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## Watch what you're watching together: the complicated relationship between family coviewing and family functioning

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WATCH WHAT YOU'RE WATCHING TOGETHER:  
THE COMPLICATED RELATIONSHIP  
BETWEEN FAMILY COVIEWING  
AND FAMILY FUNCTIONING

Thesis

Submitted to

The College of Arts and Sciences of the  
UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

The Degree

Master of Arts in Communication

by

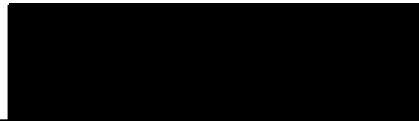
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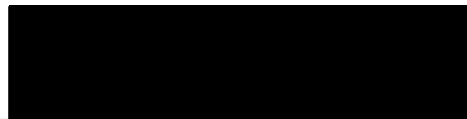
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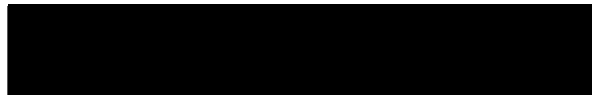
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## ABSTRACT

### WATCH WHAT YOU'RE WATCHING TOGETHER: THE COMPLICATED RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY COVIEWING AND FAMILY FUNCTIONING

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This quantitative study examines a potential relationship between viewing television together as a family and family functioning. About 150 families from California, Missouri and Ohio were asked to report the amount of time they spent viewing television together (covieving) as well as the specific programs they were likely to view as a family. The families also completed the self-report McMaster Family Assessment Device, which measures five dimensions of family functioning (communication, roles, affective involvement, behavior control and overall general functioning). Statistical analysis revealed inverse relationships between the amount of time spent coviewing and family communication, affective involvement (i.e., cohesion) and behavior control. These results suggest that, as families spend more time watching television together, they communicate less effectively, are less cohesive as a unit and their control of individual behavior is reduced.

The specific programs families reported coviewing were coded into one of six categories: drama/action-adventure; comedy; news, talk and information;

sports; reality programming/game shows; and children's programming. Families in this study covieved reality programs most frequently (47.3%), followed by dramas (40.5%), comedies (38.2%), and sports (36.6%). Standard multiple regression analysis revealed a linear relationship between coviewing categories and family communication. Specifically, coviewing news, sports and information, along with reality programming, accounted for an improvement in family communication.

Further, when families were assigned a primary coviewing category and then divided into three groups based on affective involvement scores, families who primarily covieved sports programming were 2.5 times more likely to be highly cohesive, while families who primarily covieved comedies were almost 3 times more likely to fall into the low cohesion group.

A discussion of these results suggests that families should carefully consider the amount of time they spend in front of the television together, as well as the types of program they choose to coview.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, society has placed confidence in the family as the building block of the community. The family has traditionally been responsible for the nurturing and education of children, for the emotional and physical care of adults and for establishing and reinforcing society's values. However, according to Popenoe (1995), a gradual shift from a collectivist culture to an individualistic culture has contributed to a family viewpoint that places more emphasis on self-expression, independence and competitiveness than on the welfare of the group. American families, according to various measures, are functioning as an interconnected unit less today than ever before.

Despite these indications of the deterioration of the American family as a cohesive nuclear unit and the various emerging interests vying for the individual attentions of family members, one entertainment medium retains the power to unite American families in one location for a significant amount of time: the television. If families today spend no time doing anything else together, they are watching TV together (Haran, 1995). In fact, one study suggests that 60% of television viewing occurs with other family members present (Schmitt, Woolf, & Anderson, 2003).



Family coviewing (two or more family members watching television together) has been discussed and examined in several previous studies, but emphasis has not yet been placed on whether this activity has any relationship to family functioning. Specifically, the present study will attempt to examine possible connections between a family's communication, role structure, cohesion and behavior control and their coviewing habits. Two distinct relationships will be examined: the amount of time spent coviewing to family functioning and the specific category of programming primarily coviewed by families as it relates to their functioning. Is it the amount of time spent coviewing that matters, or is it what families are watching together that is more important? An empirical investigation of these relationships follows, in which time spent coviewing, as well as category coviewed, will be statistically compared to family functioning scores.

### Television and the Family

In the 50 years since its rise to popularity, television has pervaded the lives of Americans completely. The U.S. Census Bureau (2004-2005) reports that 98.2% of households have at least one TV, with an average of 2.4 sets per household. In a Kaiser Family Foundation study, 100% of homes with 8-18 year olds had a television, and 65% of those 8-18 year-olds had a television in their bedroom (Roberts & Foehr, 2004).

According to Robinson and Godbey's (1997) study of leisure time in the United States, 37.8% of Americans' leisure time is spent watching television. Adults watch television an average of 87.6 minutes per day, which is more than any other activity save their main jobs and sleeping (Robinson & Godbey, 1997).

The average 8-18 year-old, however, watches more than three hours per day (Roberts & Foehr, 2004).

But are families watching together? In a study of the time families spend at home, 84.6% said their families are doing more things together now than individually, and most often (47.4%) family members said they like watching television together (Haran, 1995). In fact, the predisposition to stay at home may even be encouraged by the readily available entertainment of television (Lull, 1988). According to the Kaiser study, kids spend 24% of their evening viewing time watching with their parents, as well as 13% of their afternoon viewing and 8% of their morning viewing (Roberts & Foehr, 2004). Another study that videotaped families' in-home television viewing reported that 60% of time viewing occurred with other family members (Schmitt, Woolf, & Anderson, 2003).

The significant portion of viewing time spent as a family creates several opportunities for investigation regarding the way television structures and affects family life. Prior research has focused on family attitudes toward television (Brown & Hayes, 2001), the role of television in the home (Morrison & Krugman, 2001; Wartella & Jennings, 2001), family conversations about television (Messaris, 1983), the influence of television viewing on family interaction (Schmitt, Woolf, & Anderson, 2003; Brody, Stoneman, & Sanders, 1983; Brody & Stoneman, 1983), families' mediation of television viewing (Buerkel-Rothfuss & Buerkel, 2001; Krcmar, 1998) and the meaning of television in the American family (Alexander, 2001).

Kotler, Wright & Huston (2001) suggest just a few of the ways television influences families:

Television can bring family members together or it can isolate them; it can teach positive, educational messages or it can relay antisocial, frightening information; it can be an arena in which to negotiate taste, values and preferences, or it can be the battleground for family arguments. It can detract from family conflict. Television can be the friendly babysitter, the annoying houseguest, or the default activity when nothing more interesting is available. (p. 33)

Lull's (1980a, 1980b, 1988a, 1988b) ethnographic research suggests that families have learned to adapt television into overall family functioning.

Television viewing does not occur in a vacuum; it is constructed by family members. Viewers not only interpret the content they are watching, but also construct the social situations in which viewing takes place (Lull, 1988b).

Messaris (1983) suggests, "Once television becomes an established part of family life, social activities are reconstituted around it" (p. 293).

Although families do not normally think of television viewing as the time for family communication, they do claim that television brings them together, directs attention to particular topics for conversation and provides a convenient social setting for family communication (Brown & Hayes, 2001; Lull, 1988b). Children often use television to enter and promote conversations with adults (Reid, 1980). Television viewing and talk about television are simply extensions of the interpersonal communication that takes places between family members (Lull, 1988a). Even the concept of the American "TV dinner", that is, eating dinner in front of the television set, which a reported 65% of families practice (Roberts & Foehr, 2004), extends the evening meal into a media setting (Lull, 1988a).

In the 1950s, television began to bring families together, even to the point that it became known as the electronic hearth (Kotler et al., 2001). The trend toward television as an everywhere appliance in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century (bedrooms, kitchens, even the occasional bathroom) contributed to the segregation of family viewing. Now, media rooms are being created in newer homes, including projection and high definition digital televisions, stereo surround sound, DVD players, and cable and satellite subscriptions. The well-outfitted media center provides an entertainment focus that is hard for family members to resist. Andreasen (2001) proposed that image and sound quality available at the technologically sophisticated media center might further draw family members together in their viewing habits.

Morrison and Krugman (2001) call television “clusters” the gathering areas of the home, where furniture is arranged for multiple person viewing or social congregating areas. In their research comparing traditional and transitional architectural perspectives of homes, Pardun and Krugman (1994) found that families in transitional homes referred to the group experience and the benefits of watching television together. For these families, the number of sets spread throughout the home was not important compared to the “main” television in a central location.

### Social Uses of Television

Based on the theoretical foundation of the uses and gratifications paradigm, it can be argued that families consciously select media to fulfill certain needs and goals. In this research tradition, the question becomes not what the

media do with people, but what people do with the media (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974). This model focuses on how needs lead to specific patterns of television use (Schmitt, Woolf, & Anderson, 2003). Since uses and gratifications assumes a conscious, rational analysis of media choices, it may help to explain the selection behavior of individuals in a diverse and highly varied program environment (Lindlof, Shatzer, & Wilkinson, 1998). Of course, the media selected can fulfill multiple needs at the same time and from the same content (Alexander, 2001).

Katz and colleagues (1974) originally emphasized the functions of surveillance, correlation, entertainment and cultural transmission, and a host of other "uses" have been added in sixty years of uses and gratifications research. The less obvious *social* uses of media have received much less attention (Lull, 1980b). Mass media can be examined as a social resource employed in interpersonal communication systems. Television, though rarely considered as a means of facilitating interpersonal relationships, now plays a central role in the methods families employ to interact normatively (Lull, 1980b).

Lull (1980b) focused his ethnographic research specifically on the communicative value of television as a social resource. The social uses typology Lull postulated consists of two primary types: structural and relational. Employed structurally, television is first an environmental resource that serves as a background that can be moved to the foreground whenever the viewer desires. It is a companion and contributes to the overall social environment with a

"constant and predictable assortment of sounds and pictures which instantly creates an apparently busy atmosphere" (Lull, 1980b, p. 202).

Second, television is a structural behavior regulator. Television punctuates time in a household and helps to schedule other events (Goodman, 1983). Choices for family activity, when to eat, when to do homework, when to engage in outside entertainment, are all affected by the television program schedule. Jordan (1992), in a study of families' mass media use as a function of social class, reported that middle- and upper-middle-class families (more than working-class families) were likely to incorporate television into their daily routines. This included morning habits, after-school activities, and bedtime rituals. She suggests there is a "tempo" or "rhythm" in families that is "punctuated by media use at transitional times during the day (such as the shift from home to work for parents and the passage from being awake and together to being asleep and alone from children)" (p. 384).

As far as the relational elements of social uses of television, Lull (1980b) says they can be organized into four major divisions: communication, interpersonal affiliation, learning social behavior and demonstrating competence or dominance.

Communication. Television serves to facilitate communication. Children use television programs and characters as "known-in-common referents" in order to clarify issues and to explain real world experiences, emotions and beliefs, which might otherwise be difficult to elucidate to each other and adults. Children

also use television as a means to enter a conversation, possibly by using a television example that relates to the subject matter.

The viewing experience can facilitate conversation itself. Conversational discomfort can be reduced when the television is on: the expectation of eye contact between interactants is eliminated, and the program content provides an immediate agenda for talk. Television also helps family members clarify their personal attitudes, values and opinions, especially in light of controversial programming that might be watched together. However, one family member may use television to stimulate conversation while another may use it to avoid conversation (Goodman, 1983). St. Peters, Fitch, Huston, Wright, and Eakins (1991) claim that coviewing is "not often utilized as an occasion for parental attention to children's needs and interests" (p. 1422).

Competence and dominance roles. Television provides a means of asserting competence and dominance by particular family members (Lull, 1980b). When parents regulate television viewing amounts or content, they are fulfilling this gatekeeping function. The parent is confirming a role as authoritative and supervisory. Also, a family member may use television to learn acceptable role behavior. Family members often use television to validate contested information or to demonstrate intellectual competence. Information-oriented conversations about television may help to reinforce parental competence and authority regarding facts and issues (Messaris, 1983).

Television viewing may be authoritatively granted or taken away as a reward or punishment. This is often true with parents and children, but can also

be instigated between spouses, as in using television viewing or program choice to get even with each other (Goodman, 1983). In deciding which program to watch, family members often argue, thus providing an outlet for the airing of personal differences (Lull, 1980b). Television may be used as a scapegoat since fighting over television is easier and less threatening than fighting over more complex problems, or watching television could help deflect fighting (Goodman, 1983).

Interpersonal affiliation. Television provides the potential opportunity for the desired construction of interpersonal contact or avoidance (Lull, 1980b). Children often take advantage of the proxemic nature of audience positioning in front of the television. The "captive" audience facilitates their desire to engage verbally or physically with other family members. Some adults exhibit rare moments of physical contact in front of the television—intimacy that need not be accompanied by conversation. This may reflect a sensitivity on the part of family members to maintain personal contact while they are no longer talking or orienting toward each other but toward the television (Brody et al., 1980). In some families, watching television is the acceptable time for expressing affection because they may have difficulty doing so other times (Goodman, 1983). Television viewing as a family behavior which is accomplished together creates family solidarity and can be a relaxant by reducing family discord, at least during the viewing period (Lull, 1980b).

Television can also be a resource for escape, by providing a focus for attention or as a social distracter. The use for escape is more prevalent in



families with high levels of conflict (Kotler et al., 2001). Rosenblatt and Cunningham (1976) found a strong positive relationship between the amount of time household television sets were powered on and self-reports of tension and conflict within the family. Television may serve as a way of avoiding social interaction and conversation for those who have difficulty interacting with each other. Lull (1980b) suggests, as well, "Television can provoke a vicarious, evanescent fantasy world which serves for some the psychological purpose of a desirable, if temporary, occupation of an alternative reality" (p. 204).

In the aforementioned comparison of traditional and transitional homes, Pardun & Krugman (1994) found that traditional home families tended to fit into the escape or retreat pattern of viewing. Family members preferred individual viewing and no one television set in the home emerged as the "main" set. Conversely, in transitional homes, families used television as a "magnet" (Pardun & Krugman, 1994). The resulting "main" set in the community area of the home created a busier, more socially oriented atmosphere.

Social learning. Television is regarded as resource for social learning (Lull, 1980b). Besides the persuasive messages in television advertising, program content itself can provide practical suggestions for social interaction. Television provides an abundance of role models used by family members. Parents encourage children to watch public television or game shows for their educational value. To the extent that children absorb this information, television may be seen as supplementing or reinforcing the formal education process (Messaris, 1983).

Themes and values embedded in programming are used by parents to teach life lessons and to present their own view of the world to children (Lull, 1980b). However, conflict may arise when values expressed on television are embraced by one family member but are contrary to the families' values as a whole (Goodman, 1983).

### Social Coviewing

Numerous studies throughout the past 40 years have indicated that, to some degree, television is capable of influencing the development of a diverse array of social behaviors in children (Brody et al., 1980). Social coviewing, i.e., the act of sitting with the child and watching the same show he or she is watching, is one way family members act to break the link between exposure to television and unwelcome attitude or behavior changes in children (Buerkel-Rothfuss & Buerkel, 2001). Jordan (1992) suggests that "through television viewing with parents and rules that surround that medium, children learn implicit lessons about how much attention television needs and deserves" (p. 384-385). Coviewing may be an interactive activity, as when parents and children engage in conversation about what is happening on television, or it may be passive, where all family members sit silently together watching, eyes focused on the television (Buerkel-Rothfuss & Buerkel, 2001).

Coviewing can be a positive experience, in that it allows parents the opportunity to monitor programs and intervene if undesirable content is broadcast. Parents can change the channel or discuss the offensive content (Buerkel-Rothfuss & Buerkel, 2001). Parents can also offer comments that aid in

learning, can explain characters and plots, and can influence attitudes towards violence and other negative behaviors (Buerkel-Rothfuss & Buerkel, 2001).

Dorr, Kovaric and Doubleday (1989) report that parents watching television with their children is often considered "especially desirable":

In this situation parents can be certain what children are watching, help them to understand the medium and its content, encourage them to accept only those messages parents endorse, intervene immediately should there be desirable or undesirable content, and gain firsthand knowledge of children's reactions to the medium and its content. (p. 35)

Coviewing helps children make sense of the television world and aids in comprehension (Krcmar, 1998; Wartella, & Jennings, 2001). Active coviewing requires less interpretation from the child than silent coviewing and can communicate specific value judgments about the program. Supplementary information by parents has been shown to increase the educational potential of children's television viewing (Messaris, 1983). Based on parental response patterns, perhaps one of the most important lessons that children can learn from the television-inspired requests for information involves the value of trying to go beyond immediately available information in this or any other medium (Messaris, 1983). Despite these potential benefits, however, little evidence exists to suggest that parents actually engage in these active coviewing behaviors (Alexander, 2001).

Conversely, silent, or passive, coviewing is not always positive. Because social coviewing has a television-enhancing effect, watching television with children can amplify the negative impact of programming (Buerkel-Rothfuss & Buerkel, 2001). By watching a program with a child, parents are giving a form of

approval of the content as salient and valuable. The parent's mere presence may imply an endorsement of content that may not be appropriate for young viewers (Kotler et al., 2001). This can increase the magnitude of a variety of exposure effects (Buerkel-Rothfuss & Buerkel, 2001).

Although much research exists concerning the positive and negative effects of coviewing, little emphasis has been placed on how frequently it occurs or what types of programs are being coviewed by families. St. Peters and colleagues (1991) sampled 3- and 5-year olds in a 2-year longitudinal study of television viewing patterns. They found that when young children view with their parents, they are usually watching television geared toward a general audience, as opposed to programs aimed at a child audience. St. Peters et al. (1991) also suggest that parents' viewing choices are a significant factor in exposing young children to adult programming:

These findings counteract the common stereotype that children's exposure to inappropriate programs results from lack of parental involvement. In fact, young children are apt to be exposed to situation comedies, crime shows, soap operas, variety shows, and news because they are with their parents, not because they are left alone. (p. 1421)

Dorr et al. (1989) came to a similar conclusion in their study of second, sixth and tenth graders and their parents. They found that coviewing occurs primarily because children and parents have similar tastes in programming and were not averse to viewing together. The data did not support the idea that coviewing occurred as a result of the parents' concern that their children reap the most benefit from and avoid the harmful effects of television (Dorr et al., 1989).

A question that remains, and has not been addressed in previous studies, although it has been suggested by previous researchers (Lull, 1980b, St. Peters et al., 1991), is the effect of coviewing on the family. Diaries, self-reports and interviews do not measure whether coviewing television has a beneficial effect on families' social interaction or whether watching television together is simply low quality time.

One category of programming children seem to spend a great deal of time coviewing with their parents is sports. St. Peters and colleagues (1991) found that children watched sports programs with either both parents or with their fathers—rarely did they view sports alone. The start-stop action of sports programming affords parents an opportunity for active coviewing unlike other programs where a non-stop storyline attempts to hold viewers attention.

### Sports Television

Although communication researchers have studied families and television for 40 years, the specific genre of sports television as a unique opportunity for social interaction has not been addressed. A *Sports Illustrated* poll reported that 84% of Americans watch sports on television at least once a week, and 71% of those polled considered themselves fans (Showalter, 1986). While American males 18 to 49 do not watch as much television as other groups, they do watch sports (Johnson, 1986). Most men (fathers) prefer watching sports to any other category of programming (Lull, 1988a). Seventeen percent of viewing time for children ages 8-18 is sports related, while for 11-14 year-olds specifically, the number climbs to 21% (Roberts & Foehr, 2004).

A 2001 nationwide study reports that 93% of all children in the United States, ages 8-17, report using some form of sport media (Statistical Research, Inc., 2001). While the results of this study should be carefully considered in light of the fact that it was commissioned jointly by the Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles and ESPN, seven in 10 children reported that they interact with sports through the media a couple of times a week or every day, and 88% of those use television for their sports information, preferring it over radio, print and the Internet. While children indicated the "big three" professional sports—basketball, football and baseball—as the sports they interact with most through the media, the Olympic games were watched by more children (84%) than any other type of sports television programming (Statistical Research, Inc., 2001). And they are not watching alone.

Perhaps the most interesting statistic, and most relevant for this study, is that seven in ten children ages 8-17 report that they usually watch sports television with others—66% of boys and 76% of girls (Statistical Research, Inc., 2001). Children reported watching with their fathers most often (55%) and 23% mentioned viewing with their mothers. Fourteen percent reported "usually watching" with "both parents" (Statistical Research, Inc., 2001, p. 42).

While some programs, particularly on cable networks, are targeted for narrow, well-defined groups, sports programs are constructed to appeal to a wide general audience (Brody & Stoneman, 1983). Media critic Brown suggests that viewers are drawn to sports programs because of their unique nature:

Sports events are at once topical and entertaining, performed live and suspensefully without a script, peopled with heroes and villains, full of

action and human interest and laced with pageantry and ritual. (Showalter, 1986, para. 3)

Lull (1988a) comments that sports programs, while factual, do not follow a script or have guaranteed outcomes:

Games and matches are not just informational events. They are stories, too. They provoke emotional reactions. A good game, like good stories of all kinds, is a drama, full of suspense and surprises. You don't know the ending until the last scene—the final few minutes of the game. And, there are layers of public discourse that surround sports stars, just like the celebration of other popular culture heroes, that add even more flair to the drama. (p. 249)

Bozell (2004b) calls the “big game” an “obvious time-slot for family hour programming” (para. 10). Sizemore (2004) recommended the 2004 Olympic games as an “excellent viewing choice for families” because they are free from offensive content (para. 1).

Sports leagues continue to target families in their promotion to draw an even larger following. Major League Baseball (MLB) designed an ad campaign to show moms, dads, grandparents and children bonding at the ballpark and is angling to make baseball the “first choice for family entertainment” (Petrecca, Cuneo, Halliday, & Neff, 2000, para. 4, 5). The National Football League (NFL) is also attempting to attract more women to the game and hopes to also bring in kids with its sponsorship of Pop Warner football (Stanley, 1996). NASCAR auto racing has always been a family-oriented sport, and it is now second only to the NFL in both popularity and ratings (Thomaselli, 2004). NASCAR's recent draw of family-friendly sponsors, e.g., M&M's, Cheerio's and Kellogg's, encourages Sunday-afternoon viewing together around the set.

Of course, there are drawbacks to the abundance of families gathering around the television to watch the game. Foth (1986) warns against TV sports usurping "real" family interaction or replacing family ball games in the yard. At least one man's addiction to ESPN has been cited as spousal neglect in a Texas divorce case (Rainsley, 1986). And, like other programming choices, sports schedules can dictate timing of family and community events (Rainsley, 1986).

Apparently, however, based on ratings numbers, Americans need sports as an outlet for play. Critic Himmelstein writes:

We're desperately seeking relief, with no personal risk, from the monotony of our everyday lives; we want a manufactured emotional high or even an emotional low. Then after the joy or the despair wears off, we can return to our own world in which our place is as secure as it was yesterday and the day before. (Showalter, 1986, para. 8)

### Approach to Families

Recent data suggest that the traditional, nostalgic definition of a family no longer accurately describes many of the actual family units in America today (Andreasen, 2001). For the purposes of this study, Andreasen's (2001) broad definition of family will be accepted, "Families are systems bound by ties of blood, law, or affection, and like, all systems, they require cohesiveness and adaptability for their survival" (p. 10).

Goodman (1983) describes the family as a small, boundary-maintaining, natural group in which the behaviors of one individual family member affect the behaviors of the other members and of the family system as whole. According to Lindlof et al. (1988), families each have a unique psychosocial history, and family membership is constructed from a communicative framework that all family



members together determine. While many scholars have sought to ascertain how family communication patterns can explain television use, this study is concerned primarily instead with how television viewing influences family interaction patterns.

For research purposes, the "family" will be taken as a unit of analysis, with acknowledgement of the competing interests and agendas of individual family members. Families do not always act as a complete and harmonious group in their television viewing (Lull, 1988a). However, one characteristic that has been linked to television coviewing is family cohesion (Olson, 2000). Cohesive families demonstrate closeness to each other and perceive adequate amounts of shared time and attention (Buerkel-Rothfuss & Buerkel, 2001). Generally, this is related to high parental interaction with children, and, by default, mediation of television (Buerkel-Rothfuss & Buerkel, 2001).

For the purposes of this study, the McMaster Approach to Families (Epstein, Bishop, & Levin, 1978) will be utilized in our assessment of the correlations between families' social use of television and family functioning. The McMaster Model includes a multi-dimensional theory of family functioning and a self-report instrument to assess these constructs, the Family Assessment Device (FAD) (Miller, Ryan, Keitner, Bishop, & Epstein, 2000). This model was chosen because it emphasizes clarity in explanation of functioning, includes clear operationally defined constructs, and incorporates empirical validation in the form of the Family Assessment Device (Epstein, Baldwin, & Bishop, 1983).

The McMaster Model is based on systems theory. Miller et al. (2000) list the crucial assumptions of systems theory that motivate the model:

1. All parts of the family are interrelated.
2. One part of the family cannot be understood in isolation from the rest of the family system.
3. Family functioning cannot be fully understood by simply understanding each of the individual family members or subgroups.
4. A family's structure and organization are important factors that strongly influence and determine the behavior of the family members.
5. The transactional patterns of the family system strongly shape the behavior of family members. (p. 169)

The McMaster Model identifies six dimensions of family functioning: communication, roles, affective involvement, behavior control, problem-solving and affective responsiveness (Miller et al., 2000). For this study, only the first four dimensions listed above, along with an assessment of overall family functioning, will be implemented. This decision was made because of the correspondence between the communication, roles, affective involvement, and behavior control dimensions and Lull's (1980b) social uses typology of families. The dimensions in the McMaster model are not exhaustive, they could potentially overlap and interact, and no single dimension serves as a foundation for family functioning (Miller et al., 2000). The authors conceptualized and operationalized the dimensions in a way that they hoped could be easily taught and used for

research (Miller et al., 2000). The dimensions included in this study are discussed in more detail below.

Communication. Family communication is defined as how information is exchanged within a family (Miller et al., 2000). The focus is on verbal exchange, and conversation can be divided into instrumental and affective arenas.

Instrumental communication concerns the mechanical problems and affairs of everyday life, and affective communication is related to feelings and emotional experience (Miller et al., 2000). Also, two other independent aspects are addressed: is communication clear or masked, and is it direct or indirect? The clarity of the information is the focus of the first aspect; the issue is the degree to which the message is clear, or if it is "camouflaged, muddled, vague or masked" (Miller et al., 2000, p. 171). The direct or indirect aspect is concerned with whether the communication is clearly directed to the person for whom it is intended (Miller et al., 2000).

Roles. Miller et al. (2000) define family roles as "the recurrent patterns of behavior by which individuals fulfill family functions" (p. 171). Roles, like communication, are also divided into instrumental and affective areas. In addition, roles are further divided into necessary family functions and other family functions. Necessary functions include all those which a family must repeatedly perform in to order to function well, and other functions are those which are not necessary for effective function but arise in the life of every family (Miller et al., 2000).

Affective involvement. The degree to which a family "shows interest in and values the activities and interest of individual family members" is affective involvement (Miller et al., 2000, p. 171). This refers to the amount of involvement and interest in each other among family members, not simply what the family does together (Miller et al., 2000). Affective involvement can also be labeled cohesion, which refers to the emotional bonding that family members have towards one another. Cohesion can also be defined as how family systems balance the separate versus together aspect of the family (Olson, 2000). According to Epstein, Baldwin and Bishop (1983), the healthiest families exhibit intermediate levels of affective involvement, that is, neither too little nor too much.

Behavior control. The McMaster Model defines the behavior control dimension based on three types of situations. First, in *physically dangerous* situations a family must control and monitor the behavior of its members. Second, there are situations which involve *meeting and expressing psychobiological needs drives*. These include eating, drinking, sleeping, eliminating, affection and aggression (Miller et al., 2000). Third, situations involving *interpersonal socializing behavior* arise among family members and outside of the family. According to Miller et al. (2000), "Families develop their own standards of acceptable behavior, as well as the degrees of latitude they will permit in relation to these standards" (p. 172). The degree of behavior control in a particular family is determined by these standards and the degree of latitude in enforcing them.

### Family Coviewing in Relation to Family Functioning

Previous findings and suggestions in the literature surrounding the social uses of television and family functioning will be utilized in an attempt to assess one's relationship with the other. Two distinct relationships will be examined: time spent coviewing to family functioning and category coviewed to family functioning. How is it that a family uses television to facilitate or avoid social interaction, and, in turn, increase or decrease overall family functioning, successfully communicate or avoid communicating, establish roles or abrogate authority, build cohesion or tolerate dissension, and control behavior or allow errant behavior? Also, what specifically are families coviewing, and is the choice of coviewed television related to the various aspects of family functioning?

Based on the literature regarding family coviewing and social interaction, several hypotheses regarding the relationships between time spent coviewing and family functioning will be tested. In addition, three research questions relating to category of coviewing, which has not been empirically tested in previous research, will be answered.

H<sub>1</sub>: The amount of time families spend coviewing television will be related to their overall family functioning.

H<sub>2</sub>: The amount of time families spend coviewing television will be related to their use of clear and direct family communication.

H<sub>3</sub>: The amount of time families spend coviewing television will be related to their likelihood of structuring their family into defined roles.

H<sub>4</sub>: The amount of time families spend coviewing television will be related to their affective involvement, or family cohesion.

H<sub>5</sub>: The amount of time families spend coviewing television will be related to the amount of behavior control family members exert over each other.

These hypotheses will be tested using Pearson product moment correlations ( $r$ ). The amount of time in hours families spend watching television will be correlated with their score on the overall functioning scale. The amount of time viewing will also be correlated with the individual scores on the dimensions of communication, roles, affective involvement and behavior control on the McMaster Family Assessment Device to determine if any one dimension is more strongly related to coviewing time.

RQ<sub>1</sub>: What types or categories of programming do families coview?

Families will be asked to list the television shows they are most likely to watch together (see Appendix A). These answers will be codes into six categories based on the coders' prior knowledge of the shows or a television guide description (drama/action-adventure; comedy; news, talk and information;

sports; reality programming/game shows; and children's programming). Three different coders will code 10% of the surveys to determine intercoder agreement. If intercoder agreement proves to be above the 70% level, the researcher will code the remaining 90% of the surveys.

Listed shows that do not fit a specific category (e.g., rented movies), will not be classified because they do not represent standard television programming, with which this study is concerned. Each family will have a score for each category, based on the number of shows listed in that category. This will provide new insight into a body of literature that, while extensively outlining the phenomena of coviewing, fails to report what it is, specifically, that families are coviewing.

RQ<sub>2</sub>: Is the type or category of coviewing related to any dimension of family functioning?

This relationship is addressed in the form of a research question because no prior literature exists that addresses specific categories of coviewing. A linear combination of the six coviewing categories (drama/action-adventure; comedy; news, talk and information; sports; reality programming/game shows; and children's programming) will be used in multiple regression analysis to predict any or all of a family's four dimensions of family functioning scores, as well as their general functioning score. The nature of these relationships will provide

knowledge regarding if *what* families are watching together is related to their functioning.

RQ<sub>3</sub>: Is coviewing sports television as a family related to an increase in any dimension of family functioning?

This relationship is also addressed in the form of a research question because, again, no prior literature exists that addresses specific categories of coviewing or sports in particular. A family's primary coviewing category will be determined and then compared to its overall family functioning score, as well as its scores on each of the four other dimensions of functioning, using five individual chi square tests to determine statistical significance. The nature of these relationships will provide knowledge regarding if watching sports as a primary coviewing category is positively related to a families' functioning.

Goodman (1983) speculates that an analysis of television coviewing of this sort could replace the traditional methods of family assessment:

Because of TV's acknowledged pervasiveness in the lives of so many American families, the family's use of television may very well replace their dining-room table behavior as the key to a better understanding of whole family functioning. (p. 421)



## CHAPTER II

### METHOD

A convenience sample of families recruited through the students in three separate learning institutions was utilized in this investigation. The students were asked to take the questionnaires home to complete together with their families. The questionnaire included instructions to gather their family members to complete the items together and to select the answers that the entire family most fully agreed upon (see Appendix A). In this way, each family was considered an independent unit. Students and families were advised that the surveys would be completely confidential. The families were never asked their names nor any questions that could identify them in any way.

Students anonymously returned the completed surveys to their instructors and were compensated for their effort. They were allowed to choose a small tangible reward provided by a cable television network free of charge to the researcher (pens, notebooks, soda koozies, etc.). The network received no remuneration or information from this study in return.

#### Participant Description

The independent data from a total of 150 surveys were compiled to acquire the results of this study. The students and their families who completed the surveys were enrolled in three separate learning institutions located in

Dayton, Ohio; Palmdale, California; and Newtown, Missouri. Because of their socioeconomic differences, these schools provide a diverse sample of participants for coviewing analysis. Students from Waynesville Elementary School near Dayton, Ohio returned 55 surveys (of 75 distributed), 63 surveys were returned from Knight High School in Palmdale, California (of 150 distributed) and the students at Newtown-Harris High School in Newtown, Missouri returned 31 surveys (of 70 distributed). The overall survey return rate was 50.5%.

Waynesville Elementary School. Surveys for this study were distributed to fifth grade students at Waynesville Elementary School. Waynesville Elementary is a kindergarten through fifth grade primary school located in Waynesville, Ohio (population 2,929), which is south of Dayton. The 568 Waynesville Elementary students live primarily in rural and suburban areas and reported their ethnicity as 100% Caucasian (Public School Review, 2004). The median household income in this school district is reported at \$55,445 and the average household size is 2.7 persons (Public School Review, 2004). The families in this study in particular reported an average household size of 4.47.

Knight High School. Surveys were distributed to students in four different grades (9, 10, 11, 12) at Knight High School in Palmdale, California (population 131,153). Palmdale is located in the Antelope Valley, approximately 60 miles northeast of the Los Angeles basin. This urban/suburban high school has an enrollment of 1,693. Hispanic students make up 52% of Knight High School, 23% of students are African-Americans, 22% are Caucasian, and 3% report

other ethnicities (Knight High School, 2004). The median household income in this school district is reported at \$37,484 and the average household size is 3.39 persons (City-data.com, 2005). The families in this study in particular reported an average household size of 4.6.

Newtown-Harris High School. Newtown is a rural, agricultural community in northern Missouri. Newtown-Harris High School is located in the small town of Newtown, which has a population of 197 people. Seventy students are enrolled in grades 9-12, 100% of which report their ethnicity as Caucasian (Public School Review, 2004). Every student received a survey to complete with his or her family. The median household income in this school district is reported at \$22,188 and the average household size is 2.6 persons (Public School Review, 2004). The families in this study in particular reported an average household size of 4.7.

### Instrumentation

The surveys contained one page of family descriptive items, including a listing of family members, their ages and their education level (see Appendix A). Next, families were asked how many hours, on average, they estimate that two or more family members spend watching television together each day, to the nearest half hour. They were also asked how many estimated hours two or more family members spent watching television together during the past weekend. This will ideally account for the differences in weekday and weekend coviewing. Families were then given an item asking them to list from memory the shows they were most likely to watch together as a family. A smaller portion of

respondents were also given a checklist of programs from Nielsen's top 100-rated shows to check validity against the recalled list.

The McMaster Family Assessment Device made up the second page of the survey. The 12 items for overall family functioning, six for communication, eight for roles, seven for affective involvement and nine for behavior control were asked on a four-choice Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree) (see Appendix A).

The McMaster Family Assessment Device (FAD) was developed as a measure of family functioning to "identify problem areas in the most simple and efficient fashion possible" (Epstein et al., 1983, p. 171). Previous family research indicated that family functioning was much more related to transactional and systemic properties of the family than individual characteristics of family members, so the FAD was developed to collect information on the various dimensions of the family as a whole (Epstein et al., 1983). These dimensions are based on the constructs presented in the McMaster Model of Family Functioning (Epstein, Bishop, & Levin, 1978): communication, roles, affective involvement, behavior control, problem-solving and affective responsiveness. An additional scale on the FAD, general functioning, assesses overall health/pathology of the family.

The FAD is a paper and pencil questionnaire which can be filled out by all members of the family regarding statements or personal perceptions a person could make about his or her own family. Each family member rates his or her agreement or disagreement on how well an item describes his or her family by

selecting one of four items on a Likert scale: strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree (Epstein et al., 1983). Because Miller et al. (1985) suggest that different methods of combining individual scores to produce a "family" score should be explored, for this study family members will complete the 42-item questionnaire together as a group.

Reliability. Certain problems exist when developing an assessment device such as the FAD using a large item pool and then factor analyzing the results for the emergence of particular constructs. First, the scope of the instrument is determined and limited by the initial item set alone. If areas are underrepresented or not represented in the initial item pool, the final instrument will not be able to measure those areas. Second, the scales that are produced, "while having nice mathematical properties, are frequently hard to interpret and not clinically useful" (Epstein et al., 1983, p. 175).

To avoid these dangers, first the McMaster Model of Family Functioning (MMFF) was used to define the domains and scales that the FAD would measure. The original item pool consisted of 240 items, 40 items for each of the six dimensions of the MMFF. Within each subset the smallest number of items which produced the highest reliability using Chronbach's *alpha* was taken together to produce an individual construct scale. The original range of these *alphas* was between .83 and .90 (Epstein et al., 1983).

In subsequent studies of the internal reliability for the FAD (Kabacoff, Miller, Bishop, Epstein, & Keitner, 1990), using nonclinical families as well as families under psychiatric and medical care, the *alphas* were highest for the

General Functioning scale (.83-.86) and ranged between .70 and .80 for five of the other six dimensions. The Roles scale was the sole exception (.69 for the psychiatric and medical samples and .57 for the nonclinical sample), which suggests that this construct should be used cautiously, particularly for the nonclinical families under examination in this study. Despite the fact that the FAD was not originally developed through factor analytic methods, Kabacoff et al. (1990) reported that 90% of the items loaded on factors hypothesized by the MMFF (p. 438). Further, the General Functioning scale has been found to correlate highly (.87) with the first principal component of the other 48 items (Kabacoff et al., 1990). This supports the use of the General Functioning scale as a single index to represent overall functioning, as it will be used in this study.

The correlations between the seven scales were found to be only moderately independent, but the partial correlations when General Functioning is held constant do approach zero. This means the variance shared between the dimension scales is largely accounted for by the variance that each shares with the General Functioning scale (Epstein et al., 1983). The remaining intercorrelations between the scales, though potentially conflicting with traditional psychometric practices, explain the realistic interrelation between different dimensions of family life. Epstein et al. (1983) explain:

There is no reason to think that different aspects of family functioning will be totally independent of each other. In fact, we would expect problems in one area of family functioning to have ramifications in other areas ... Total independence of scales thus seems an illogical demand to place on a family assessment instrument. The FAD scales are sufficiently independent to be distinguishable and we have attempted to strike a balance between the demands of psychometry and reality. (p. 178)

Miller et al. (1985) tested the stability and equivalency of the FAD by administering it and two other well-known self-report family assessment measures, the FACES II and the Family Unit Inventory, to 45 non-clinical individuals and readministered the test one week later. The test-retest estimates for the FAD scales were as follows: communication (.72), roles (.75), affective involvement (.67), behavior control (.73), problem-solving (.66) affective responsiveness (.76), and general functioning (.71).

The FAD correlated highly with the Family Unit Inventory in relation to theoretical predictions, and if the FACES II is assumed to have a linear relationship with health—as opposed to the curvilinear scale proposed by the Olson Circumplex Model—then correlations between the FAD and the FACES II were also highly congruent with theoretical expectations (Miller et al., 1985).

Validity. Epstein et al. (1983) used FAD scores from 218 nonclinical families and 98 clinical families as an indicator of predictive validity, expecting the former to score higher on each dimension of the test as well as the General Functioning scale. The results proved statistically significant and revealed that 67% of the nonclinical group and 64% of the clinical group were correctly predicted. In every case, the nonclinical group mean was more healthy than the mean for the clinical group (Epstein et al., 1983).

Miller and associates (1985) collected a second type of validity, discriminative validity, by comparing FAD scores with an experienced family therapist's clinical ratings of that family. A series of *t* tests revealed that the mean FAD scores for families rated as unhealthy by clinicians were significantly

inferior to those of the families rated as healthy. Only for the dimension of behavior control was the mean difference not statistically significant (Miller et al., 1985). This analysis provides evidence that on six of seven dimensions the FAD scores correspond to the clinicians' ratings of healthy and unhealthy families.

The results of these studies suggest the Family Assessment Device has demonstrated sufficient internal consistency and test-retest reliability. FAD scores correlate with the results of other family measures and relate to family clinicians' professional assessment. The dimensions of the measure provide assessment of families in terms of a well-described, specific model of family functioning, and provide a detailed picture of families based on the seven different dimensions included. Hayden, Schiller, Dickstein, Seifer, Sameroff, and Miller et al. (1998) agree that the FAD exhibits adequate reliability and validity estimates and has been shown to distinguish between samples with and without psychopathy, as well as between families rated as healthy or unhealthy on the McMaster model. In conclusion, sufficient evidence exists for utilization of the Family Assessment Device as a reliable and valid measure of family functioning of a wide range of families.



## CHAPTER III

### RESULTS

#### Time Spent Coviewing and Family Functioning

The relationships described in hypotheses one through five were compared using Pearson product moment correlations. Significance was determined at the .05 level. Each relationship was examined using two different self-report time estimates: one for average time spent watching television together each day and another for time spent watching television together the weekend prior to completing the questionnaire.

Hypothesis one suggested that a relationship would exist between the amount of time families spend coviewing television and their overall family functioning. The correlation between these variables did not prove to be statistically significant for either time report (day:  $r = -.069$ ,  $N = 144$ ,  $n.s.$ ; weekend:  $r = -.117$ ,  $N = 144$ ,  $n.s.$ ); therefore, hypothesis one was not supported.

Hypothesis two concerned a relationship between the amount of time families spend coviewing television and their use of clear and direct family communication. This relationship was statistically significant, in the negative direction, for the average time spent viewing each day ( $r = -.188$ ,  $N = 144$ ,  $p < .05$ ), but not significant for weekend viewing ( $r = -.086$ ,  $N = 144$ ,  $n.s.$ ). As weekday coviewing time increased, families' communication scores on the FAD

decreased; conversely, families who communicated more clearly and directly spent less time coviewing television during the week (see Appendix C, Table 1).

The relationship between the amount of time families spent coviewing television and their established roles was addressed by hypothesis three. This correlation was not statistically significant for day or weekend coviewing, and therefore, hypothesis three was not supported (day:  $r = .009$ ,  $N = 144$ , *n.s.*; weekend:  $r = .018$ ,  $N = 144$ , *n.s.*).

For hypothesis four, the correlation between the amount of time families spend coviewing television and their affective involvement, or family cohesion, was examined. This relationship was statistically significant in the negative direction for reported weekend coviewing ( $r = -.164$ ,  $N = 144$ ,  $p = .05$ ) but not significant for average weekday coviewing ( $r = -.152$ ,  $N = 144$ , *n.s.*). This means that as families spend more time coviewing television on the weekends, their amount of affective involvement, or cohesion, decreases (see Appendix C, Table 2).

Hypothesis five, concerning the relationship between the family coviewing and behavior control, was supported with a statistically significant, inverse correlation for average weekday coviewing ( $r = -.218$ ,  $N = 144$ ,  $p < .01$ ). A family's degree of behavior control increases as their weekday television coviewing time decreases (see Appendix C, Table 3). The relationship between weekend coviewing and behavior control was not statistically significant ( $r = -.142$ ,  $N = 144$ , *n.s.*).

### Coviewing Categories

Research question one asked what types or categories of programming families coview more than others. Each family was asked to list the television shows they are most likely to watch together (see Appendix A). These shows were then coded into one of six categories, based on the coders' prior knowledge of the shows or a television guide description (intercoder agreement = 76.5%,  $n = 15$ ). The categories were as follows: drama/action-adventure; comedy; news, talk and information; sports; reality programming/game shows; and children's programming. Listed shows that did not fit a specific category (e.g., rented movies), were not classified because they did not represent standard television programming, with which this study is concerned.

Another group of questionnaires ( $n = 25$ ) was utilized in a validity check between listing freely recalled programs and a forced choice list of programs. Families were asked to list the shows they were most likely to watch together as a family, and then they were also asked to select from a list of 50 programs the shows they were most likely to watch together (see Appendix B). The forced choice list of 50 programs was assembled from season-to-date ratings of the top 100 programs in the Fall 2005 schedule (ABC Entertainment, 2005) and supplemented with choices for local news, top syndicated programs, and broad sports genres. The percentage of agreement between freely recalled listing and a forced choice list was 53%. To calculate this percentage of agreement, the number of programs both freely recalled and checked from a list were counted. This number was added to the number of programs freely recalled that were not

available in the list. These two numbers were summed as positive agreements. The total agreements were then compared to the number of non-agreements (shows freely recalled but not checked in the forced choice list and programs checked but not freely recalled). This means that respondents freely recalled a little more than half of the programs they say their family watches together, and selected from the forced choice list the other half.

Families coviewed programs in each of the six categories (see Appendix C, Table 4 for a comprehensive review). The category coviewed most by families in this study was reality/game shows. Almost half the families (47.3%) listed a reality or game show as a show they were likely to watch together as a family (see Appendix C, Table 9). Of these families, 25.3% listed two or more reality or game shows as likely coviewing.

Programs in the drama/action-adventure category were the next most likely to be viewed: 40.5% of families listed one or more drama/action-adventure programs (see Appendix C, Table 5). The comedy category follows closely behind drama/action-adventure in families' reports: 38.2% of families listed at least one comedy program as likely to be coviewed (see Appendix C, Table 6). Of those families, 20.7% listed two or more comedies as regularly viewed together as a family.

Sports programs were coviewed by 36.6% of the families studied (see Appendix C, Table 8), the news, talk and information category was reportedly coviewed by 28.2% of families (see Appendix C, Table 7) and 25.2% of families

watched programming designed specifically for children together as a family (see Appendix C, Table 10).

### Coviewing Categories and Family Functioning

After determining the types of programming that families tend to coview, research question two concerned a potential relationship between a family's reported coviewing categories and each dimension of functioning. The coviewing categories were analyzed with a standard multiple regression model to determine a linear combination of categories listed (drama/action-adventure; comedy; news, talk and information; sports; reality programming/game shows; and children's programming) as a predictor for each dimension of family functioning, as well as a general overall functioning score.

This suggestion of a potential relationship was confirmed for the communication dimension of family functioning as a dependent measure and the coviewing categories as predictors,  $F(6, 124) = 3.334, p < .01$ . The categories coviewed explain a sizable portion of the variance;  $R^2$  for the model was .139 and adjusted  $R^2$  was .097. Specifically, coviewing the news, sports and information category ( $\beta = .195, t = 2.303, p < .05$ ) and reality/game show category ( $\beta = .310, t = 3.611, p < .001$ ) accounted for an increase in a family's communication score (see Appendix C, Tables 11, 12 and 13). In this model, 9.7% of the variance in communication score is accounted for by coviewing categories reported.

All other dimensions of family functioning (roles, affective involvement, behavior control and general functioning) as dependent variables resulted in non-

significant models. However, coviewing news, talk and information continued to account for a portion of the variance along the roles and behavior control dimensions. Interestingly, (but not statistically significant) reality/game show programming accounted for 3.1% of the variance in the general overall functioning score.

### Sports Coviewing and Family Functioning

In order to answer this research question, each families' listed coviewed programs were coded into a primary viewing category for each family, based on the prominence and volume of shows in each category listed (drama/action-adventure; comedy; news, talk and information; sports; reality programming/game shows; and children's programming). For example, a family that listed four one-hour primetime drama shows, along with two situational comedies and the evening news was classified as a *drama* family. A family that listed three shows, each in a different category, was classified according to the type of show listed *first* (see Appendix C, Table 14).

Sports were primarily coviewed by 16.1% of families ( $f = 24$ ). All primary coviewing categories (see Appendix C, Table 15) were compared with groups of functioning scores using a chi square test of independence. To determine the groups of functioning, the scores for each functioning dimension were divided into three equal groups: low, medium and high functioning. The low and high functioning groups were then compared to the category of coviewing.

Of the five dimensions, only affective involvement returned a statistically significant chi square ratio ( $\chi^2 = 10.674$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $p < .05$ ), detailed in Appendix C,

Tables 15 and 16. Specifically, the most notable differences in affective involvement were in the sports and comedy categories. Of the families that coview sports as their primary category, 71.4% were in the *high* functioning group. In other words, families that primarily coview sports are two and a half times more likely to fall into the high affective involvement group. Conversely, of the families that primarily coview comedy programming, 73.7% were a part of the *low* functioning group. This means that families that coview comedy programming are almost three times more likely to fall into the low affective involvement group. Also of note, 68.2% of reality/games show programming coviewing families were in the high affective involvement group (see Appendix C, Table 15).

The results for general functioning, communication and roles were not statistically significant. The behavior control chi square only approached significance ( $\chi^2 = 9.164$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $p = .057$ ) but exhibited similar characteristic patterns to the affective involvement chi square (see Appendix C, Tables 17 and 18). As with affective involvement, families who primarily coviewed sports were two and half times more likely to fall into the high behavior control group (71.4%) than the low group. In contrast, families who were primarily comedy coviewers were again almost three times as likely to exhibit low behavior control scores than high behavior control scores.

## CHAPTER IV

### DISCUSSION

Analysis of the data collected in this study produced several individual results worthy of consideration. Inverse relationships were discovered between the amount of time families spend coviewing and family communication, affective involvement (i.e., cohesion), and behavior control. Families' specific coviewing categories were also determined. These coviewing categories, when compared to self-reported family functioning, accounted for a notable amount of variance in family communication scores. In particular, coviewing news, talk and information programs, along with reality television, played a key role in predicting successful family communication. Further, when families were assigned a primary coviewing category, that primary category was significantly related to their affective involvement. Specifically, families who coviewed sports or reality television were found to be more cohesive.

Discussion of these results will begin with an examination of the five hypotheses presented. The non-significant results produced for hypothesis one, concerning time spent coviewing and general functioning are not at all surprising considering the multi-dimensional nature of the general functioning score itself. Potentially because so many dimensions of a family's interactions are measured at once, time spent coviewing television had no relationship to this overall score.



The results for hypothesis two, though, were significant. As a family's reported coviewing time increased, their effective family communication scores decreased. This supports Lull's (1980b) idea that television may provide the opportunity for interpersonal avoidance. Further, these results are in agreement with Rosenblatt and Cunningham's (1976) study that found a strong relationship between the amount of time television sets were reported to be on and tension and conflict in a family.

Lull's (1980b) suggestion that television provides a means of asserting competence and dominance roles was not supported by this study. This is not to say that roles are not asserted through television, only that amount of time spent coviewing is not related to that social characteristic of television. Although hypothesis three was unsupported, the roles dimension may have a relationship to television coviewing more dependent on the active or passive nature of that coviewing (which was not empirically tested here).

Hypothesis four was supported: the amount of time families spend coviewing is related to their affective involvement, or cohesion. This relationship was inverse—as families watch more television together, their cohesion decreases. This is consistent with Kotler and associates' (2001) suggestion that television can be used as a resource for escape, by providing a focus for attention or as a social distracter. These results also support St. Peters and colleagues (1991) assertion that "joint viewing time is not often utilized as an occasion for parental attention to children's needs and interests" (p. 1422). Lull (1980b) posited that television can provoke an alternate fantasy reality that would

serve as a method of avoiding social interaction and detract from family togetherness. A reminder that families do not always act as a complete and harmonious group in choice of television programming (Lull, 1988a) can also aid in explanation of this inverse relationship. The more television coviewing is taking place, the more opportunities there are for conflict between family members. Future research should examine the nature of the coviewing experiences, because active coviewing (as opposed to the more common silent/passive coviewing) may, in fact, reverse the direction of this relationship.

The relationship between behavior control and time spent coviewing was also statistically significant, so hypothesis five was supported. This relationship again was in the negative direction. As family coviewing time increased, the amount of behavior control decreased. This relationship makes sense in light of Messaris' (1983) idea that television can supplement the education process, which can have either a positive or negative effect. If the values expressed on television are contrary to those espoused within the family, and television coviewing is high, it will be difficult for families to control the behavior of individual family members (Goodman, 1983). Passive coviewing has a particularly television-enhancing effect; parents watching negative programming with their children only amplifies the negative impact of the programming (Buerkel-Rothfuss & Buerkel, 2001). By watching with their children, parents are giving a form of approval to the behavior seen on television, and thus nullifying any conflicting behavior control efforts that may be made outside of television viewing.

In turning to consideration of the research questions posed, research question one called for a determination of the specific categories of programming that families coviewed more than others. Families reported coviewing reality/game show programs more than any other category (47.3%). This means that almost half of the families in this study listed at least one reality/game show that they regularly watch together as a family. Four in ten families listed at least one drama/action-adventure program (40.5%) as coviewed, with comedies (38.2%) and sports (36.6%) following close behind. About one quarter of families regularly coviewed at least one news, talk and information program (28.2), and almost one quarter of families reported regularly coviewing children's programs (25.2). These categories are not mutually exclusive. Families could be included in more than one of these categories of coviewing, depending upon the number of shows they listed as regularly coviewed.

Research question two examined the relationship between those coviewing categories and the dimensions of family functioning. Regression analysis suggested that a family's communication score can be predicted, to some degree, by the shows they view together as a family. In fact, almost 10% of family communication, as measured by the McMaster Family Assessment Device, can be accounted for by what they watch on television together. Specifically, family communication increases as families watch more news, talk and informative programming and more reality programming.

This relationship makes sense when the nature of these shows is considered. Shows that fit into the news, talk and information category

encourage, rather than discourage, active coviewing. Family discourse about what is happening on a news or talk show is more likely than family discourse during a plot-driven drama or comedy, in which any interruption might cause viewers to miss story points. Children might feel more comfortable to ask clarification questions during an informative documentary than during a suspense-filled action-adventure program. Reality programs would also seem to encourage family discussion. In most of these programs, contestants compete for an ultimate prize. This competition might spur family conversation as individual family members root for and against particular contestants. Nabi, Biely, Morgan and Stitt (2003) examined the appeal of reality programming and determined, along with other factors, that viewers watch reality programming because of its unscripted nature and for social utility. Family members might discuss this unscripted competition or the "reality" of the program while the show is airing, which could facilitate family discussion post-coviewing.

After families' individually listed programs were categorized for research question three, each family was assigned a primary coviewing category based on the programs they listed in order to answer research question four. Interestingly, only the dimension of affective involvement had a statistically significant relationship with a family's primary category of coviewing. When comparing groups of low and high affective involvement, i.e., cohesion, the most significant differences can be found in the categories of sports and comedy. Research question four can be answered in the affirmative, because sports families in this study were most often rated in the high cohesion group (71.4%).

If there is a high likelihood that families who primarily coview sports are high in family cohesion, what is it about watching sports together that builds family togetherness? Viewing sports often involves discussion of the game or event between family members and allows for active interaction between family members while the coviewing is taking place. Also, and perhaps most importantly, families build cohesion through their mutual admiration and support of a particular team or player, as well as their common abhorrence for the opposition.

In comparison, families who primarily viewed comedies were much more likely to fall in the low cohesion group (73.7%). It may seem odd that laughing together on a regular basis would be cause for low cohesion. However, when one considers the base nature of much comedic programming, along with the realization that watching passive entertainment comedies does not encourage family interaction, this inverse relationship makes sense.

#### Research Limitations

As with any study of this nature, there are always limitations in resources and instrumentation that must be considered. First, this study utilized a convenience sample from three diverse geographic and socioeconomic regions. Admittedly, a random sample would potentially produce more accurate results that could then be generalized to the entire population (families in the United States). Because obtaining a random sample of the entire country is often difficult, a random sample of a specific area might also contribute to the research in this area.

Second, all data were based on a self-report measure. Subject reactivity as well as social desirability bias is certainly of concern. In future research, a variety of observational methods as well as self- and other-report measures should be implemented. Third, for this study, the definition of coviewing is limited to two or more family members being in the same room at the time of viewing. The reported coviewing time does not specify whether the television program was actually being attended to, whether active or passive coviewing was taking place, or which family members were coviewing. To increase the impact of a study of this nature, what actually goes on during coviewing should be measured, as well as whether parents are watching with children, siblings are coviewing, or parents are watching with each other.

Fourth, the percentage of agreement between freely recalled listing of programs coviewed and selecting from a forced choice list did not reach the desired level of 75% recall. According to the data collected from a small sample ( $n = 25$ , 16.7% of the total number of subjects), families were only able to recall about half of the shows they watch together, and then they selected more from the forced choice list. In future studies, families should be given a more comprehensive list of programs to choose from and then also be allowed to write in any shows coviewed not on the list.

Lastly, interpreting the measure in one instance (to answer research question four) required coding of the primary coviewing category on the part of the researcher. Because each family was asked to identify the television shows they are most likely to watch together, the researcher had to make a coder

judgment for primary category based on the specific shows reported. While a detailed system was in place for the coding, another technique for future measures might include a multiple choice item specifically asking a family to report which category (drama/action-adventure; comedy; news, talk and information; sports; reality/game shows; or children's programming) they primarily view together.

### Future Research

The relationship between family coviewing and family functioning, to the researcher's knowledge, has not before been empirically tested. This study's contributions regarding the time spent coviewing and family functioning correlations, together with the television category and family functioning connection, should encourage an interest in investigation of this relationship. In an age when families spend little time together, it is likely that the time they spend in front of the television can have quite an impact on their social interactions. Without implying causality, the results from this initial study suggest an inverse relationship between three dimensions of positive family functioning and television coviewing. The idea that families watching television together, particularly for great amounts of time, is related to decreased family communication, less family cohesion and a reduced amount of behavior control could be a notable cause for attention from family and mass media researchers.

On the other hand, the preliminary results from the study also suggest that amount of time spent coviewing is not the only factor related to family functioning. Category coviewed showed a significant relationship, particularly on the

dimensions of communication and affective involvement, or cohesion. Future research should explore these relationships further, perhaps with a look at not only categories of coviewing, but specific shows coviewed. Content analysis of shows might reveal a "positive influence" factor. The positive, or negative, nature of particular shows regularly coviewed might then be compared to family functioning.

Further, a multi-variable relationship between amount of time spent coviewing, category coviewed and family functioning might be examined. If the category coviewed is related to coviewing, does more or less time spent coviewing within that category increase family functioning or cohesion? Future research should be focused on investigating these issues.

Another matter for future research in this arena might be the impact of digitally recorded television. The recently-diffused technologies of TiVo and other digital video recorders (DVRs) may influence the social uses of television in an altogether different manner. Because television programs can be almost effortlessly recorded and played back at will, families may no longer structure their time by television schedules.

Further, the use of a DVR could encourage family communication, instead of limiting communication. If live television can be paused, or even rewound and reviewed, family members may feel more comfortable interjecting comments or questions in the middle of a program. DVRs could potentially eliminate the fear of reprimand for interrupting significant dialogue or action.



Families who utilize DVR technology might also demonstrate significantly higher cohesion scores because of the potential for appointment viewing. While competing schedules may have previously prevented families from coviewing a beloved program, the ability to record and then playback a shared favorite could make coviewing a family event in which everyone may participate.

As families spend so much time apart, the amount of time they spend together becomes increasingly important to their family functioning. The amount of time they spend coviewing television is negatively related to certain dimensions of family functioning and should be carefully monitored to avoid a silent, passive endorsement of whatever programming is being coviewed. The type of programming families are coviewing is related to both their communication and cohesion as a family. This relationship should also be carefully considered as families choose what to watch together as well as how much they should watch.

## APPENDIX A

### Television and Your Family A University of Dayton Research Study page 1 of 2

*Your family has been selected to participate in a research study involving television and families.  
This study is for a graduate thesis project at the University of Dayton in Dayton, Ohio.  
Your careful completion of this survey is greatly appreciated. This study is completely confidential.  
You will not be asked your name, nor any questions that will identify you in any way.*

***Please take the time to gather your family members to complete the questionnaire together.  
When completing the questionnaire, select the answers that your family most fully agrees upon.  
Please complete both sides of this sheet.***

**Please list each member of your household below, along with their age, gender and how many years of school they have completed.**  
*Remember, all this information is entirely confidential and no names or identifiers will be used in this study.*

ROLE (for example: father, step-mother, child, grandparent, etc.)	AGE in years	GENDER male or female	YEARS OF SCHOOL # of years completed

*The next two questions are about the amount of time your family spends watching television together.  
Please estimate the amount of time to the nearest half hour.*

- a. How many hours, on **average**, would you estimate that two or more family members spend watching television **together each day**?

\_\_\_\_\_ hours

- b. How many hours would you estimate that two or more family members spent watching television **together this past weekend**?

\_\_\_\_\_ hours.

*Some families have favorite television programs or events they enjoy watching together regularly.*

**Please list below the shows you are most likely to watch together as a family.**  
Include any recurring series, sporting events or special programs.

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**Please complete the back side of this questionnaire. Thank you.**

**Television and Your Family**  
**A University of Dayton Research Study**  
 page 2 of 2

*The following questions concern the way your family interacts with each other. Please answer these questions together, based on agreement from all family members as to which answer best describes your family. Remember, all this information is entirely confidential and no names or identifiers will be used in this study.*

**Please check the box at the right that best describes how your family feels about the statement.**

		STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1	In times of crisis we can turn to each other for support.				
2	When you ask someone to do something, you have to check that they did it.				
3	When we don't like what someone has done, we tell them.				
4	We feel accepted for what we are.				
5	We are able to make decisions about how to solve problems.				
6	Planning family activities is difficult because we misunderstand each other.				
7	We don't get along well together.				
8	There are lots of bad feelings in the family.				
9	We get involved with each other only when something interests us.				
10	You can't tell how a person is feeling from what they are saying.				
11	We are frank with each other.				
12	When someone is upset the others know why.				
13	Anything goes in our family.				
14	We have no clear expectations about bathroom habits.				
15	There's little time to explore personal interests.				
16	Family tasks don't get spread around enough.				
17	We can express feelings to each other.				
18	We are generally dissatisfied with the family duties assigned to us.				
19	Even though we mean well, we intrude too much into each other's lives.				
20	We don't know what to do when an emergency comes up.				
21	We are too self-centered.				
22	There are rules about dangerous situations.				
23	Our family shows interest in each other only when they can get something out of it.				
24	We confide in each other.				
25	If the rules are broken, we don't know what to expect.				
26	We avoid discussing our fears and concerns.				
27	If someone is in trouble, the others become too involved.				
28	We have rules about hitting people.				
29	If people are asked to do something, they need reminding.				
30	You can easily get away with breaking the rules.				
31	We discuss who is to do household jobs.				
32	Making decisions is a problem for our family.				
33	We make sure members meet their family responsibilities.				
34	We don't hold to any rules or standards.				
35	We have trouble meeting our bills.				
36	We show interest in each other when we can get something out of it personally.				
37	We don't talk to each other when we are angry.				
38	You only get the interest of others when something is important to them.				
39	People come right out and say things instead of hinting at them.				
40	Individuals are accepted for what they are.				
41	We know what to do in an emergency.				
42	We cannot talk to each other about the sadness we feel.				
		STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE

**Thank you for your time. Your family's efforts are greatly appreciated.**

## APPENDIX B

**Television and Your Family**  
**A University of Dayton Research Study**  
 page 1 of 2

*Your family has been selected to participate in a research study involving television and families.  
 This study is for a graduate thesis project at the University of Dayton in Dayton, Ohio.  
 Your careful completion of this survey is greatly appreciated. This study is completely confidential.  
 You will not be asked your name, nor any questions that will identify you in any way.*

**Please take the time to gather your family members to complete the questionnaire together.**  
**When completing the questionnaire, select the answers that your family most fully agrees upon.**  
**Please complete both sides of this sheet.**

*These questions are about the amount of time your family spends watching television together.  
 Please estimate the amount of time to the **nearest half hour**.*

- a. How many hours, on average, would you estimate that two or more family members spend watching television together each day?**

\_\_\_\_\_ hours

- b. How many hours would you estimate that two or more family members spent watching television together this past weekend?**

\_\_\_\_\_ hours

*Some families have favorite television programs or events they enjoy watching together regularly.*

**Please list below the shows you are most likely to watch together as a family.**  
 Include any recurring series, sporting events or special programs.

---



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**Please select from this list the shows you are most likely to watch together as a family.**  
 Check any and all shows members of your family watch **TOGETHER**.

- |   |  |   |   |  |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> CSI                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Two and a Half Men        | <input type="checkbox"/> 60 Minutes         | <input type="checkbox"/> Football       | <input type="checkbox"/> American Idol             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Desperate Housewives | <input type="checkbox"/> Will & Grace              | <input type="checkbox"/> 20/20              | <input type="checkbox"/> Baseball       | <input type="checkbox"/> Survivor                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lost                 | <input type="checkbox"/> My Name is Earl           | <input type="checkbox"/> Dateline           | <input type="checkbox"/> Basketball     | <input type="checkbox"/> Dancing with the Stars    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Without a Trace      | <input type="checkbox"/> Malcolm in the Middle     | <input type="checkbox"/> Primetime          | <input type="checkbox"/> Auto Racing    | <input type="checkbox"/> Apprentice                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ER                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Everybody Loves Raymond   | <input type="checkbox"/> Local News         | <input type="checkbox"/> Olympics       | <input type="checkbox"/> Extreme Makeover: Home Ed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grey's Anatomy       | <input type="checkbox"/> Simpsons                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Nat'l Nightly News | <input type="checkbox"/> Golf           | <input type="checkbox"/> America's Next Top Model  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Law & Order          | <input type="checkbox"/> Family Guy                | <input type="checkbox"/> Oprah              | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis         | <input type="checkbox"/> Amazing Race              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ghost Whisperer      | <input type="checkbox"/> America's Funniest Videos | <input type="checkbox"/> Wheel of Fortune   | <input type="checkbox"/> Extreme Sports | <input type="checkbox"/> Biggest Loser             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7th Heaven           | <input type="checkbox"/> Bernie Mac                | <input type="checkbox"/> Jeopardy           | <input type="checkbox"/> Wrestling      | <input type="checkbox"/> Big Brother               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commander in Chief   | <input type="checkbox"/> Joey                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Dr. Phil           | <input type="checkbox"/> Sportscenter   | <input type="checkbox"/> Three Wishes              |

**Please complete the back side of this questionnaire. Thank you.**

**Television and Your Family**  
**A University of Dayton Research Study**  
 page 2 of 2

*The following questions concern the way your family interacts with each other. Please answer these questions together, based on agreement from all family members as to which answer best describes your family. Remember, all this information is entirely confidential and no names or identifiers will be used in this study.*

**Please check the box at the right that best describes how your family feels about the statement.**

		STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1	In times of crisis we can turn to each other for support.				
2	When you ask someone to do something, you have to check that they did it.				
3	When we don't like what someone has done, we tell them.				
4	We feel accepted for what we are.				
5	We are able to make decisions about how to solve problems.				
6	Planning family activities is difficult because we misunderstand each other.				
7	We don't get along well together.				
8	There are lots of bad feelings in the family.				
9	We get involved with each other only when something interests us.				
10	You can't tell how a person is feeling from what they are saying.				
11	We are frank with each other.				
12	When someone is upset the others know why.				
13	Anything goes in our family.				
14	We have no clear expectations about bathroom habits.				
15	There's little time to explore personal interests.				
16	Family tasks don't get spread around enough.				
17	We can express feelings to each other.				
18	We are generally dissatisfied with the family duties assigned to us.				
19	Even though we mean well, we intrude too much into each other's lives.				
20	We don't know what to do when an emergency comes up.				
21	We are too self-centered.				
22	There are rules about dangerous situations.				
23	Our family shows interest in each other only when they can get something out of it.				
24	We confide in each other.				
25	If the rules are broken, we don't know what to expect.				
26	We avoid discussing our fears and concerns.				
27	If someone is in trouble, the others become too involved.				
28	We have rules about hitting people.				
29	If people are asked to do something, they need reminding.				
30	You can easily get away with breaking the rules.				
31	We discuss who is to do household jobs.				
32	Making decisions is a problem for our family.				
33	We make sure members meet their family responsibilities.				
34	We don't hold to any rules or standards.				
35	We have trouble meeting our bills.				
36	We show interest in each other when we can get something out of it personally.				
37	We don't talk to each other when we are angry.				
38	You only get the interest of others when something is important to them.				
39	People come right out and say things instead of hinting at them.				
40	Individuals are accepted for what they are.				
41	We know what to do in an emergency.				
42	We cannot talk to each other about the sadness we feel.				
		STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE

**Thank you for your time. Your family's efforts are greatly appreciated.**

## APPENDIX C

Table 1

## Correlations

		Hours each day	COMMUNICATION
Hours each day	Pearson Correlation	1	-.188*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.024
	N	144	144
COMMUNICATION	Pearson Correlation	-.188*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.024	.
	N	144	144

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 2

## Correlations

		Hours each weekend	AFFECTIVE INVOLVEMENT
Hours each weekend	Pearson Correlation	1	-.164*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.050
	N	144	144
AFFECTIVE INVOLVEMENT	Pearson Correlation	-.164*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.050	.
	N	144	144

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 3

## Correlations

		Hours each day	BEHAVIOR CONTROL
Hours each day	Pearson Correlation	1	-.218**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.009
	N	144	144
BEHAVIOR CONTROL	Pearson Correlation	-.218**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.009	.
	N	144	144

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4

**Family Coviewing Categories**

Percent of Families who coviewed	Drama / Action- Adventure	Comedy	News, Talk & Information	Sports	Reality / Game Shows	Children's
1 or more programs	40.5	38.2	28.2	36.6	47.3	25.2
2 or more programs	19.9	20.7	9.1	16.0	25.3	6.1
No programs	59.5	61.8	71.8	63.4	52.7	74.8

Table 5

**Drama / Action-Adventure**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	78	52.3	59.5	59.5
	1	27	18.1	20.6	80.2
	2	16	10.7	12.2	92.4
	3	6	4.0	4.6	96.9
	4	2	1.3	1.5	98.5
	5	2	1.3	1.5	100.0
	Total	131	87.9	100.0	
Missing	System	18	12.1		
Total		149	100.0		

Table 6

**Comedy**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	81	54.4	61.8	61.8
	1	23	15.4	17.6	79.4
	2	14	9.4	10.7	90.1
	3	10	6.7	7.6	97.7
	4	1	.7	.8	98.5
	5	1	.7	.8	99.2
	6	1	.7	.8	100.0
	Total	131	87.9	100.0	
Missing	System	18	12.1		
Total		149	100.0		

Table 7

## News, Talk &amp; Information

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	94	63.1	71.8	71.8
	1	25	16.8	19.1	90.8
	2	11	7.4	8.4	99.2
	6	1	.7	.8	100.0
	Total	131	87.9	100.0	
Missing	System	18	12.1		
Total		149	100.0		

Table 8

## Sports

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	83	55.7	63.4	63.4
	1	27	18.1	20.6	84.0
	2	13	8.7	9.9	93.9
	3	8	5.4	6.1	100.0
	Total	131	87.9	100.0	
Missing	System	18	12.1		
Total		149	100.0		

Table 9

## Reality / Game Shows

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	69	46.3	52.7	52.7
	1	29	19.5	22.1	74.8
	2	21	14.1	16.0	90.8
	3	6	4.0	4.6	95.4
	4	4	2.7	3.1	98.5
	5	1	.7	.8	99.2
	6	1	.7	.8	100.0
	Total	131	87.9	100.0	
Missing	System	18	12.1		
Total		149	100.0		



Table 10

## Children's Programming

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	98	65.8	74.8	74.8
	1	25	16.8	19.1	93.9
	2	6	4.0	4.6	98.5
	3	2	1.3	1.5	100.0
	Total	131	87.9	100.0	
Missing	System	18	12.1		
Total		149	100.0		

Table 11

## Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.373 <sup>a</sup>	.139	.097	2.09649	.139	3.334	6	124	.004

a. Predictors: (Constant), Children's Programming, Comedy, News, Talk & Information, Sports, Drama / Action-Adventure, Reality / Game Shows

Table 12

ANOVA<sup>b</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	87.932	6	14.655	3.334	.004 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	545.015	124	4.395		
	Total	632.947	130			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Children's Programming, Comedy, News, Talk & Information, Sports, Drama / Action-Adventure, Reality / Game Shows

b. Dependent Variable: COMMUNICATION

Table 13

Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	16.658	.353		47.157	.000
	Drama / Action-Adventure	-.038	.171	-.019	-.219	.827
	Comedy	.253	.165	.134	1.533	.128
	News, Talk & Information	.536	.233	.195	2.303	.023
	Sports	.038	.209	.016	.183	.855
	Reality / Game Shows	.567	.157	.310	3.611	.000
	Children's Programming	.291	.294	.084	.991	.324

<sup>a</sup>. Dependent Variable: COMMUNICATION

Table 14

## Coviewing Category

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Drama	25	16.8	18.5	18.5
	Comedy	28	18.8	20.7	39.3
	News, Talk & Information	16	10.7	11.9	51.1
	Sports	24	16.1	17.8	68.9
	Reality	32	21.5	23.7	92.6
	Other	10	6.7	7.4	100.0
	Total	135	90.6	100.0	
Missing	System	14	9.4		
Total		149	100.0		

Table 15

**Coviewing Category \* AFFECTIVE INVOLVEMENT Category Crosstabulation**

			AFFECTIVE INVOLVEMENT Category		Total
			Low	High	
Coviewing Category	Drama	Count	6	8	14
		% within Coviewing Category	42.9%	57.1%	100.0%
	Comedy	Count	14	5	19
		% within Coviewing Category	73.7%	26.3%	100.0%
	News, Talk & Information	Count	7	4	11
		% within Coviewing Category	63.6%	36.4%	100.0%
	Sports	Count	4	10	14
		% within Coviewing Category	28.6%	71.4%	100.0%
	Reality	Count	7	15	22
		% within Coviewing Category	31.8%	68.2%	100.0%
Total	Count	38	42	80	
	% within Coviewing Category	47.5%	52.5%	100.0%	

Table 16

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10.674 <sup>a</sup>	4	.030
Likelihood Ratio	10.988	4	.027
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.947	1	.047
N of Valid Cases	80		

<sup>a</sup>. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.23.

Table 17

## Coviewing Category \* BEHAVIOR CONTROL Category Crosstabulation

			BEHAVIOR CONTROL Category		Total
			Low	High	
Coviewing Category	Drama	Count	10	7	17
		% within Coviewing Category	58.8%	41.2%	100.0%
		% of Total	12.2%	8.5%	20.7%
	Comedy	Count	14	5	19
		% within Coviewing Category	73.7%	26.3%	100.0%
		% of Total	17.1%	6.1%	23.2%
	News, Talk & Information	Count	6	6	12
		% within Coviewing Category	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	7.3%	7.3%	14.6%
	Sports	Count	4	10	14
		% within Coviewing Category	28.6%	71.4%	100.0%
		% of Total	4.9%	12.2%	17.1%
	Reality	Count	7	13	20
		% within Coviewing Category	35.0%	65.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	8.5%	15.9%	24.4%
	Total	Count	41	41	82
		% within Coviewing Category	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%

Table 18

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	9.164 <sup>a</sup>	4	.057
Likelihood Ratio	9.456	4	.051
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.944	1	.015
N of Valid Cases	82		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.00.

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