read "ECCO Studio." Prior to last fall, these doors led to the stage of the Ritz Theatre—a try-out theater for the New York vaudeville circuit for many years. But the proscenium arch is filled with the wall of a movie theater and the stage has been unused for some time. But no longer.

The doors lead to a lounge, newsroom, office, film-editing room, audio and video control rooms, and the ECCO studio itself—a 30 by 50 feet all-purpose stage area. If close inspection reveals minor errors in the construction of these rooms, it may be attributed to the fact that it was the first major contracting job for its builder—a 17-year-old school drop-out. Considering the beating it takes from 20 to 40 kids a day, it is a remarkable job.

On any given day there may be a news conference, an audiotaped session for radio, film editing, and one or two television productions, with on-location activity thrown in. The earlier comment by Bethel



Leslie was videotaped as part of a series called *ECCO Guest*—a series which has included interviews with Shepard Coleman, musical director of “Hello, Dolly” and “Golden Boy”; Ken Hyman, photographic collaborator with Margaret Mead and Lyndon B. Johnson; Edmund Carpenter, anthropologist and co-author with Marshall McLuhan of *Explorations in Communication*; and Charles Weingartner, co-author of *Language in America* and *Teaching as a Subversive Activity*. All the shows are made entirely by the kids.

ECCO (an acronym for Experiment in Community Communications Operation; and meaning “behold” in Italian, leading Federico Fellini to conclude that Newburgh must be a wonderful city to have such a beautifully named project) is the product of the educational theories of Leo C. Irrera, Art Director of the Newburgh public schools, and the writer, formerly professor of art at South Carolina State College and The University of Georgia and now Director of ECCO. It is an outgrowth of a proposal for a workshop for teachers in understanding electronic media designed by Irrera and John Culkin, Director of the Center for Understanding Media in New York City. The original workshop was strangled by the red tape of the local school board, but ECCO is alive and well in its unique multi-media studio. The project is conducted by the Center for Understanding Media and is financed through a grant of \$68,000 from the Ford Foundation.

It is one thing to study about media in school; it's quite another thing to fill four hours (soon to be seven) of TV time a week. ECCO kids do it, and, through the cooperation of Mr. Richard Sabino of the local TelePrompTer Cable Television Company, their shows are sent out over cable to a potential audience of 25,000.

Use of the cable facilities allows an unusual degree of flexibility in programming. When Andy Protter, a 16-year-old reporter, came back from Washington, D.C. with an hour and twenty minutes of tape on the most recent peace demonstrations, the entire show was broadcast. The following week another hour and ten minutes showed the steel workers' pro-Nixon demonstration in New York. Both shows had the quality which used to be found in live television. The camera, because of its size, was in the crowd rather than on a platform 20 feet above the crowd, and the length of the programs allowed the viewer to participate in the event rather than to see only the highlights. These combined to give the sense of the event's happening while the viewer was watching.

The relationship between ECCO and its cable outlet is a symbiotic one: cable gives the kids an outlet for their work, and the kids give the cable company original programs of interest to the community. In light of the recent FCC ruling that cable companies which serve over 3,500 homes must start originating shows in 1971, ECCO and ECCO-type projects may be one of the most economical and interesting solutions to a difficult problem. Few cable companies can afford to set up full-time production studios. Few kids have access to television facilities and air-time. The two can help solve each other's problems.

Another interesting sidelight is the relationship between the movie theater-owner, the radio station, and the manager of the cable company. Although each normally competes with the others for audience or advertising, in Newburgh, for the sake of the ECCO kids, they have all cooperated with one another. Richard Sabino of TelePrompTer has given air-time and technical assistance; Stan Levinson, owner of Cinema I and II, has given the studio space and offered to show any 16mm films the kids make as a part of his regular movie program; and Wes Richards and Mike Delany of radio station WGNY have aired promotions for ECCO TV programs and are working with the kids on making regular radio shows. They have a common belief that ECCO is good for the kids, the community, and their businesses.

The range of TV programs extends from a parody of the late-night talk shows; through experiments with feedback patterns, coverage of local events such as the rescue squad's mock disaster, and city council meetings; to interviews with local people of interest and celebrities from outside the area. There has been a program on drug abuse (later shown to church groups and the PTA Council by request), and one on anti-pollution made for a local I.B.M. office. The kids have videotaped applicants for the U.N.; the funeral of Dr. Hall Johnson; the Democratic candidates for Governor and Congress, and Walter Cronkite in his newsroom office.

The Walter Cronkite interview was the result of the kids being invited by Mr. Cronkite to watch him put together his network news show. ECCO has also been invited to participate in the making of the John Batholomew Tucker show, *A.M. New York*, on WABC-TV. They were invited to be in the NBC election-returns studio during the primary elections. Arrangements are being made for more of the kids to be involved with more of the shows on all of the networks.

Who are these kids, and what do they want to say? In these days of everyone with a message trying to grab a microphone or stick his face in front of a TV camera, it could reasonably be assumed that ECCO would attract and even be controlled by radical groups. It hasn't and isn't. The make-up of the membership is as varied as the community itself (and the make-up of the community is economically, socially, and racially a microcosm of larger American cities—one reason for its being chosen for the project). The kids walk, drive beat-up cars, or are driven in Lincoln Continentals to the studio. They come in all degrees of intelligence, sensitivity, creativeness, and motivation. Their colors range from dark brown to pale pink, their ages from 10 to 20 (if you don't count Willie, who is pushing four-and-a-half and functions as a combination mascot and pain-in-the-neck), and their backgrounds range from Southern rural, through Northern suburban, to recent immigrant from Italy.

This mixture (it exists because ECCO is open to all kids, and, whatever else they may be, they are all kids of the second-half of the 20th Century) has resulted in ECCO's being as broad in program content as any studio could be. Some kids use the television, audiotape, and film facilities as abstract artistic media. Others perceive them as vehicles for drama. Still others record the news with them. Most, however, have no message or direction. They are simply kids who have grown up in a world of electric communications, and ECCO gives them their electric pens and pencils. Some doodle, some draw, some write, and some just chew on them. But all feel comfortable with them.

It would be a distortion to say that every kid who has joined ECCO (there are over 115; it costs nothing, but they all must have parental permission) has instantly and permanently become a producer of shows. Some sign up and never come back for their membership cards. But these are balanced by those who have spent between 30 and 40 hours a week for the entire eight months ECCO has been in operation. An average might be estimated to be eight hours per week for 40 or 50 members.

As none of these kids comes with prior experience, each starts at the bottom. Although there are occasional sessions on use of the equipment—taught by experienced kids—most learning comes through hanging around the cameramen or technical directors and asking questions. After the questions comes the use of a camera (with luck, having a patient director on the other end of the ear-phones) and, given enough courage, directing or producing a show.

A typical television production in the studio begins with the producer or director putting together the set (for some reason ECCO has no set designers yet) with the lighting man. The lights are placed and the cameras are balanced. If the director is an old-hand (through experience, not age—remember, *everything* in the production is done by kids), he will go through some of the major shots with his cameramen. An average crew consists of a director, a technical director, a floor manager, and two cameramen.

The control room is glass-enclosed and all verbal communication between director and crew is through earphones. The programs are taped on half-inch Sony video-corders. The ECCO control room has three video-corder decks, four monitors (three for cameras and one for the final image), a sound mixer, and a special effects generator for fades and wipes.

The shows are titled after the taping (it seems to be impossible to think far enough ahead to set up titles to be recorded at the time of the show) and stored for future use. The week's programming is made up by the Program Director (a job which ranges from making coffee and sound systems to representing ECCO at the recent National Cable Television Association convention in Chicago). ECCO's Program Director is Paul Woidke, an 18-year-old who left a cast of "Up With People" to become the only permanent staff member other than the Director of the project.

ECCO is an experiment. It is an experiment in education. It is an experiment in cable-casting. It is an experiment in community communications. And it is an experiment which is working. The Newburgh ECCO is funded only temporarily. The creators hope that the community and the television industry, particularly the cable companies, will see the potential values, both human and economic, in extending the project.

Who knows, maybe every community in the country will one day be able to tune in their own kids, and the generational communications gap may begin to close. In Newburgh, New York the ECCO kids are plugged in and turned on. And they are electric.

# OF BIG MEDIA AND LITTLE KIDS

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JOHN M. CULKIN

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It is the age of the moving image. Photography got it started. Film got it moving. Television got it into the living room. Kids<sup>1</sup> like the moving image. Some of us who like kids are trying to improve the quality of that viewing experience by working with both the producers and consumers of those moving images. What follows are the motives, strategy and tactics of the conspiracy.

Many of today's children are in front of a television set short days after the cutting of their umbilical cords because parents find that "TV keeps them quiet." By the time today's American children start elementary school they have already seen several thousand hours of television. They have been to the moon, to Sesame Street, to commercials, to assassinations, to cartoons, to riots, to Vietnam, to lots of places. By the time they have graduated from high school some 12 years later, they will have spent 12,000 hours in the classroom and 15,000 hours (two full years) watching television. And to supplement their living-room diet, we feed them the moving image in theaters, in the classroom and at Expos.

Any parent or teacher can add to the lore of anecdotal material generated by this massive viewing experience. There are reports of children whose first spoken words are "Budweiser," "Namath," "Clairol" and "Axion" and there are quotes like: "We always have off when there's an assassination." "I saw a man walking on the

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<sup>1</sup>My five-year-old nephew has reminded me frequently and ineffectually that... "A kid is a young goat."

moon." "The dog died of cancer? Did he smoke?" "What is a pre-marital relationship?" "Grandpa died? Who shot him?" "Mommy, are we live or on tape?"

This last quote is more than vaguely reminiscent of a warning delivered 2,500 years ago by Plato. In his famous analogy of the cave, he pictured a generation of people whose lives were spent watching shadows on a wall. Later on they rejected the outside world because it didn't correspond to their shadows. Television, anyone?

Today's students are literally immersed in a sea of communications. One doesn't have to be a card-carrying McLuhanite to acknowledge the pervasive presence of media and messages of all kinds. It has always made good sense for people who live on water to learn how to swim. Our interest in children now has to be translated into an active program which helps them to process this vast input of visual information and vicarious experience. As my colleague, Bob Geller, has observed: "It is precarious to be vicarious in the age of Aquarius."

Creating active and selective viewers is the essence of the conspiracy. Its premise is that one can acquire good taste by tasting good things. So we want kids to see, discuss and analyze the best within the media. It can be done in school, in a theater, at home, in a community group. Film is the place to begin because it can be programmed and discussed at the convenience of the group and can be reshown if the group desires. It's important. It's fun. A few pioneers are doing it. Everyone should be doing it.

There are a few things to be learned from our ten years of experience in working with teenagers. For several years now the high schools have begun to develop critical viewers for film and television through units and courses within the curriculum and through festivals, assembly programs, clubs and seminars outside the classroom. Community groups, theaters and public libraries have also gotten into the act. But these teenage movie teachers are ambitious folks. They want to go on to higher things. And these days higher things means lower education. Even the ladies at the Laundromat know that what happens in the early stages of child development is what really counts in the learning experience.

There is a whole litany of experts whose advocacy can be invoked to support the cause, but it might be easier on all of us merely to listen to the remarks of some film-study students in the elementary grades of Evanston, Illinois:

"It would give the child a chance to cool off."

"The children would have something to enjoy one morning a week."

"Yes, because I would like to discuss with the class and it is a nice rest from the work of a teacher that I would have."

"Yes. Give kids some fun and teach them to observe more closely."

"I just like to watch them because I like movies. I didn't learn anything."

"Movies are not as bad as some people say they are."

"Information, laughter."

"I think I learned a lot in what other people think and what I think I learned to discuss and understanding other people and sharper observation."

"To see what is in the world."

"How to be picky."

"I really didn't learn anything. I just got a feeling."

"I like the movies because they were about things."

"I would rather see the films than do anything else."

"I think you should let younger grades see and write about them, too. You would be surprised."

"I liked it very much. I would have time to rest."

"I thought it was great! It was a 45-minute break from that everyday slow boring day."

"It was the first thing really great that has come my way."

"It was good. Except there were no 'adults only' films."

The thrust of all these remarks is best summed up by a 12-year-old student from Dunraven School in London. Her name is Wendy Puddle (Honest!) and she laid out the educational mandate for all of us: "I think that film education is a very good thing to have on the school timetable and it is a great pity that all schools do not have it."

Those desiring more prestigious authorities and a more elaborate rationale can consult my article in *Saturday Review* (July 16, 1966), "I Was a Teenage Movie Teacher," which developed the case for film study in the high schools.<sup>1</sup>

Motion pictures appeal to kids and to all of us because they are emotion pictures. They draw us to tears and fears and laughter like no other medium. This intrinsic lure of the moving image explains why students respond so quickly to film and why they get

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<sup>1</sup>A free copy of the article in *Saturday Review* can be obtained by writing to the Center for Understanding Media, 267 West 25th Street, New York, New York 10001.

so involved in discussing films and writing about films. The psychological intake system of the children of the television age has been programmed by and for the moving image. They are the natural citizens of this new electronic terrain, and our chances of communicating with them are enhanced enormously if we use their native tongue—or medium. The interested adult will find that the right film with the right audience and the right discussion techniques leads to a very direct and human form of classroom communication.

It was in Czechoslovakia five years ago that I first discovered what a children's film could be. There I was, up to my armpits in a thousand nine- and ten-year-olds looking at a film designed just for their age group—and not “for children of all ages.” The film was done with love, craft and sophistication beyond anything I had previously experienced. And it all happened because the film's makers really cared about kids.

The Czechs have a special fund for children's films and there is a tradition that the best filmmakers work in children's films. As an American I was embarrassed for the piddling and often meretricious efforts in our films and television for children.

In recent years the local scene has been brightened considerably by the films of Robert Radnitz, who is the only major American director working exclusively in feature films for children. He has directed *Island of the Blue Dolphins*, *Misty*, *And Now Miguel* and *My Side of the Mountain*. And there is a growing repertoire of short films which constantly appeal to children: *The Golden Fish*, *A Chairy Tale*, *White Mane*, *Orange and Blue*, *Toccata for Toy Trains*, *Snowy Day*, *Harold and the Purple Crayon*, *Water is Wet*, and the all-time favorite, *The Red Balloon*.

The producers of films can only be as good as their audiences allow them to be. The mandate for the public is, therefore, simple. . . to develop an audience that is quantitatively large enough to sustain the cost of film production and qualitatively perceptive enough to demand the very best from the media. Neither of these things will happen by accident and nothing at all will be accomplished by the shedding of tears on Madison Avenue or Sunset Boulevard. *Sesame Street* has proven that the good guys can also be competent. It is a lesson that is ready to be applied across the board in films and television for children.

Let's face it right away. Once kids study films, they want to make films. And the word is out that other students are already in business. Last year as part of the *NBC Experiment in Television* series, I



produced a one-hour special, "The New Communicators," highlighting the work of filmmakers from six to 18 years of age. NBC liked the idea and the title and produced two more specials this season. So filmmaking, like Howard Johnson's, will be one of those things that you can't indefinitely hide from the kids.

One story sums up for me many of the nice things that can happen in such an undertaking. When all the repertoire of turn-on devices had failed with a group of withdrawn seven- and eight-year-olds, teacher Robie Heilbrun of the Early Childhood Center of the Bank Street College of Education turned to film. She got hold of some 8mm Instamatic movie cameras and showed the kids how to aim them and push the buttons. Their first assignment was their block. They came back with pictures of trucks, fences, drunks, empty houses—all the things they were afraid of. But once they had taken a picture of these things they were able to talk about them. And that, brethren, is the stuff of which hope is made.

The next time out they explored the wider neighborhood. Most of the children did not know that there was a river three blocks from their house. They interviewed adults who paid attention to them for the first time because "they were on camera." They visited and filmed butcher shops, vegetable marts, construction sites, the waterfront. And their shaky little films gave them insight into and control over their world. That is a nice thing.

There is something magic about kids making their own films. There is something magic about the films they make. Films and television have put a lot of images in their heads. Now they would like to put a few of their own on the screen. Their interest is greatly aided by the current availability of inexpensive and easy-to-operate equipment. Their competence can be enhanced through independent study and practice, through contact with professional filmmakers, and through a new breed of movie-minded teachers who are making film part of every student's education. Motivation takes care of itself. There is no such thing as an unmotivated kid when it comes to making his own film.

The "Holy Place" of the films-made-by-kids movement is at the Yellow Ball Workshop in Lexington, Massachusetts. The five- to 15-year-olds working there with Yvonne Andersen have, for the past eight years, been turning out a steady flow of inspired and refreshing animated films. Independent film critic Jonas Mekas describes their work in a *Village Voice* review: "Without any exaggeration these 40 minutes (approximately 20 short films, each from 30 seconds

to four minutes) are about the best animated films made anywhere today. . . . These children's films demonstrate that there are no uninteresting subjects: there are only bad, washed-out artists."

Many adults don't believe that kids can produce work of the caliber of the Yellow Ball films. Almost every time I have screened the films publicly several adults will say: "No kid could make a film like that." I have learned to let them stew in their own remark because it says so much about the mentality which drags kids down to our level of competence or expectation. We still have no idea what kids can do. My rejoinder is: "No adult could make a film like that." Who of us could come up with a line like that of a seven-year-old doing a film on what it felt like to be just an "in-between" . . . "I'm too old to cry and too young to go to the psychiatrist."

Teachers have constantly noted that students who work actively with the media no longer assume the foetal position before the TV set. They either watch less or actively analyze what they see and compare it with what they themselves can do. Filmmaking provides the necessary feedback loop with the media by sharpening the perception and critical eye of the student.

My personal experience with children's film and television around the world has convinced me of the need for a central focus for such activities in this country. As a believer in the thesis that great movements deserve modest beginnings, we have applied for the legal right to incorporate and achieve tax-exempt status for a Children's Film and Television Foundation. The coming year will be devoted to planning the eventual scope of the Foundation and to initiating pilot projects. Here are some of the things which we are scheming to do:

1. Experimental film programs in theaters on Saturdays and weekday afternoons.
2. Design of a theater for the exclusive use of children.
3. Use of our potable air-structure for children's film festivals.
4. Development of a cable-television channel just for children.
5. Publication of an annotated catalog of children's films and television programs.
6. Training programs for parents, teachers, producers and children.
7. Compilation of research on the effects of the media on children.
8. Library and distribution center for films and television programs for and by children.

9. Production of films for children by famous filmmakers.
10. Sponsorship of regional, national and international conferences.

The first public announcement of the Children's Film and Television Foundation was made last July at the First National Conference on Films and Television for Children in New York. The results of the Conference were so optimistic that a similar gathering is being planned for next spring in Los Angeles.

The movement is moving.

# GROWING GRASS ROOTS IN VIEWERLAND

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EVELYN SARSON

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Nearly three years ago, a dozen parents and educators met in a living room in Newton Center, Mass. to define violence in children's television and to pinpoint the reason for its existence. Out of these informal gatherings grew a new national consumer organization called Action for Children's Television—ACT. The original group of participants has grown to a membership of more than 2,000, its discussions have reached from suburban living rooms to the offices of the FCC, and the guidelines it has proposed for children's programming have become a national issue.

During the winter of 1967 the first few members of ACT spent many hours trying to determine why broadcasters beamed so much violence to children. Suddenly, conclusions emerged with startling clarity: violence and conflict were the simplest attention-getters. If TV can hold a child's attention, he will sit by the set for the next commercial and be sold to. In any case, a child is about the easiest victim to sell to. Until he reaches the age of five, he usually doesn't even realize what a commercial is; from five to seven he will still believe most of the things he's told; after seven he's probably hooked. The sales of cereals, candies and toys go up, the program is judged a success, and the commercials increase.

ACT believed that this was the philosophy behind commercial television's programming for children, and decided that if any long-term improvement and change was to occur, this philosophy needed extensive re-thinking.

The original group settled down to a committee of four: Lillian Ambrosino, Judith Chalfen, Peggy Charren and the writer. Together we set out to monitor children's programs, and to this end we wrote ACT's first brochure, found a sympathetic designer and a sympathetic printer, and sent out 1,100 copies of a plea for constructive research.

For one month, in April-May of 1969, 20 mothers with stopwatch or kitchen clock in hand timed the content and commercials of *Romper Room*, the alleged pre-school kindergarten. At the end of that period, the findings were collated. As one mother put it, "That's no program—that's one long commercial for *Romper Room* products." During one typical half-hour, four and one-half minutes were straight commercials, six were used to play with *Romper Room* toys (which had just been advertised) and six more were spent playing with other *Romper Room* toys, which had not been specifically advertised that day. There were therefore 16½ minutes of commercial content. No adult program can boast such a successful ratio. In later monitoring in Bangor, Maine (in November of 1969), where the program runs for 45 minutes, it was found that on one occasion the full 45 minutes was devoted to promoting commercial products. Even the juice and cookies were brand-named. In general, the month-long monitoring disclosed excessively high percentages of commercial content, usually involving *Romper Room* products and few simple or creative activities for pre-schoolers.

This monitoring was followed up with three meetings with WHDH-TV, which broadcasts the program daily in the Boston area, and one with Mr. and Mrs. Bert Claster, who syndicate the program format in 110 American cities from their offices in Baltimore, Md. As of this writing, summer 1970, the program continues in much the same format, and random monitoring has revealed no change in the basic ideas behind the program. *Romper Room* toys still predominate and the teacher is still encouraging her pre-school audience to buy them. ACT continues to follow this up, and a national boycott of toys on the show is being considered.

On Sept. 5, 1969, WHDH (which had already lost its license, but continued to operate as usual) unexpectedly cut the morning edition of *Captain Kangaroo* in half. At 8:30 A.M. the program ended in mid-sentence to be followed by WHDH's locally-produced commercial-studded *Bozo* show. In response from its membership, ACT organized a letter-writing campaign, petitions across the state, and a "good" picket for good television outside WHDH one fall day with

mothers, children, balloons, candycanes and a guitar for "Captain Kangaroo—All of You." Mr. Harold Clancy, head of the WHDH Corporation, met with two ACT Committee members to explain that the change was merely a programming rearrangement. ACT pointed out that since there was not one minute of children's programming on WHDH for the rest of the day, perhaps *Bozo* could be moved to another time-slot. Why cut off half of a reasonably good children's program instead of moving *Bozo* elsewhere?

In January, 1970, *Captain Kangaroo* was restored to its full hour and local newspapers credited ACT with its return. Following this success ACT was invited to a long meeting with CBS executives and met with several of them in a meeting at which Mike Dann, who has since left for *Sesame Street*, insisted on the high quality of CBS's children's programs. "Why," asked Mrs. Chalfen, "do we then have to fight to keep *Captain Kangaroo* on the air?"

Later, ABC invited ACT to meet with its top executives together with its newly-appointed children's programming director, Mr. Charles Martin Jones. Before 1970, no commercial network had any executive in charge of children's programming; it was lumped together as daytime programming, with the quiz shows and soap operas. Suddenly all three networks realized their deficiency and appointed an executive in this area.

During the fall of 1969, ACT broadened its base of activities by testifying at two Senate hearings. During the first, which concerned appointments of Dean Burch and Robert Wells to the FCC, ACT urged that the new Commissioners present their views on television, especially children's programs, to the public whose interests they were representing. The second hearings were on Senator Pastore's bill, S.2004, which amended the Communications Act; ACT opposed the bill.

The group was also being invited to speak at conferences and to PTA's, to church groups and graduate seminars and even to a high-school class in marketing. The four founders became an Executive Committee, and some dozen other members joined the regular Committee. ACT incorporated and became non-profit and tax-deductible; and newcomers tracked the organization down (there were no funds for a business phone listing) and asked to join.

Unexpectedly, in February of 1970, our work took a major step forward. The FCC was about to issue its Primer on the Ascertainment of Community Needs; ACT suggested that its views on chil-

dren's television, a vital need for most communities, be expressed to the Federal authorities. The Commission responded with an invitation to Washington; and a two-hour exchange between six Commissioners and five mothers resulted, a week later, in the FCC's publication of ACT's guidelines as a possible proposed rule-making, the first tentative step towards a rule-making procedure. In typical bureaucratic fashion, the FCC did not inform ACT of this move. In faraway Massachusetts, ACT headquarters learned of it through the newly-formed Citizens Communications Center in Washington, D.C.

The Guidelines stated:

1. There shall be no sponsorship and no commercials on children's programs.
2. No performer shall be permitted to use or mention products, services or stores by brand name during children's programs, nor shall such names be included in any way during children's programs.
3. Each station shall provide daily programming for children and in no case shall this be less than 14 hours a week, as part of its public service requirement. Provision shall be made for programming in each of the age groups specified below:
 

A. Pre-school:	Ages 2-5	7 A.M.-6 P.M. Daily
		7 A.M.-6 P.M. Weekends
B. Primary	Ages 6-9	4 P.M.-8 P.M. Daily
		8 A.M.-8 P.M. Weekends
C. Elementary	Ages 10-12	5 P.M.-9 P.M. Daily
		9 A.M.-9 P.M. Weekends

ACT then learned quickly what it had to do, how much time it had to do it in, and who could help. Through Dr. Everett Parker of the United Church of Christ, ACT had met with Messrs. Moore, Berson, Hamburg and Bernstein, leading communications lawyers, who agreed to help the group with its legal representation. Dr. Ralph Jennings, a communications consultant, set up a major research project on children's television programs, and Dr. Daniel Yankelovich agreed to carry out a pilot study of mothers' attitudes towards children's television programs and advertising.

ACT then tried to publicize the fact of its Public Notice as much as possible. Broadcasters have easy access to FCC activities through lobbyists and lawyers in Washington. The FCC, as the representative of the public's interest, has no direct way of telling the public

when issues of vital interest are under consideration. Whatever anyone's views on children's TV today might be, it is most important that the viewing public be told when they have a once-only chance to express their opinions on this topic to the Commission.

Through splendid newspaper and magazine coverage and by using its own mailings and contacts, ACT tried to get the word out: "Tell the FCC now what you think of children's TV programs." (The organization knew that no word of its petition would be whispered on the national airwaves.) And the letters began to arrive at the FCC offices in Washington. By the end of the summer, they filled 14 volumes.

"I have become so disgusted with the amount and quality of commercials on children's programs that I refuse to buy products made by the sponsoring manufacturers," wrote a mother of two preschool children in San Francisco, California. "This seems to be the only way I can fight large companies bent on turning my children into morons."

From Boston: "As a mother of three young children and as a psychiatrist who has worked with youngsters I am convinced that the standards urged by ACT are reasonable and well thought-out. It is also high time to stop using children as the tools of advertisers."

From Nashville, Tennessee: "As a black citizen, I would like to add one point. I feel that in addition to ACT's contention, a significant portion of children's broadcasting on both commercial and educational television should be geared to black children...."

A mother from Ridgewood, New Jersey: "I am deeply disturbed about the television programs presented to young viewers during the after-school and weekend hours. Much of it seems to portray themes of violence and unreality and confusion of real and pretend situations that have disturbed at least temporarily children of my acquaintance and in my family."

From the father of a five-year-old in Gainesville, Florida: "Television has become a consumer-conditioner straight out of Brave New World. If the FCC can't help, perhaps more drastic alternatives are needed."

Parents were not the only concerned individuals. The head of a Boston advertising agency regretfully admitted: "My years of experience in creating commercials and buying commercial time on children's programs for many toy manufacturers have left me with sincere regrets for having been a participant in what I would now consider to be an unhealthy effort...I wholeheartedly concur with



your conclusions that the children faced with little or no choice, spend endless hours being brainwashed with the 'Buy it now' propaganda."

And from New York:

"As an ex-advertising executive (formerly advertising agency president) of 30 years experience on Madison Avenue, I know from seasoned conviction that your drive to improve programming for children on TV is urgently essential. . . . For the primary concern of broadcasters is not to create or choose children's shows for the good of the youngsters, but rather to keep sponsors and make money."

A toy dealer from Berkeley, California wrote:

"As a toy dealer I want to support the recommendations of ACT to prohibit sponsors and commercials on children's programs. Commercially-sponsored television has two major effects on the toy business:

1. Creation of the TV toy where as much as 20% of the cost of manufacture is spent on TV advertising instead of quality material and good engineering. . . . A good example is a toy which is just being introduced and promoted. It is nothing more than a sponge rubber ball that would sell plain for 29-39¢. Packaged and televised, the retail price is \$1.29!

2. The TV toy has created giant toy manufacturers who stifle competition, ignore customer complaints, and force wholesalers and stores to take unwanted merchandise in order to get a best-selling toy. Growing through unrestricted merger, these giants become increasingly arrogant and unresponsive to the best interests of children and the opinions of their parents."

Many national organizations have indicated their support for ACT's efforts. These include the American Public Health Association, the National Recreation and Park Association, the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the National Education Association, the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the National Health Council and the Association for Childhood Educational International.

Robert Lewis Shayon devoted one of his columns in *Saturday Review* to ACT's petition, and suggested that concerned individuals might contact the newly-created Citizens Communications Center in Washington, D.C. if they wanted to file official legal comments. From across the country groups and individuals responded. The

Parish and Family Life Commission of St. Mary's Cathedral in Portland, Oregon stated in their comment:

"We find many factors in our environment which militate against the strength and growth of the family and children; and one of the important factors is the programming on television. . . it is an indignity to the children and their family that commercial interests be allowed to exploit the receptivity and suggestibility of children by heavily interspersing programs with commercials."

An elementary librarian in Romulus, N.Y., a rural community, "where children do not have access to cultural opportunities," wrote to urge that television provide "good dramatizations, discussions of community situations, without interference from commercials and brand-named sponsors."

From Eau Claire, Wisconsin a mother commented: "The television commercials that my children watch must indeed be confusing and frustrating to them. The mommies and daddies on television are constantly shown buying for and giving to the children. The world, as these commercials portray it, is one in which each parent owes the child the instant happiness and joy of being the owner of every new and exciting toy, candy, snack or breakfast cereal created by the all-glorious manufacturer."

And the Parents Council of the Ancona Montessori School in Chicago, Illinois, representing 675 parents of children aged three to nine, wrote:

"In Chicago, from Monday through Friday, there is a total of one hour per day of children's programming among the three commercial networks. . . Whatever options are open to adults to choose selectively among media are largely foreclosed to children."

ACT's two commissioned studies only served to prove the many allegations about children's programming that had been made. There were far more commercials during children's programs than during adult prime-time viewing—and this was allowed by the Code of the National Association of Broadcasters. The number of children's programs increased in the pre-Christmas season in order to take advantage of the lucrative toy advertising. The cost of commercials on all three networks went up significantly in the pre-Christmas season compared to the rest of the year.

Dr. Ralph Jennings, communications consultant, selected a representative sample of 13 of the top 50 markets: New York, Boston, Washington, D.C., Chicago, Los Angeles, Dallas-Ft. Worth, St.

Louis, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Atlanta, Seattle-Tacoma, Charlotte, Denver, and New Orleans. Examining a total of 54 stations, 39 network affiliates and 15 independents, for a sample week of February 21-27, 1970, he found that 33 of the 54 stations carried less than 14 hours of children's programming a week. He found that the content of children's programs on air were mainly classified as "entertainment" with cartoons "the staple" in all markets sampled. In Washington, D.C., for example, 84 percent of the children's programs were cartoons. Only one network offered a daily children's show of any kind, the majority of children's programs appearing at weekends.

Dr. Daniel Yankelovich carried out a pilot study on "Mothers' attitudes toward children's television programs and commercials" in St. Louis, Denver and Omaha on groups of mothers with children under 12. While many of the comments showed that the mothers were unaware of the way programming operated, research found that "all the mothers agreed that the whole thing would be better if there were no commercials at all." In another area, the mothers agreed that "they *don't* think the sponsors are interested in providing good entertainment for children, they are just using the media for advertising."

An earlier independent study carried out by the Los Angeles Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women to study parents' attitudes towards children's TV viewing revealed "a widespread bitter resentment of commercials' attempts to influence buying through the use of sex, rudeness, vulgarity and insolence."

ACT itself submitted a brief and the studies to the FCC at the end of April, and is now waiting to hear if the FCC plans to move ahead. At this writing, ACT is planning a major conference to be held in Boston with the Kennedy Memorial Hospital for Children and the Boston University School of Public Communication. The conference hopes to outline courses of action that professionals and concerned citizens can take in trying to upgrade TV for children. Letters arrive daily from across the country, asking for more information, offering support and occasionally including a \$5 check for membership. The organization has no financial resources beyond its membership dues and the occasional fee for speaking engagements, but is submitting a proposal and budget to several foundations.

ACT has linked up with other groups across the country—the American Council for Better Broadcasting in Wisconsin, Better Broadcasting for Chicagoans, Women Who Won't Buy Violence in

Detroit, the National Association for Better Broadcasting in Los Angeles, and the National Citizens Committee for Broadcasting. ACT sees itself as the voice of the viewer in the area of children's programs, and plans to expand its activities in order to express the viewer's opinions as clearly and as effectively as possible. There is an urgent need for the FCC to regulate the commercial abuses on children's programming and ACT hopes to exert pressure in this direction.

# THE CHAIRMAN SPEAKS ABOUT CHILDREN'S TV

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DEAN BURCH

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There can be no question of the importance of programming for children: Children today cannot remember the time when television was not a large part of their lives. It's reported that one young child wrote, "In prehistoric time before we had TV. . . ." As a matter of fact, my own children, the oldest of whom is 12, asked me about the olden days before television.

We have all heard the statistical evidence on this score. One authority points out that "by the time the average American student graduates from high school today, he has watched more than 15,000 hours of television and seen more than 500 films. . . . During this same period, this average student has attended school five hours a day, 180 days a year, for 12 years, to produce a total of 10,800 hours of school time. Only sleeping time surpasses television as the top time-consumer. . . ." <sup>1</sup>Nielsen figures indicate that teenagers (12-17) view 20 hours a week, while children (6-11) watch 24 hours and those in the age bracket 2-5 watch over 28 hours a week. The above figures are facts—not necessarily benefits but *facts* which must be considered by the industry and the Federal Communications Commission.

Don't you sometimes wonder about this influence when all too often our children know every word of the Virginia Slims song but think "infinite" has to do with the length of Joe Namath's hair.

From a commercial standpoint, broadcasters are well aware of this

extensive viewing. Cartoons on Saturday mornings have demonstrated their reach and impact through the sales record of the products advertised during these programs.<sup>2</sup>

I hope I need not belabor the point to broadcasters. Children are our greatest resource, and television clearly consumes a very large part of the life of that resource. As a public trustee, the broadcaster must face a crucial consideration. He must ask, what am I doing with this unparalleled opportunity to reach children—who have been aptly described as islands of curiosity surrounded by a sea of question marks. Surely no broadcaster would answer—“Just treat them like an audience of customers to receive an advertising message.” All of us recognize that a different, a special effort is called for.

The Commission has presently pending petitions which request Governmental action to assure a special effort. I refer mainly to the petition filed by the group, Action for Children's Television, or ACT. ACT seeks a ban on commercial sponsorship of children's programs, and a requirement of daily programming for children amounting to at least 14 hours per week during specified time periods for three age groups, 2-5, 6-9 and 10-12.

It is not my purpose here to go into a detailed dissertation of the merits or demerits of this petition, nor even to discuss the obvious Constitutional and policy problems it raises. I mention this petition because, in my opinion, its consideration by the Commission typifies the quandary which is faced by the regulatory agency in the '70s. There is one point of view in the industry—the one that wants seven senile men on the FCC—that would say, “Dismiss the petition out of hand because its basic thrust is censorship in its baldest form, and is thus contrary to Section 326 of the Act and simply unconstitutional.”

And on the other side of the coin, we have those activists who would say, “Of course the FCC can lawfully act in this area, and any other area, and since you are dealing with children, it ought to act promptly to impose these very minimal kinds of detailed regulation upon the commercial broadcaster.”

I will say very candidly that the FCC of the '70s cannot slough off a problem with the old and loved Constitutional arguments—they went out with the Red Lion Case. Neither can it, in my opinion, successfully carry out the dictates of the Communications Act by attempting, from its bureaucratic tower, to substitute its collective judgment for the considered judgment of the members of the

industry who think that "the public interest" is more than a phrase to justify multiple ownership and guaranteed profits.

It may be that in Hegelian terms we are headed from the thesis to the antithesis. But what I am suggesting is that the industry, in concert with the FCC, which I happen to feel represents the public interest, can—no, *must*—achieve a synthesis—and quickly. Problems cannot be ignored simply because they've been ignored in the past. Problems must be considered, weighed and solved, and the solution must often be implemented regardless of whether cereal or toy sales reach new heights—or not.

What I am saying and on which I think we can all agree, is that there is in this case a middle ground. To repeat, the commercial broadcaster must recognize, and act upon the premise, that children are different and that the difference requires a dedicated, special effort. Further, the FCC should do all it can to promote action upon this premise, including fostering the best possible Governmental climate for such action.

The thrust of my comments is thus not to threaten the broadcaster with the possibility of Governmental action. Rather, it is to urge that he take up the challenge—really, the opportunity. For, in the final analysis, only the broadcaster can be truly inventive, and create the various kinds of programming that should and must be tried. Neither the Government nor ACT nor indeed any outside entity can decree enthusiasm or talent or experimentation. It is not sterile, fixed quantities that are needed, but quality, dedication and, as usual, money.

I am glad to see heightened interest by the networks in this vital area. But I am by no means ready to look forward to the new season as the banner year for children's programming. I notice that the August 31, 1970 issue of *Advertising Age* characterized network TV's children's schedule for 1970-71 as "containing a dash of informational programming but still dominated by 26 cartoon shows."

I would also stress that designating responsible officials to head up children's departments is not, of course, the end of the matter. What commitments of time and talent are being made? And not just by the networks, important as they are, but also by the multiple owners and the individual stations. The multiple owners have long claimed that they can serve the public interest better because of their holdings. Here, truly, is a crucial area where they can "show" us.

In short, I am questioning the commitment of the broadcasting industry to the area of children's programming. It seems to me that

so very much is called for because of the importance of television to the child's life, and that, when viewed against that call, the industry's efforts are not yet sufficient. I wish to make clear that I have not been addressing myself to any negative aspect of children's programming such as "hard-sell" commercials by performers or excessive violence. As to the latter, I note and commend the networks' recent efforts. It is a subject well worthy of study by the industry as well as the Surgeon General's Office.

But my remarks *are* directed to the contrast between typical fare—which just fills the child's time and serves as a background to the commercial—and TV programming which makes a positive contribution to the child's growth, his awareness of reality. Longfellow referred a century ago to the Children's Hour—the time "between the dark and the daylight, when the night is beginning to lower." Today in millions of homes, that time is one where the housewife, about to prepare dinner, uses the TV set as a babysitter. Indeed, I think that some of the concern, the consternation about the quality of children's programming, stems from the guilty conscience of a parent who *is* using television as a babysitter or as a disciplinary device—you know, "You can't watch TV the rest of the week because you didn't brush your teeth."

I recognize that to a substantial extent, this "sitter" must and should just entertain—be the equivalent of chewing gum for the eyes. But also to a substantial extent, it must fulfill its promise as a child's "window to the world." To do this—to facilitate the necessary experiments, broadcasters must make a correspondingly substantial commitment of funds and resources. Otherwise, commercial programs such as "J.T." or *Children's Theatre* will continue to stand out as rare occasions.

On our part, I spoke of the Government creating the best possible climate to permit effectuation of public interests goals. One contribution which we could make in this field is to facilitate joint or cooperative efforts. For example, I would expect each network to "do its own thing" in children's programming. But that does not mean that cooperative discussion might not be helpful. It would permit better scheduling of the resultant programs, so that they did not wastefully "buck heads" with one another. Indeed, it would facilitate, if the networks so desired, a rotating six-day schedule, where Network "A" presented its outstanding or experimental children's programs on Monday, "B" on Tuesday, and "C" on Wednesday, with the cycle then beginning over again. Thus, on each day,



there would be available creative children's fare. This would have the further advantage of all the networks equally sharing the responsibility.

Multiple owners might wish to cooperate in the production of creative children's programming, which could then be made available to other stations on reasonable terms. Indeed, individual stations might engage in such a joint enterprise.

My point is that the Government stands ready to foster a climate which presents a maximum creative and, if desired, cooperative effort in this field of children's programming. In order to avoid any claim or charge of abuse, we would of course expect to be consulted on such cooperative efforts.

Obviously, you who are broadcasters will not always succeed. As with all creative efforts, some must be failures. But when you do succeed, I would hope that as in the case of network programs today, you publicize extensively these programs. I would also hope that institutions such as schools or churches would bring such programs to the attention of the children and parents and indeed make them the subject of discussions. Individual families might do so on their own. Newspapers owe a duty to feature such programs in their TV sections. Such efforts demand the greatest possible audience, and I am satisfied that the interested community elements will respond in kind to the broadcasters' increased activities.

And while I am on these general subjects of publicity for these children's shows and cooperation between the networks, I want to commend NBC for its recent series of on-the-air promotions of outstanding programs, including several on other networks. Mr. Julian Goodman's purpose—to "alert the selective viewer about the good things that are on television—not just NBC..."—is most worthy, and while it may be regarded as heresy by some, it is, I believe, the type of cooperative effort that is called for.

Finally, there is the opportunity and responsibility of cable television in this important area. If the cable system originates in a small community, it can make its cameras and other origination facilities available to the local educational institutions, and can make an effort to obtain outstanding film series like *Sesame Street*, which may well have had no local showing. If it is a large system in a city such as New York, there is no reason why it also should not undertake its own production of children's programming. For this system has available great channel capacity, and thus could devote an entire channel to children's programming of its own production or re-runs

of worthy programs produced by others. I realize that all this is easier said than done. But my point is that cable also has a significant contribution to make in this vital area, and that while it may necessarily be a small contribution in the beginning, it has the potential of great growth and future impact. It is therefore right to call upon this new industry *to begin*—to take up the challenge.

A noted historian once observed that human history is a race between education and catastrophe. No one would argue that broadcasting alone will determine how that race ends. But no one would deny that broadcasting has vital duties to play, and that it must discharge its duties faithfully and fully, if the race is to be won. It is my considered judgment that these duties, particularly in the case of children's programming, are more demanding than a Profit and Loss Statement, and are not discharged by you or by me by smugly suggesting that this is the responsibility of the Public Broadcasting network. We must all recognize and act on a single premise: That the human mind is our fundamental, our bedrock resource.

#### NOTES

1. John M. Culkin, S.J., Director of the Center for Communications, Fordham University, *Saturday Review*, July 16, 1969, pp. 51-53.

2. Richard K. Doan, "TV on Saturday Morning: When People Are Second Best; Saturday Morning's Cartoon World," *TV Guide*, February 11, 1967, pp. 10-13.

# EUROPEAN BROADCASTERS AND CHILDREN'S TELEVISION

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J. D. HALLORAN  
P. R. C. ELLIOT

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Summary portraits of broadcasting institutions surveyed\*:

## *Austria — ORF*

Regular transmission of television programs did not begin in Austria until 1957. Relative to other "single national institutions" the quantity of general programming produced by ORF is large, but the quantity of programs for children and young people is both relatively and absolutely small. ORF concentrates its programming for children and young people on the middle age-groups, and produces a very low proportion of "pure entertainment" programs. Programs for children and young people are produced in a separate small department which is also responsible for "family programs." Three-camera studios and film equipment are used in production.

In answer to the questions on policy, ORF gives high priority to the provision of entertainment, furthering international understanding, and stimulating the imagination of children. ORF feels that horrifying or frightening scenes, examples of criminal, deviant and

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\*These portraits are presented in general, fairly loosely-drawn, comparative terms. For convenience, phrases such as "the institution felt, thought, etc." are used in these summary portraits. These should not necessarily be taken as indicating the "official" policy of the institution, for here as in many other places in the report we are simply reporting the statements of the respondents who completed the questionnaire.

anti-social behavior, and matters of social, political and religious controversy should be avoided for children of all ages, but holds that the "unpleasant side of life" should only be completely avoided in the case of the youngest children.

#### *Denmark — DR*

Regular television transmission began in 1954, and there was a rapid expansion so that a large proportion of the population became covered within a very short space of time. The total program output of DR is small and so is the output of programs for children and young people. The department responsible for children's programs in DR is of very recent origin, but there is a moderate number of production personnel available. Two- and three-camera studios and film effort are used in the production of programs. A high proportion of these programs is "pure entertainment" and a high proportion "information and topical features."

DR's assessment of policy priorities gives great weight to stimulating the imagination, enlarging experience, and "helping young people with their personal and social problems." The provision of entertainment is not selected by DR in its policy preferences. For all ages, DR feels that scenes which might horrify or frighten should be avoided, but that scenes which show the unpleasant side of life need not be. DR is uncertain whether matters of controversy should be presented to young children, but certain that delinquent and anti-social models should be avoided. In neither case is it thought that this should apply to the older children as well.

#### *Finland — YLE*

Regular transmissions by YLE began in 1958, and, though total output is small, programs for children and young people account for more than one-tenth of the total. Production takes place within a special department which is of moderate size and equipped with four-camera studios, but there is no film effort. YLE concentrates its output of programs for children and young people on the older children and produces a low proportion of "pure entertainment" programs, and a high proportion of "information, topical features."

YLE gives high priority to enlarging experience and stimulating the imagination, and also to "building up ethical standards and developing social character." The provision of entertainment is not selected as a preference. YLE feels that while models of criminal,

deviant and anti-social behavior and the presentation of controversial matters should not be presented for the youngest age-group, there is definitely no need for this restraint for the oldest age-groups. Similarly, the unpleasant side of life should not be presented to under-7s, but there is definitely no reason to avoid such presentations for the over-15s. Scenes which might frighten or horrify children, however, should be avoided for all ages.

### *Ireland — RTE*

Regular television transmissions began in Ireland in 1961, and a large number of hours of both general programs and programs for children and young people are transmitted each week. A moderate proportion of the programs for children and young people are "pure entertainment" and "information and topical features." There is not a specific children's department in RTE, nor is there a large production staff, and production facilities are also limited. RTE produces the greater part of its output for children in the middle of the age range, and a large proportion of its output is purchased from abroad.

RTE feels that there is some difference between "ideal" policy priorities and those policies actually reflected in its programming. Stimulating the imagination, enlarging experience, providing information about one's own country and furthering international understanding are chosen as the most important "ideal" priorities. However, RTE feels that its present programs are concentrated on the provision of entertainment, which is not included in the "ideal" preferences. It is also maintained that for the older child, unlike the younger, there is no need to avoid the unpleasant side of life, horrifying or frightening scenes, models of criminal and anti-social behavior or matters of social, political or religious controversy.

### *Luxembourg — RTL*

RTL transmits to a wider area than the Duchy of Luxembourg itself and is financed through advertising revenue. Transmission began in 1955 and the output of general programs and of programs for children and young people is about average for a "single national" institution. There is no department specifically responsible for children's programs, and both production resources and production staff are very limited. A large proportion of children's programs are purchased from other countries. Most of the output for children

and young people is devoted to "light entertainment and variety" and aimed at children in the middle of the age range.

RTL places the highest priority on the three general aims of providing entertainment, enlarging experience and stimulating the imagination. RTL does not differentiate between children of different ages, but agrees in all cases that the unpleasant side of life, scenes which might frighten and horrify, models of criminal and deviant behavior, and matters of controversy should be avoided in children's broadcasts.

#### *Norway — NRK*

Television transmissions did not commence in Norway until 1960. The output of all types of programming is small, but a relatively large proportion (over one-tenth) consists of programs for children and young people. These programs are produced in a special department which is moderately staffed and technically well-equipped. Only a small proportion of programs is purchased from other countries. A large proportion of the children's programs is "information and topical features," and a moderate proportion "pure entertainment." The programs are directed primarily at younger children.

NRK reports that its "ideal" order for the policy items differs slightly from the order reflected in its programs. In both cases highest priority is given to enlarging experience and building up ethical standards, but NRK feels that providing information about one's own country tends to be rather over-emphasized at the expense of the provision of entertainment. NRK feels that while the showing of controversial matters should be confined to older children, there is no need to avoid the unpleasant side of life, scenes which might frighten or horrify, or criminal and anti-social models, for younger children. However, for young children it is felt that criminal models should certainly be presented in the context of "teaching a lesson."

#### *Sweden — SR*

SR began regular transmissions in 1957, and now transmits a large quantity of general programming each week. Compared with the output of other countries, the proportion of programs for children and young people to total programs is about average, but the output of schools and educational programs is large, both relatively and absolutely. Both "pure entertainment" and "information and topical features" make up moderate proportions of SR's children's

programming and they are produced within a special department which has a moderate number of production staff and is technically well-equipped. SR produces primarily for the younger age-group.

Apart from stimulating the imagination, which is given the highest priority, SR gives high priority to building up ethical standards, preparing children so that they may become useful members of society, and building up aesthetic standards. SR feels that for children of all ages up to 15 (the over-15s are not included by SR), there is no need to avoid the unpleasant side of life, but holds that it is better not to present controversial matters. It would seem that, for SR, whether or not scenes of potential horror or models of criminal and anti-social behavior should be avoided depends on the age of the target audience.

### *Yugoslavia — JRT*

Television transmissions in Yugoslavia began in the mid-1950s, but the spread of television set ownership seems to have been slower than in other countries served by a single institution. JRT concentrates its output of programs for children and young people or younger children, and the total program output is very large. Compared with other institutions, the programs for children and young people make up an average proportion of total output, but the quantity of educational programs is both relatively and absolutely very large. A high proportion of the children's output of JRT is "pure entertainment," and a low proportion "information and topical features." Few programs for children and young people are bought from abroad. In JRT there is a special department responsible for production, which has a large staff and is technically well-equipped.

JRT feels that there is some difference between the "ideal" and the actual policy preferences, although in both cases highest priority is given to the provision of entertainment, providing information about one's own country, and stimulating imagination. JRT would then like to see a higher priority given to preparing children to be useful members of society. JRT feels that for all ages the unpleasant side of life, and scenes which might horrify or frighten, should be avoided—but is uncertain whether its general feeling that matters of social, political and religious controversy, and criminal and anti-social models should not be presented should apply to children over the age of 15 as well as to the younger children.

### *France — ORTF*

Television transmissions in France began in 1936, before the second world war, but by 1964, compared with other countries, the set ownership figure was not particularly high. ORTF provides two services, one of which has an output which is considerably larger than the output of any of the single national institutions. The output of the other service is smaller than that of the other single national institutions. Comparatively speaking, the proportion of broadcasting time given to programs for children and young people is much smaller than average, and most of this time is given to older children and adolescents. ORTF produces both "pure entertainment" and "information and topical features" in about equal proportions, in a department which apparently serves a mainly administrative function.

ORTF feels that there is some difference between its "ideal" preferences and actual policy priorities. In practice ORTF thinks that providing information about one's own country receives great emphasis. Ideally ORTF would like to see more emphasis on helping children and young people with personal and social problems and on building aesthetic standards. ORTF feels that the unpleasant side of life, scenes which might horrify and frighten, models of criminal and anti-social behavior, and matters of controversy, should not be shown to the youngest children. It is uncertain (except in the case of the matters of controversy, which it feels should be shown) whether they should be shown to adolescents.

### *Italy — RAI*

Television transmissions in Italy began in the mid-1950s. The total general output in the two services which operate is lower than that of ORTF, the proportion of programs for children and young people is about average, but there is a very high proportion of education programming. Compared with other institutions, RAI appears to be subject to a more rigorous system of control through externally appointed committees. Special programs are not produced for adolescents, and output seems to be directed more towards younger children. A large proportion of the output for children and young people consists of "information and topical features," and there is a moderate amount of "pure entertainment." The special department for children's programs is moderately staffed, and is equipped with four-camera studios, but film effort is not reported.



Although RAI maintains that preparing children to be useful members of society should be given the highest priority, it feels that in practice this is given to the provision of entertainment. Ideally the provision of entertainment ranks third, after enlarging experience and widening horizons. In general, RAI feels that none of the "controversial" items<sup>1</sup> should be shown to children of any age up to 15, though it is uncertain about showing "the unpleasant side of life" for older children.

### *Spain — TVE*

TVE started transmissions in 1956 but expansion in terms of set ownership has been slow. The two services of TVE provide a larger output of general programs than either ORTF or RAI, and there is a large amount of schools and educational broadcasting. The proportion of programs for children and young people is below the average and these are broadcast on only one channel. A large proportion of output is devoted to both entertainment and "information and topical features." Generally there is concentration on the younger children. The department responsible for children's programs seems to perform a mainly administrative function. Technical resources appear to be limited.

The provision of entertainment and enlarging experience and widening horizons receive both ideally and actually the highest priority. After this TVE feels that ideally more emphasis should be placed on providing information about one's own country and furthering international understanding rather than stimulating the imagination and building aesthetic standards; aims which it is stated are reflected in current practice. For younger children, TVE feels that all the "controversial" items should be avoided, but for older children it feels that there is no need to avoid "the unpleasant side of life" or "models of criminal and anti-social behavior." It is uncertain about the other two "controversial" items.

### *Belgium — BRT and RTB*

The two institutions broadcast to two different language regions. The output of both institutions is about the same in quantity, and is comparable to the output of the larger single national institutions. RTB produces a small quantity of programs for children and young people but, relative to BRT, a large quantity of schools and educa-

<sup>1</sup>"Controversial" items refers to those items where the answers provided by the countries show an interesting variation.

tional programs. This situation is reversed with BRT. RTB concentrates on the youngest age-group, BRT on the middle age-group, but both institutions devote a large proportion of time to "pure entertainment." In both institutions there are special departments, although these departments are also responsible for other types of programs as well as for programs for children and young people. BRT's department has a moderate number of staff, and is technically well-equipped. RTB's department has a larger staff, but there is no information on technical facilities. A large proportion of the output of BRT is bought from other countries.

Both Belgian stations think that the highest priority is and should be given to providing entertainment and enlarging experience. RTB then feels that its programs actually provide information about Belgium and supplement formal education, although ideally it thinks a higher priority should be given to stimulating the imagination and preparing children to be useful members of society. BRT sees no difference between its ideal and actual priorities and gives third and fourth priorities to building ethical and aesthetic standards respectively. BRT rejects "controversial" items for the younger children, but feels that there is no need to avoid the unpleasant side of life and matters of controversy for adolescents. However, it is felt that the other two "controversial" items should be avoided for these older children. RTB's attitude follows the same pattern but it is uncertain whether adolescents should be shown the unpleasant side of life.

### ***Federal Republic of Germany — ARD***

There are nine regional institutions contributing to the ARD network. The service recommenced television transmissions in Germany after the second world war in 1952. There is a wide variation in the size of the region served by each affiliated institution, and in the amount contributed by each institution to the ARD service. Over half (five) have special programming departments for children and young people, though these departments are usually responsible for family programs as well. Generally, programming is concentrated at the middle of the age range.

An over-view of the responses of the various ARD institutions shows that there is general agreement in giving a high priority to the three general items, "enlarging experience," "providing entertainment" and "stimulating the imagination." "Furthering international understanding," "helping children and young people with their

personal and social problems" and "building aesthetic standards" are also chosen frequently. Again, generally speaking, there is a widespread agreement between the institutions that the "controversial" items should not be shown to young children, and widespread disagreement with the suggestion that they should not be shown to older children and adolescents.

### *Federal Republic of Germany — ZDF*

The second German television service, ZDF, was set up as an independent corporation in 1963. It began a special service for children and young people in 1966, the year mainly covered by this survey. Consequently, the departmental organization is both new and small, and the number of hours provided for children and young people represents only a small proportion of total output. Total output is larger than most single national institutions and does not include schools and educational programming. Like the other German institutions, ZDF concentrates on the middle of the age range. A high proportion of its output for children is described as "pure entertainment." There are four-camera studios available, but no film effort is reported.

ZDF agrees with the other German institutions in giving highest priority to the three general items, although it then goes on to mention "supplementing formal education" and "keeping children out of trouble" as well as "furthering international understanding." ZDF also moves from agreement to disagreement over the age range with the suggestion that the "controversial" items should be shown to those in the older age-groups. However, it seems unsure whether matters of controversy should be shown to adolescents.

### *Netherlands — NTS*

NTS is a network system based on five broadcasting associations representing different ideological positions. Experimental television transmissions in Holland began in 1951. It was intended that NTS itself should provide the technical services of the network, but over the years it has acquired more and more responsibility for program production in areas not affected by the ideological differences between the associations. It is now the largest producer of children's programs in the network but it has very little production equipment, and most of its children's programs are purchased from free-lance film companies.

Three of the other institutions are technically well-equipped and, unlike NTS, produce the majority of their output themselves. The scale of operations of even the largest of these producing institutions is much smaller than the smallest single national institution. Three institutions mention that there are special difficulties associated with NTS networking arrangements which create difficulties in the planning and production of programs for children and young people.

The institutions vary considerably in their policy priorities as reported in the answers to the questionnaire. Five select "provision of entertainment," four "enlarging experience" and "furthering international understanding," but the priorities given to these items fall within the full range. (Respondents could indicate six preferences.) In general, there is little emphasis placed on "preparing children to be useful members of society" and "building ethical standards." There is also general disagreement between the affiliated institutions with regard to the showing of "controversial" items to children of different ages. NTS (affiliated), for instance, is generally in favor of showing such items at all ages, though other institutions have more doubts, especially for the younger age-groups.

#### *Switzerland — SSR, SRG, TSI*

These three services provide programs for the different regions and language groups in Switzerland. They all produce a large quantity of programming compared with the single national institutions, but the amount produced for children and young people varies from SRG, where it makes up a below-average proportion of the total, to TSI, where the proportion is well above average. It is reported that four-camera studios are not always available for production. There is no information on production organization, and only two of the services give answers on the types of programs they produce. This limited information suggests that for SSR "pure entertainment" makes up a large proportion and for SRG a small proportion of their respective outputs.

One policy assessment was returned for all three, and this did not rank priorities, but simply selected six items. These are "entertainment," "imagination," "international understanding," "help with problems," "prepare for society," and "build aesthetic standards." For all ages, the Swiss services feel that "controversial" items should not be shown. This does not include "matters of controversy," which it is considered need be avoided only for the younger age-groups.

### *Great Britain — BBC*

Television transmission began before the second world war, and in terms of set ownership Britain has the widest coverage of all the European countries. The BBC, through two services, produces the largest number of program hours available in Europe, but not the largest quantity of children's and young people's programs. BBC recognizes a special child audience only up to the age of 12 (but the institution producing a larger amount of children's broadcasts, RAI, does not specifically produce for an adolescent audience either). As a proportion of total output, the BBC's output of children's programs is low, and of schools and educational programs about average, compared with other institutions. BBC has a large department which is technically well equipped. A low proportion of time is reported as being devoted to "pure entertainment," and a high proportion to "information and topical features."

BBC felt that the three general items, "enlarging experience," "stimulating the imagination" and "providing entertainment," should and do receive the highest priority. For children under 12, the BBC feels that there is no reason to avoid the unpleasant side of life, or entirely to avoid models of criminal and anti-social behavior. However, it feels that scenes which might horrify and frighten, and matters of controversy, ought not to be presented.

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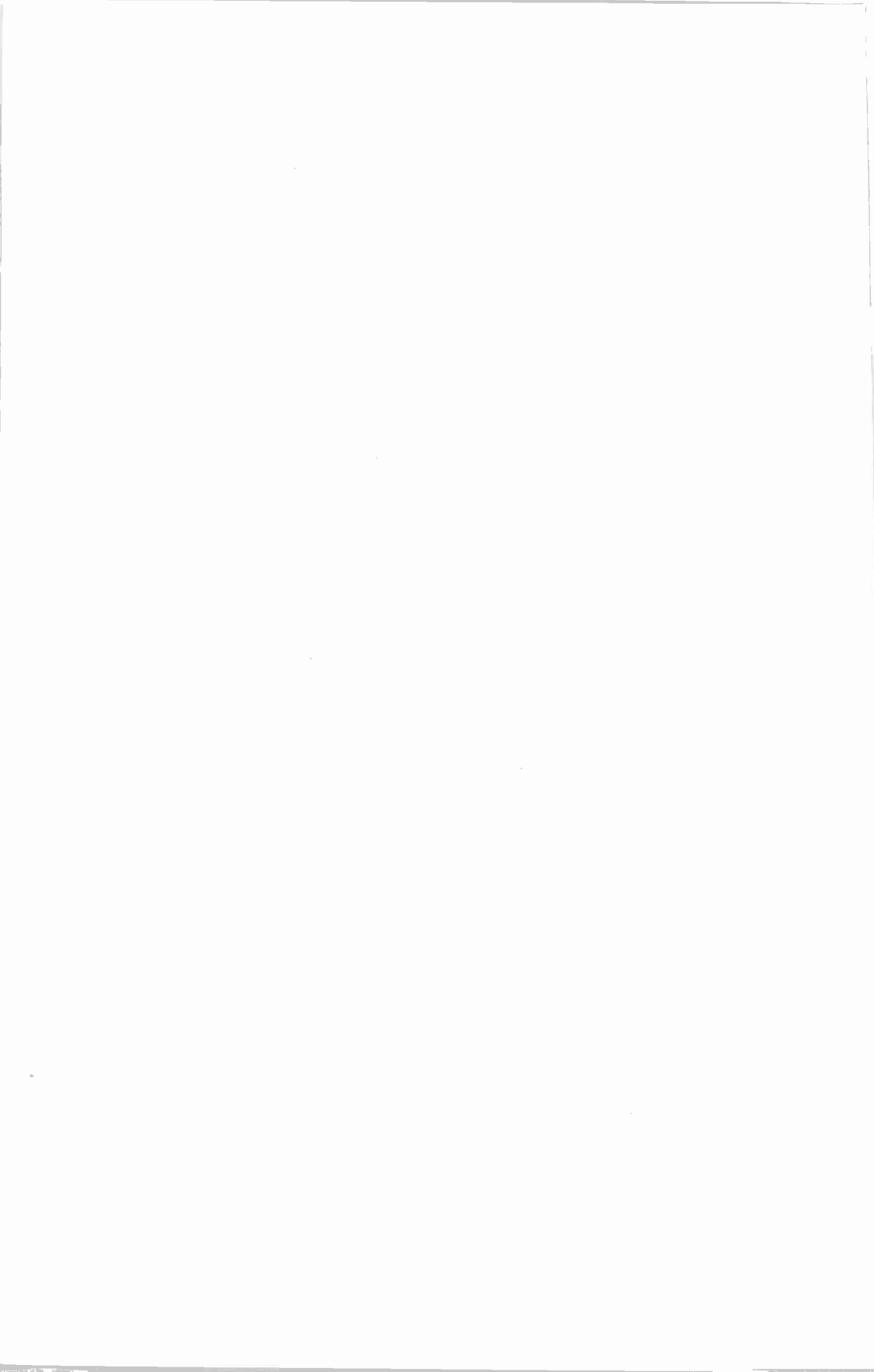
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