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The influence of television on children of primary school age

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THE INFLUENCE OF TELEVISION
ON CHILDREN OF PRIMARY SCHOOL AGE
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ABSTRACT

The study reviews the literature relating to the influence of television on children of primary school age. An account is then given of an investigation into the viewing habits and preferences of two consecutive classes of 8 - 9 year old school children, mainly from a socially deprived area. 87% came from homes with more than one TV set, 59% had a VCR - above the national average, as were the term-time viewing hours of 69% of these pupils; 60% of them spent more time watching television than in school and 26% watched for more than a quarter of each entire week.

The results revealed a developing dichotomy between the increasingly private viewing of 'live' television and the family togetherness experienced during a hired video screening. Most children in multi-set households were able to watch anything they wished. Possession of a VCR enabled transmissions after the 9 p.m. 'watershed' to be watched at a more convenient time.

Favourite programmes included cartoons and adult shows (especially situation comedies and violent programmes considered unsuitable for children). Reasons for these preferences were investigated and, in general, children used television as a means of escapism and thus tended to dislike those programmes which made demands on them.

In view of their popularity, the content and appeal of cartoons were further examined. Cartoons provided fantasy, excitement, fun and laughter. Although often containing more acts of violence than a 'real' programme, they were enjoyable because, in reality, no-one was hurt.

In school, the heaviest viewers tended to be the least attentive and the most aggressive, but other causative factors made it difficult to directly correlate such behaviour.

Although television provided a commonality of experience for these children's conversation and play, it appeared to contribute little to their language, their knowledge and their perception of social reality.

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TERMINOLOGY

In this thesis, except where the *context requires* otherwise, the following terms have been used:-

TV set: Used for direct screening of television transmissions; may also be used in conjunction with a VCR.

VCR: Video cassette recorder – used either to record and later replay television programmes or to replay hired video tapes.

Television: The actual programmes broadcast regardless of whether or not seen 'live.'

Video: The output of a VCR, regardless of original source.

Film: An original production for the cinema, shown on a TV set from either a broadcast or a video.

Cartoons: Animated productions, of which there are several kinds:

1. Feature length films made for the cinema.
2. Individual comedies for mixed cinema audiences, usually lasting less than 10 minutes, and featuring animals with human characteristics.
3. Similar to the above, but made for television, and often featuring humans.
4. Series fantasy programmes for television, aimed mainly at children, especially boys: programmes last up to 25 minutes.
5. Art forms made for either medium but rarely shown as *popular* television.

Notes

1. Titles of films and programmes are shown in **Bold Print.**
2. References to Figures (graphs) are given at the start of some sections: they are located in Appendix III.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of civilisation increasingly sophisticated methods of communication have evolved. The desire to reach a wider audience encouraged the development of new methods: from cave paintings to symbols pressed into clay or drawn onto paper; from words printed into books to those transmitted by radio waves, the circle of contact increased.

With the advent of television, speech and pictures were combined in a medium which would prove able to excite, stimulate, interest, agitate or provoke people at some time or another.

The first television pictures were publicly demonstrated in 1926, by John Logie Baird. At first, the images were tiny and flickering, but Baird gradually improved them. In 1936, the British Broadcasting Corporation started the first public television service, which lasted only until the outbreak of the Second World War. It reopened, in 1946, to serve a limited number of homes in the London area. Gradually, more transmitters were constructed throughout Britain so that, by 1954, nearly 4 million TV sets were in use, increasing to 19 million by 1971.

Britain's second television channel was started, in 1955, by the Independent Television Authority and, within a few years, practically the whole country could receive ITA programmes. In 1964, the BBC started its own second service (BBC2) which, in 1967, began to transmit in colour. BBC1 and ITA began colour transmissions in 1969. A new independent station, Channel 4, began in 1982.

A recent development has been the VCR, which enables owners to record

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television programmes or to rent commercially recorded films for home viewing. In 1986, there were VCRs in 42% of British homes (Brooks 1986).

Television ownership has become so widespread that nowadays very few homes do not possess at least one set, and "our patterns of life and leisure have been radically changed by it. Watching television occupies more of our waking hours than any activity except work" (Winick & Winick 1979:15). It is something that is enjoyed by all age groups from the very young to the very old. The children of thirty years ago, who first grew up with television, may find their own attitudes to the medium reflected in their parental roles. Today, some people have a profound mistrust of television because of "the overwhelming popularity of what seems to them the tawdry, the trivial and the third rate in the media" (Masterman 1983:183). Other opinions do not blame the media itself, but "the ways in which the media are used" (Greenfield 1984:2). However television also offers models of kindness, bravery and generosity: the response to televised appeals for e.g. Children in Need, famine relief (B.B.C. 1987), Bangladesh floods, clearly demonstrates its more beneficial aspects.

Over the years, there has been a considerable amount of research worldwide into the effects of television on children, and opinions varied widely according to the philosophical stance of the speaker. A rather simplistic classification was adopted by Maccoby (1963): "The optimists believed that it (television) would educate children in the widest possible sense, giving them an opportunity to learn about science and about human life in other lands in such a fascinating way that learning would be a joy instead of a labour. The pessimists worried about whether too much television would damage children's eyesight, whether it would keep them from healthy active play, whether it would corrupt them by showing too much crime and violence and whether it would interfere with their study and learning of school subjects" (1963:116). These concerns have been re-iterated over the years by many, including the present writer.

The author is a serving teacher in a primary school. She had been aware for some time previously that the children in her care spent a considerable amount of time watching television and, more recently, videos. Her curiosity

was aroused, and she began to investigate what influences, if any, television had on children, apart from the alarmist reports that occasionally appeared in the press. The following study developed from there.

Beginning with a review of some previous research into children and television, the author then proceeds with the study itself. This was conducted with the children in her primary school and involved two groups of children whose behaviour and interests were each monitored over a period of one year. The study was divided into three parts: Phase One and Phase Two involved observation and discussion with the children in each class; Phase Three is an additional study of cartoons. The survey was conducted using direct and indirect observational methods; also the children's own statements were used as primary source material. The investigation was an attempt to discover how much television was watched; what programmes were liked or disliked; and what were the effects, if any, of other factors such as viewing cicumstances, including access to TV sets and VCRs. Development of the research structure is described in sections 3.3, 4.8 and 5.7.

Using this data, it was then proposed to investigate how much behaviour in school was linked to the amount and types of television seen. The behaviour was to include both interpersonal reactions and attention in class; also the effect of television on play and language. In addition, the child's view of social reality was to be investigated and it was hoped to explore the ways in which primary school children appear to utilise what they have seen on television.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

The introduction of TV sets into homes was of sufficient importance for educationalists and sociologists to be concerned about how young children were affected by television viewing. In order to identify any trends in style and focus of research patterns, the author has summarised and analysed some of the literature by decades.

2.1 The 1950's

Siegel (1956) examined the effect of an aggressive film on young children. She compared the play of twelve pairs of 3-5 year-old children after they had seen either an aggressive film (**Woody Woodpecker And The Large Airforce Sergeant**), or a control film (**The Little Red Hen**). The children were then left to play with a variety of toys (including rubber daggers, clay, dolls, balloons and a child-size punching toy) and observed for signs of anxiety and aggression. There were no significant differences resulting from either film, but Siegel suggested the films "may have an effect on childrens' beliefs, their role perceptions, and perhaps their values and attitudes" (1956:377). This was a small scale laboratory experiment, involving only twenty-four children. In later years, other researchers (Cline, Croft & Courrier 1973; Coates, Pusser & Goodman 1976; Merta 1978) would return to this type of study to investigate the effects of watching films on childrens' pro-social and aggressive behaviour.

Maccoby & Wilson (1957) examined the way boys and girls identified with, and learnt by, observation from films. From a questionnaire given a week after viewing, they concluded that boys recalled the aggressive content of a film better, and girls the non-aggressive content, especially if a male was the aggressor. They also suggested that viewers identified with leading characters of the same sex and the social class to which the viewer aspired (rather than his current status). The suggestion of children identifying with models on the screen was raised.

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The first large scale research ever into television and children was published by Himmelweit, Oppenheim & Vince (1958). Using data from 4,500 children in England (diaries, questionnaires, essays and teacher comments) a comparison was made between children with a TV set and those without. Analysis revealed that a child's viewing was related to his or her sex, emotional and intellectual maturity, and its own needs. Less intelligent children and the socially insecure spent the longest time viewing and a vicious circle ensued, because escape through television was so easy whereas other sources of companionship demanded too much effort and might not succeed.

Concern about television as a major source of modelling was shown to be unjustified: children did not directly model themselves upon screen characters but, instead, identified themselves with personalities as a means of expressing a longing for adventure and heroism. It also enabled them to safely deny conventions and enjoy danger vicariously. By frequently watching familiar programmes, or types of programme with similar themes and personalities, a child's need for security may have been satisfied.

The introduction of a second television channel increased the choice of programmes but, paradoxically, narrowed the variety actually watched, because the child could now choose to view more programmes of a similar type. In general, there was a preference for adult programmes. This finding was to be reiterated by Cullingford (1984), who noted that children over 6 years consistently preferred to watch similar programmes every night.

Himmelweit et al. were also interested in whether children were frightened by what they saw on the screen. It was apparent that children were less concerned about the seriousness of any real disaster than the prospect of harm to someone with whom they could identify. All gunfights were enjoyed and treated as spectacles, whereas knives quite often proved disturbing. (This observation has been incorporated into the B.B.C.'s "Note of Guidance, 1974" and "Guidelines For Production Staff, 1987" for programmes intended for children, but not for adult programmes transmitted after 9 p.m.). Although crime and violence programmes could occasionally produce tension or anxiety among children, it did not necessarily affect them all.

Television helped to satisfy a need for security in children because its omnipresence provided companionship, comfort and reassurance during the run of a series. It was likened to a club of which all viewers were members.

As children mature they continuously acquire new skills, insights and attitudes from the example of parents, peers, teachers and heroes of the mass media. New ideas and stimuli are added to existing ones and "when they impinge on the child again and again they can gradually modify his existing views" (Himmelweit et al. 1958:229).

Himmelweit et al. concluded that, in general, the influence of television was small and that it was "the child's emotional make-up and the total of his environmental influences that determine his behaviour" (1958:215) and, although television may not affect a stable child, it could evoke a response in a child who was disturbed or emotionally unstable. The enjoyment of television and the amount watched, reinforces any messages the child might absorb. Though individual programmes can make an impact, it was the slow accumulation of minute influences from many programmes that worried Himmelweit et al., especially if the child had not been previously supplied with a set of values against which to assess the views offered by television. "Under certain conditions, ideas and values which form part of the underlying entertainment pattern do influence children's attitudes.... because they are repeated and seen so much more often" (1958:216).

The timing of their research provided Himmelweit et al. a unique opportunity to study childrens' reactions to television when it was first introduced to an area and also when a second channel was added, rather than relying on retrospective accounts of pre-television behaviour. Their survey was sufficiently comprehensive and large-scale to provide the first detailed analysis of childrens' attitudes to the new medium in their lives, and has provided a reference point for subsequent research. However, it should be pointed out that Himmelweit et al.'s research was among children who were new to television, and may have already developed other interests and values. The "long-term viewers" had had access to television for only three years whereas, nowadays,

most children are exposed to television from birth. The daily transmission breaks between afternoon, children's and evening broadcasts reduced the total viewing time available. The young people of the survey are now parents and grandparents and their viewing habits and attitudes may have been passed on to today's children, perhaps with a magnified effect.

The present author considers that Himmelweit et al.'s findings based upon children's diaries may have been more illuminating than their responses to questionnaires. Furthermore, their teachers may have been prejudiced against the new medium and could have been reflected in their comments. Nowadays, data collection by teacher comment might be more circumspect and take into account any personal bias (Donaldson 1985). Present day concern could be more about the amount of television watched by children and any possible consequent behaviour.

Summary: the 1950's

Research provided an initial data base. For the few early researchers the main areas of concern were: whether children identified with screen heroes; whether they remembered or copied aggressive actions; which types of programme were popular and which were frightening; how children incorporated television into their lives. There was also concern about those children who did not yet have a set of values against which to measure those shown on television.

In the present study it was proposed to develop Himmelweit et al.'s research and to try and discover what aspects of a programme children looked for, and to what extent television influenced their thoughts and lives using, whenever possible, the child's own words.

2.2 The 1960's

Schramm, Lyle & Parker (1961) compiled the first major American study into children and television, using an approach similar to that of Himmelweit et al. (1958). Over 6,000 children from communities with and without television

were studied using questionnaires and interviews. Schramm et al. suggested that the shared experience of viewing was a major social factor, along with school and home. They also found children of low ability watched more television, whereas brighter ones were more critical and selected programmes to fit in with their other activities. From television each child absorbed particular experiences into their lives. For children under 10 years, their selection of programmes was most strongly influenced by the family.

Schramm et al. suggested that how television was used depended on the child as much as the programme but, nevertheless, three main categories of useage were distinguished:
(a) Passive entertainment, escape from real-life boredom or problems, identity with exciting and attractive people, and vicarious "thrill-play".
(b) As an incidental source of information about how people dress, behave, speak and live.
(c) As a social utility, providing a common experience for conversation with the peer group.

Like Himmelweit et al. (1958), Schramm et al. provided a broad-based survey of children's responses to a relatively new part of their lives. It was still possible to find regions without television in order to measure and compare changes in children's leisure habits since its introduction. More recent studies have appreciated that television has been a part of children's lives since birth and is, therefore, possibly used in different ways.

As a major piece of research, Schramm et al.'s study provided a yardstick for subsequent American studies comparable with Himmelweit et al. in England. The effect of television on a particular child depends on that individual child's own character and previous experiences. As Schramm et al. state: "For some children, under some conditions, some television is harmful. For other children, under the same conditions, or for the same children under other conditions, it may be beneficial. For most children, under most conditions, most television is probably neither particularly harmful nor particularly beneficial" (1961:1). Thus, Schramm et al. neatly refute the current argument that television is a major cause of violence.

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Furthermore, because a programme is perceived by different people in different ways, its influence varies so that, say, television violence may not necessarily lead to imitative behaviour, a fact borne out by the small number of violent incidents relative to the vast viewing audience. This author was interested as to why some children were apparently affected more than others, despite having been exposed to similar programmes.

Gomberg (1961) used observations of individual children in nursery schools, followed by interviews with the children and parental questionnaires, as a basis for her research. It was apparent that certain key-words informed other children what was the objective of play: if a television symbol was used, the pattern of action and mood that resulted was similar, stereotyped and always generated excitement. Children subconsciously selected from television according to their own needs, sex and personality, but it provided a common basis for co-operative play, for conversation during juice- and dressing-time, and was a source of authority in settling disputes.

Gomberg's study was of young children who were unable to distinguish fantasy from reality and brought television characters to life in their play. Her observations showed how, at times, the children had problems reconciling values permitted on television with those allowed in school: for instance, fighting was allowed on television, but not in school.

Play arising from their own background and experience did not generate much excitement and it was not easy for other children to join in because they had not shared the experiences. In her observations and subsequent interviews, Gomberg attempted to discover the reasons behind the children's choice of programmes and of characters to recreate in play. It is of particular interest to the present writer that Gomberg observed children in natural surroundings, rather than in an experimental laboratory situation or by questionnaire.

During the 1960's, Bandura investigated the way children acquired certain physical and verbal responses. He showed that children could learn new behaviour by observing others and, if that new behaviour was rewarded in some

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way, then the learning was reinforced (Bandura & Walters 1963). Although children often copied from real models (e.g. parents and siblings), the symbolic models of television and film could be more influential because of the amount of time spent watching (see Himmelweit et al. 1958; Schramm et al. 1961).

Bandura and his associates carried out a number of experiments in which groups of children were shown films of adults with a large inflatable doll. Children who observed adults behaving aggressively towards the doll subsequently imitated accordingly, whereas children who had seen non-aggressive adults hardly ever reacted in this way. "The results indicated that film-mediated models are as effective as real-life models in transmitting deviant patterns of behaviour" (1963:61).

Bandura's use of specially made film contrasted with Siegel (1956) who showed commercially available films. Bandura similarly observed children playing afterwards in a room containing the apparatus featured in the film and which, therefore, might have encouraged some of them to copy unusual behaviour. After showing commercial films and cartoons, Bandura noted that children not only imitated them but added other aggressive responses learnt previously.

The rate and level of observational learning can vary, while a visual stimulus may be more important than a verbal one. Thus a parent's instructions may be "far less influential than the audio-visual mass media in shaping children's social behaviour, unless parents exhibit modelling behaviour that is consonant with the instructions they issue" (Bandura & Walters 1963:50). When the child is exposed to a variety of models he adopts various characteristics from them all and exhibits a behaviour pattern that is an amalgam of elements from all the models. As the child gets older, the range of social models increases and the parental influence becomes less important. Thus Bandura & Walters developed the work of Himmelweit et al. (1958) and Schramm et al. (1961) into television as a further source of behavioural models.

As part of the process of being entertained, the child also acquires information and "conceptions of the world around him and his pattern of adjustment to that world" (de Fleur 1964:58). Television is "an important source

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of incidental learning through which children develop a variety of conceptions, ideas, attitudes and preferences" (ibid:73). A child may spend more time watching television than on any other single activity; learning is incidental and unplanned; thus imparted knowledge need not be complete or objective and may require augmentation from other sources.

Other experiments in the 1960's were concerned with children's responses to aggression on television. In a direct follow-up to Siegel's (1956) work, Mussen & Rutherford (1961) investigated the effect of aggressive cartoons on children. They divided thirty-six 6-7 year-olds into six groups. Three groups were given a frustrating task and then viewed either: an aggressive cartoon or a non-aggressive cartoon or no cartoon. The other three groups were not frustrated and saw the same films. Whereas Siegel observed aggression in an interpersonal situation, this study looked for a verbal desire to destroy a balloon. The subjects who saw the aggressive cartoon were more likely to express aggressive impulses than those who had seen either the non-aggressive cartoon or no cartoon at all. This supported the hypothesis that viewing cartoon violence could stimulate a child's aggression in a subsequent permissive situation.

One possible explanation why Mussen & Rutherford's results differ from Siegel's is that, in the latter's experiment, children had no adult present and thus may have been inhibited because of previously learnt behavioural patterns; this time, with an approving adult present, the children were not discouraged from verbal aggression. However, because the measure did not refer to a physical response, the subjects may have been less inhibited.

Lövaas (1961) also based experiments upon Siegel's work. Small numbers of children were shown either an aggressive film featuring hitting and biting etc., or a non-aggressive film of a bear playing with her cubs. They were also shown how to operate a lever on a mechanical doll which, when pulled, hit another doll. They were then given an opportunity for free play. After the first two experimental sessions, there was no significant increase in aggression after seeing the aggressive film, possibly because too many instructions had been given to the children. In the third session there was a slight change in the play

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area, and this time the children who had seen the aggressive film were more inclined to use the doll hitting toy. The films had been edited, but were similar to those a child could watch on television. Although this study dealt with aggression towards an inanimate object, it was considered to be part of a growing body of empirical evidence supporting the generalization that aggressive films were more likely to make children more aggressive.

Eron (1963) investigated the viewing habits of 367 nine year-old children by asking parents about their children's weekly viewing hours and their three favourite programmes. Also, the children's aggressive behaviour was peer-rated by means of a "Guess Who?" survey. The total hours viewed and the number of violent programmes watched was then calculated. There was a strong positive relationship between the violence rating of favourite programmes and the aggression of boys, but no significant relationship for girls. The aggressive rating of the boys increased with the number of violent programmes watched. Paradoxically, the higher the viewing hours, the lower the aggressive rating. This might have been because these boys were more passive, or had discharged their aggressive impulses through fantasy, or simply had less time and opportunity to be aggressive. Boys who watched more aggressive films may have been more aggressive by nature, or it may have been increased by watching television. No satisfactory conclusion could be given.

Summary: the 1960's

During this decade there was much research into the acquisition of behavioural patterns in general. When related to television, laboratory studies indicated that watching aggressive films led to imitative speech and behaviour in children. Studies also showed that other actions were readily imitated in play and that children used television as a source of entertainment, excitement, information (including behavioural patterns) and a common basis for conversation. Although accessible to all, television was used by individual children in different ways.

Styles of research were noticeably different, particularly concerning the presence of an adult and whether specially made film was utilised: this could account for differing results.

2.3 The 1970's

In the 1970's television was thought by many to be an "all powerful, all persuasive, manipulating force which is entirely outside their control" (Halloran 1970:9). Halloran also noted that much previous research had been into the short-term influence of television on behaviour. He was aware that television's influence was more insidious in presenting an attitude or type of behaviour, but each child responded in a different way according to his individual differences. He also stated that TV ownership was an essential qualification for acceptance by the peer group.

Halloran, Brown & Chaney (1970) had to use correlational data in their study of television and delinquency as it was unethical to experiment on human subjects in real-life situations. Their work indicates that, although delinquents and non-delinquents show little difference in the amount of television viewed, they do differ in their preferences for certain programmes and personalities. Delinquents prefer more exciting and aggressive programmes to educational and informative programmes. Furthermore, delinquent boys often see their fathers as failures and will not model on them, preferring hero figures in television series. (Delinquent girls prefer prominent pop stars). As they are also less inclined to discuss what they have seen with friends and family, they may think about and use television in a different way. This agrees with Schramm et al.'s (1961) findings that different people used television in different ways and took from it what they needed. Halloran et al. were concerned that the influence of television would be more pronounced with younger children, whose attitudes and values were still in the process of being formed and considered this to be a priority area for research.

Children will not only model their behaviour on television but also from their environment. For many of the children in the present author's study, school is seen as an alien situation and so is often rejected. The heroes seen

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on television provide more acceptable male figures with which to identify; for example, the heroes of adventure programmes appeal to boys from broken homes needing a strong masculine role model (see 4.5.2 and 5.5.2).

Noble (1970) conducted an experiment among 24 six year-olds to find out whether their play was affected by watching certain films on television. One group of children saw a war film, another a puppet film, and a third saw no film at all. All then had a play session, with a selection of toys being available. The children played significantly more with war toys after the war film than after the puppet film, but did not play more with puppets after the puppet film, thus suggesting that it was easier to copy aggressive actions. Those who saw the war film played less constructively and interacted significantly less afterwards, especially the middle-class children, who may have been made more anxious by the aggression shown. This study was rather simplistic and involved only a few children. The reactions of the working-class children were particularly relevant to the present study, as these children were more likely to have seen aggressive incidents in their daily lives.

In 1975, Noble studied children's knowledge of occupations: those who watched the most television had the most definite ideas and "expect real life occupants of such roles to behave in the predictable manner defined by television presentations" (1975:111). Similarly, Howe (1977) commented that television was used by children as a general source of information, but coming at such an early age it exerted a very strong influence.

Noble's experiment was confined to a single showing of a film. By contrast, Stuer, Applefield & Smith (1971), in another small-scale study, exposed two groups of five children to either aggressive or non-aggressive television, for a total of 110 minutes over an eleven day period, and observed their subsequent behaviour. When compared with their baseline scores, children who had seen aggressive programmes showed an increase in interpersonal aggression. Unlike some previous experiments they were not observed alone, but in small groups with minimal adult supervision and under fairly natural surroundings. The programmes viewed were chosen from Saturday morning children's television having human and cartoon content. The regular increase in aggression among

children of the relevant treatment group suggests that television had influenced the change.

So far in the 1970's research had been confined to small numbers of children; but in 1972 the United States Government (under the auspices of the Surgeon General's Scientific Advisory Committee) authorised a series of investigations into the effects of television on thousands of children. Twenty experiments showed that most children imitated filmed aggression, while thirty experiments caused increased aggressiveness by both children and adults. Although the report was compiled by experts, there was subsequent criticism that certain members of the committee had vested interests in television companies. Some of the experiments and their results are as follows.

Bechtel (in Surgeon General's Scientific Advisory Committee Report 1972) measured children's attentiveness to the screen and discovered that, for up to half the time the TV set was switched on, it was not really being watched, even though children were in the same room and reported having seen the programme. This was to be pertinent to the present author's work.

Similarly, Lyle & Hoffman (ibid.) found that 80% of first-grade children did something else while watching, and so their attention was not wholly on the screen. This affected their understanding of the programme and possibly distorted their comprehension of the reasons underlying any actions. Those who watched most were likely to dream about television, but those who watched least were more likely to be frightened by it. Also, first-graders often copied aggressive actions seen on television when playing with friends. Lyle & Hoffman stated that television provided a common source of conversation for all ages, as previously noted by Schramm et al. (1961). This observation was also to become a major part of the present writer's research.

Stein & Friedrich (1971) studied the behaviour of children in a nursery school over a four week period following the showing of aggressive, neutral, and pro-social programmes. They found that violent programmes had no consistent effect on children who were initially non-aggressive, as they had been socialised to control their aggressive impulses. Highly aggressive children

were more likely to respond to aggressive stimuli. Viewers of the pro-social programmes exhibited a slight increase in pro-social behaviour. These results show that relatively short exposure to television can affect behaviour, but that the effects vary for different types of children.

Liebert & Baron (1971) showed aggressive or non-aggressive television programmes to children of 5-6 years and 8-9 years, who were then given the opportunity to ostensibly help or hurt a child in another room. In both age groups, those children who had viewed aggression demonstrated a greater willingness to "hurt" the unseen child. Free play was also observed: younger boys behaved more aggressively after aggressive programmes.

These last two studies both involved laboratory situations, in which children were subjected to some kind of experimental procedure (and were examples of further updating of Siegel's earlier experiment). Although a change was observed in the children's behaviour in the short term, neither was continued over a long period of time.

Liefer & Roberts (1971) suggested that most older children were able to put violent television acts into the context of the story, but younger ones saw them as isolated incidents and thus may have been more inclined to copy any observed actions.

Gerbner (1972) analysed violent incidents shown on scheduled television and found that children had little chance of escaping them, even on a Saturday morning, because cartoons were among the most violent programmes shown. (In 1967, the average cartoon hour contained more than three times as many violent episodes as the average adult dramatic hour, and violence was the characteristic means of solving problems). He stated that "children watching Saturday morning cartoons had the least chance of escaping violence or of avoiding the heaviest saturation of violence on all television" (1972:36). Television also encouraged children to acquire stereotyped ideas about social structure and shaped attitudes about other people and the world at large. The most powerful group of people on television (and therefore by suggestion in real-life) were white American males, young and middle class, unmarried, often involved in violence and less

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likely to be punished. Women were shown less often, and were more likely to be in romantic or family roles, married or engaged, were less aggressive, less successful and more likely to be victims. Few other races were represented and, if they were, frequently in criminal roles.

The present writer was concerned that the children of her study were spending a considerable time exposed to cartoons, many of them American and from the time of Gerbner's analysis. A detailed discussion follows in Phase Three (Chapter 6).

The Surgeon General's Report concluded that while violence depicted on television could be copied by children and could instigate an increase in aggressive acts, there was no evidence that this was a general consequence. Instead, violence appeared to be confined to certain subgroups of television viewers i.e. the 4-6 year-olds, those who were initially highly aggressive, those who displayed pleasure in viewing violence inflicted on others, and those who were exposed to a greater amount of violent television. The Report concluded that, although television might have no immediate effect upon the crime rate, it could interact with other influences in society to produce indifference to suffering.

The Surgeon General's Report was based on experiments which often used isolated film sections, and thus any conclusions are open to interpretation. The relevance of these results to normal viewing circumstances is unclear, when the environmental context could play a part in modifying the effects. These studies also left unexplained any latent tendency to prefer violent programmes and why the vast majority of the viewing audience do not react aggressively. Of more general concern is that children grow up accustomed to viewing violence and its acceptability as a means of solving problems.

During the 1970's, there were other studies into children's responses to television violence. Eron et al. (1972) studied aggressive behaviour and television viewing habits over a ten year period. In 1960, they interviewed 875, 8-9 year old children, their parents and their peers, about each child's behaviour and viewing habits; 10 years later they were able to get additional data from 427 of

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them. They found that those boys who had preferred violent programmes at 9 years old were, at the age of 19, rated as being more aggressive by their peers. Their early viewing habits had had more influence on their subsequent behaviour than later viewing preferences. It was suggested that characters on television gained desirable rewards by violent tactics, and this strengthened viewers convictions that such behaviour was permissible. Girls did not conform to this pattern, possibly because socialization indicates aggression in girls is unacceptable and there are fewer aggressive females on television to act as role models. The long-term nature of this study, coupled with the disassociation of other environmental factors such as I.Q., ethnicity, religion, etc., gave credence to the supposition of a critical developmental period, in which a child is susceptible to the influence of violent television, which will be displayed as aggressiveness then and in later years.

Eron et al. considered "television habits established by the age of 8-9 years influence boys' aggressive behaviour at that time and at least through adolescence" (1972:260). Earlier, Bandura et al. (1963) had demonstrated that novel aggressive behaviour could be copied after seeing a model achieve successful results through its use. As many characters on television obtain their goals through violence, continual exposure to such models possibly encourages copying and reinforces the idea that such behaviours are acceptable. That anti-social reactions seemed to predominate could be due to the ease of physical violence, whereas pro-social behaviour often involves abstract acts; it is also less emotional and therefore less likely to impel action.

Eron et al.'s long-term study produced a considerable amount of evidence to support other short-term laboratory studies, indicating that regular viewing of violent programmes in childhood sometimes led to a more aggressive adult life-style, depending on the pre-existing level of aggression, the underlying personality factors, and the family circumstances. They also established the idea that viewing violent programmes could later cause aggressive behaviour but direct correlation could not be established because each child's initial level of aggression would have been different, as would the amount or type of television violence seen. (See: Mussen & Rutherford 1961; Lövaas 1961; Eron 1963; Stuer, Applefield & Smith 1971).

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Greenburg (1975) conducted a similar survey of British children and their attitudes to aggressive statements. He found that the majority of violent programmes were watched by half the children, especially those who were younger, working-class or of non-European origin. Boys expressed more aggressive attitudes than girls. Although he found there was a relationship between watching violent programmes and having aggressive attitudes, he did not define the cause solely as television. However, he suggested that as children watched television to relax, their defences are lowered and any messages directed at them in this state may have more of an effect: watching violence on the screen may thus reduce inhibitions to aggression.

Belson (1978) suggested that television violence caused disinhibition, so that boys more easily produced violent behaviour in response to their environment. This behaviour was cumulative, beginning with minor forms of violence and escalating to the more serious, and may have imitated that on television if it were easy to copy. Exposure to programmes with swearing and verbal abuse was associated with an increase in boys' use of bad language, while sporting programmes featuring violence increased the degree to which boys themselves were violent in sport or play. The circumstances in which the present writer was to be working were conducive to the observation of language and play in a school environment.

Merta (1978) conducted a laboratory experiment to test children of 9-12 years, using a game in which each child manipulated a robot so as to knock over his opponent's. After the children's basic social response was tested, they were shown small amounts of television and then their use of the robots was observed. These experiments were repeated over a series of weeks using violent episodes from television and commercials. He found that males were more aggressive than females in the majority of experiments. He expected to find maladjusted or over-reactive children to be more aggressive after viewing, but these experiments were rendered invalid due to faulty initial classification by teachers of one group of children. The recall of a realistic portrayal of violence, seen previously, encouraged a more aggressive use of the robot, whereas exposure to stylistic or fantasy orientated violence had a cathartic

effect on the viewing audience. The children who were frustrated also played more aggressively with the robots, even after seeing a non-violent film. The subsequent study was based on the television they had seen at home, and so there arose the problem of attributing the cause of the observed behaviours to what they had seen. However, it was reasoned that the considerable amount of time spent viewing would affect behaviour more noticeably than a brief experimental period.

Berkowitz (1974) concluded that exposure to media violence roused the aggressive drive in viewers. He noted that many American films infer that violence is necessary for manliness. If the violence was considered to be justified, then viewers would have had fewer inhibitions against aggressive behaviour. The closer the violence is to the children's own life, then the more likely it is that children will be aggressive themselves. Berkowitz also commented that children from poverty-stricken families are particularly susceptible to this type of learning.

Other research during the seventies sought to evaluate the ability of television to bring about changes in social behaviour. Coates, Pusser & Goodman (1976) used American public television programmes for their field study into pre-school children's reactions to television. The programmes were specially created around characters who interacted positively and there were no acts of aggression. Twenty-six children each saw fifteen minutes of **Sesame Street** or **Mr Rogers' Neighbourhood** on four predetermined days. The children had been observed in free play before viewing and baseline levels of behaviour calculated. Following the programmes they were observed again in free play. The **Sesame Street** excerpts were selected to be high in cognitive behaviours, problem-solving and included punishment. **Mr Rogers' Neighbourhood** consisted more of social and emotional development, co-operation and positive re-inforcement and showed no punishment.

It was found that **Sesame Street** encouraged the children with low baseline scores to increase their positive reinforcement and social contacts, but had no effect on those children with initially high scores. **Mr Rogers' Neighbourhood** increased all the children's positive reinforcement and social contacts with

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other children and adults. It was concluded that television programmes like **Sesame Street** and **Mr Rogers' Neighbourhood** can influence children's behaviour in the preschool, the amount of change being determined by the character of the child (see Noble 1970; Eron et al. 1972).

The Canadian researchers Gorn, Goldberg & Kanungo (1976) inserted elements into **Sesame Street** programmes in the attempt to change the attitudes of English-Canadian children to other races and to French-Canadians. The new sections showed children of different races playing together in a familiar setting, ethnic dancing, a French-Canadian boy with no language and then speaking French. Pretests indicated a preference for playing with white children with the same language. A total of 205 preschool children were shown 12 minutes of film with inserts and then asked to chose from photographs of the groups seen who they would like to see at school next day. Although the control group preferred the white children, those who had been exposed to the television inserts produced a very clear-cut short-term positive attitude change towards televised children of other racial groups and especially towards the French-speaking boy. This was a short term intervention study which specifically tried to change the attitudes of the children, rather than just measuring the effects of standard programmes on them.

Noble (1975) suggested that the TV screen provided a child's first view of many national, occupational and social groups. As these impressions could be long lasting, children could expect people in real life to conform to their television stereotypes. Television was thus influencing children's views of social reality.

In Britain, Greenberg (1974) investigated the reasons why children watch television. He asked 726 children (9, 12 and 15 year-olds) to write an essay "Why I like to watch television...." and followed it with a questionnaire. Regardless of age, the results were similar, i.e. children watched television for arousal, relaxation, as a habit, for companionship and to forget problems of home and school. Children liked to talk to others about what they had seen. (See Schramm et al. 1961; Gomberg 1961)

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Annis (1971) used 3-7 year-old children to find out how much television was imitated in play. She observed the reactions of 76 children to two selected programmes from the **Playtime** series. Pre- and post-test observation was in the classroom and in a playroom, where they were observed for twenty minutes. Parental questionnaires were also used. During the showing of the films children of high I.Q. were more constant attenders. There was very little copying of the chosen programmes seen in school, but the more exciting television programmes seen at home (such as **Batman** and **Sinking Of The Titanic**) had generated much interest and stimulated creative writing and painting. Annis suggested that programmes seen at home had more action and that boys, in particular, chose to watch programmes with considerable action and hero characters, whereas the girls preferred programmes like **Blue Peter** or **Crackerjack**. The present writer hoped to discover whether there were any similar links between programme choice and sex.

Two other studies at this time were concerned with whether children understood what they had seen. Collins, Wellman & Keniston (1978) showed 292 American children (2nd, 5th and 8th grade) edited versions of adventure programmes that varied in the number and order of scenes shown. The children were then tested for their recall of plot, for non-essential information and inferred plot details. The memory for all three items improved with age, regardless of the number and organisation of scenes shown. All children, except 2nd grade boys, could infer information better from sequentially ordered rather than randomly ordered versions, while older children were better able to infer information when they recalled the central content. To follow film and television plots viewers must understand motives, relationships etc. which, therefore, involves effort during viewing "to select, order, and make inferences about the narrative" (1978:292). If viewing is not constant or is interrupted, even by advertisements, young children may not fully understand the reasons behind the actions depicted. As an alternative explanation, only their powers of communication need to be deficient.

Lorch, Anderson & Levin (1979) studied 72 children after viewing **Sesame Street** of whom, half had also played with toys: all were then tested for comprehension of what they had seen. Although the visual attention had varied

(it was twice as high in the group without toys) there was no difference in comprehension. In a normal viewing situation, variations in the understanding of the programme may determine the child's attention. Children playing while watching are aware of the screen at a superficial level but some auditory change (e.g. from voice to music or certain key words) will make them look at the screen until it gets boring again.

Bechtel (1972) and Lyle & Hoffman (1972) found that children frequently did something else while watching television. If, as Lorch et al. (1979) suggested, young children only watch the exciting or fast moving scenes, they may be unaware of the underlying reasons for the activities and misinterpret motives. Children who watch a lot of television, or programmes interrupted by advertisements may see frequent, but apparently unjustified, aggressive actions and they may be more inclined to copy such isolated acts (Collins et al. 1978).

Summary: the 1970's

Research in the seventies had been far-reaching. Much of it had been devoted to the effects of television violence on young people. Some laboratory experiments correlated aggressive behaviour with televised violence. In field studies, younger children and those who viewed the most were particularly at risk. Experiments using specially-made television broadcasts to influence pro-social behaviour were successful. In general, a child's response depended on his basic character. Television provided children with information about the world in general. Research also showed that incidents seen out of context may not have been fully understood.

2.4 The 1980's

In 1958, Himmelweit et al. observed that children tended to selectively view entire programmes. By the time that Comstock produced his major study of American children in 1980, he was able to state that "television viewing is discontinuous. It is frequently non-exclusive. It is often interrupted. It changes with the type of programme" (1980:30). The influence of television was

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dependent on such factors as the characteristics of each viewer, his circumstances and how he applied his values. He also noted the increased numbers of TV sets led to the pattern of viewing becoming more private, thus further separating adult and child experiences, and preventing explanation and modification of its influences. Comstock commented that television was competing for available leisure time and so it "strives never to be dull" (1980:80).

In England, the Department of Education and Science (1983) reported on the influence popular television had on schoolchildren. It estimated that children between 5 and 14 years old spent an average of 23 hours per week watching television. The report was about the content and values of programmes broadcast between 5.45 p.m. and 10.30 p.m. and the images of adult life and society thus conveyed to children. Those who watched the most were aged 8-11 years and 55-65 years, although it was unlikely they watched together as family groups. The survey also showed that many children watched after 9 p.m., which the B.B.C. (1987) suggests is a "watershed before which in normal circumstances all programmes should be suitable for viewing by children".

The D.E.S. report (1983) also noted how successful people were brought to children's attention, but as certain types of personality make better "television" than others, the range of qualities seen was limited. As most children spent more time watching television than in the classroom, it was important to realise the magnitude of the part which television played in the life of young people today.

Berry & Mitchell-Kernan (1982), about television as a source of social reality, wrote: "Television has assumed increasing importance in the transmission of meaning, ideas, information and values and its impact on the socialization process cannot be ignored" (1982:2). Similarly, Dorr (1982) noted that children of minority and lower socio-economic classes were more likely to give a greater credibility to television.

Cullingford (1984) surveyed 5000 children in Britain and Texas. He found no differences in response due to class, ethnic origin or domestic circumstances.

Television was seen by children as an undemanding activity that entertained them. Consequently, they disliked programmes such as the News or documentaries, which relied on the spoken word. After children's cartoons, their favourite programmes were adult. Half the children preferred drama thrillers, and a third of the remainder situation comedies: these preferences were consistent with the findings of Himmelweit et al. (1958).

Children tended to watch 2-3 hours every evening simply because the set was switched on. Cullingford's survey indicated that "all children are generally allowed to watch whatever they wish to, whenever they wish" (1984:15). There was some disagreement with Himmelweit et al. (1958) about the effect on children's bedtimes: whereas the latter said that television made little difference, Cullingford found that many children habitually stayed up late to watch their favourite adult programme.

By now, television was a "natural part of children's lives" (Cullingford 1984:12) and, because they watched so much, they seemed to obtain more pleasure from the act of viewing than from the programme content. They did not approach television to learn anything, but rather to fulfil the anticipation and to absorb the atmosphere as a whole. Children who watched the most were less likely to be able to recall what they had seen, but a programme that had made a deep impression may be recalled a long time afterwards. In general, children had an air of boredom or indifference towards television, an attitude which could be carried over into their normal lives.

Cullingford's research was particularly influential in the formation of the present study, partly because it was recent, and partly because the results were obtained after children had watched television under natural conditions, in their own homes. Furthermore, the children of the present study, like Cullingford's, appeared to see so much television that left little impression on them afterwards. Accordingly, the research pattern was planned to emulate Cullingford's approach and use the children's own words to explore their feelings and reasons for what they viewed.

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Greenfield (1984), commenting on television as a source of information, suggested that "evidence overwhelmingly indicates that television does influence children's views of social reality" (1984:32). She also considered that gender and racial stereotyping exerted an influence on minority children and those of low socio-economic status as they were even more likely "to believe in the realism of the world presented on the screen" (1984:49).

Donaldson (1985) suggested that children received images of reality from television, and that entertainment programmes were the major source.

James & McCain (1982) observed 36 American pre-school children in a day centre, followed by interviews with their leaders and parents. Television was seen to provide a mutually-shared reality around which to base their games (c.f. the findings of Schramm et al. 1961; Gomberg 1961). The games themselves were not "new", being variations of older children's games, played according to their age and stage of development. The researchers suggested that the use of television was beneficial in that it provided children with a means to further explore their environment, their own feelings and capabilities.

In Britain, Barlow & Hill (1985) published the results of a survey into video films. Data was obtained from questionnaires answered by 4,500 children (7-16 years) and their parents. Analysis showed that one third of 7-8 year-olds and one half of 9-10 year-olds had seen one or more of the films listed for prosecution under The Obscene Publications Act, 1959.

The possession of a VCR is not related to class and wealth (41% of the children in the survey had a VCR and twice as many had seen videos in other peoples' homes). Barlow et al. stated that, for half the primary-age children, horror films were the most popular, made the most impression and were the most readily remembered. Many of the "favourite" or "most remembered" (1985:41) videos mentioned in the survey were originally rated as being 'unsuitable for audiences under the age of 18 years'. In discussions, children reasoned that they preferred videos to television because they could choose what to watch, and be able to repeat scenes that interested them.

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"The disturbing effects of violent videos are likely to remain in children's minds in spite of either forewarnings or reassurances" (ibid.:117). Some of the imagery re-emerged in creative drawing and writing in school, and in conversation. Younger children were more frightened by grotesque and fantastic creatures; older ones by greater realism. The report concluded by stating its concern over the growth of the video market and the lack of controls.

The availability of VCRs to the children of this present study make it an important way to watch television. The VCR enables schedules to be bypassed so that those programmes considered unsuitable for children and/or broadcast in late evening can be seen when convenient.

In Australia, Hodge & Tripp (1986) studied six hundred 6-12 year-old children over three years. Up to 98% of Australian homes have a TV set, children view for an average of 20-25 hours per week, "and heavy viewers manage a 40 hour week or more in front of the box" (1986:1). Hodge & Tripp were especially interested in the way children approached a new cartoon series. Their studies led them to believe that the conflict between fantasy and reality was ideally adapted to children's developing powers of discrimination, and that cartoons were as important in developing emotion and intellect as fairy tales. The children were able to associate the new cartoon with other similar ones seen before. Children from the age of 9 years were considered to be able to understand, in their own way, quite complex adult television messages, and were in need of a wide range of experiences. Furthermore, as too much viewing reduced the time remaining for other activities, the researchers felt that restricting the total amount viewed, rather than the actual programmes, would be more beneficial to children.

Summary: the 1980's

In contrast to the previous decade, worldwide research during the eighties has involved the normal viewing habits of large numbers of children and was often based on their own words. The hours watched and the values imbibed have been studied. It was thought children used television mainly as a source of entertainment but could absorb ideas of social reality while they viewed. There

was concern about the proliferation of VCRs, the types of videos seen by young children and their consequent effects. In this decade, cartoons were defended for providing a source of fantasy/reality training.

2.5 Relevance of the literature to this study

The studies reviewed in this chapter must also be seen in relation to their social context. For instance, Himmelweit et al. (1958) investigated the effects on children of a novel form of entertainment: during restricted viewing hours relatively simple programmes were attentively watched. By 1984, Cullingford's subjects had a choice of four channels transmitting complex visual images for longer hours, with VCRs and videos in addition.

Research attention has developed from analyses of hours and programme types watched and the potential for modelling on hero characters; it has explored the relationship between television and violence and is currently focussed on why children watch television and their reactions to it. Each study has differed in its approach to children's interaction with television and adds to the understanding of the processes involved. However, the problem of whether television viewing permanently affects behaviour needs still to be solved.

In school, it is virtually impossible to relate observed behavioural patterns to specific causative factors. Schramm et al. (1961) commented that people adopt new behaviours because they are more rewarding. In the process of socialization, television may offer both behavioural models and an escape from the conflicts of maturation. Bandura & Walters (1963) noted the amalgam effect of several models on children's development, so that even siblings develop differently with or without the influence of television. Halloran (1970) questioned the importance of television in the socializing process. Cullingford (1984) doubted that children modelled behaviour on their favourite characters, because there were too many of them, but suggested television fantasy was used by children as a readily available source of images for imaginative play.

Concern about the extent to which children reacted aggressively to violence seen on television was shown by many workers. The experiments by

Bandura (1965); Hicks (1965); Kuhn, Madsen & Becker (1967); Hanratty & O'Neal (1972); Rosenkrans & Hartup (1967) suggested that exposure to a steady diet of violence may increase the tendencies of children to behave in a similar manner. These experiments were based on programmes which showed aggression against toys rather than people, had no story-line to follow and involved unusual actions. While the children were given the opportunity to copy the behaviours shown, they were less appropriate to reality situations.

Using extracts from real television programmes, Liebert & Baron (1972) suggested that a continued exposure to a high level of violence may influence the behaviour of young children, dependent on the situational and personality characteristics of each child.

Bandura & Walters (1963) showed cartoons with an aggressive content and found that children were more likely to subsequently respond aggressively in play. Based on an earlier study by Siegel (1956), Mussen & Rutherford (1961) observed children's behaviour after watching aggressive and non-aggressive cartoons. They found children were more willing to express aggressive thoughts after watching aggressive cartoons, although this may have been the result of disinhibition due to a relaxing environment. As it was not possible to experiment in the present inquiry, this approach was not followed.

Many authors considered television to be a major source of play and language. Gomberg (1961) noticed how young children played in a stereotyped way once television characters were introduced, i.e. their voices became shrill, their movements stylised and recognisable. Television apparently influenced the play of 80% of the boys and it was seen to provide a unique basis for communal play. Freedman (1961) had observed that mostly younger children identified with the models on television and copied their habits. Annis (1971) also found younger children, being less self-conscious, frequently re-enacted imaginative and realistic situations in normal play activities. She noted that, although it gave rise to little conversation, it was recognised by other children.

James & McCain (1982) also observed pre-schoolers using television as a basis for games. Boys, especially, were inclined to copy superhuman or powerful

characters, those with distinguishing costumes or props, funny or silly characters, and those with distinct verbal or non-verbal behaviours. Again, it was reported that television provided a common experience on which to base play, resulting in modern variations of traditional games. Developmental differences suggested age, followed by gender to be the strongest determinant of how much and what type of play was produced.

Opie & Opie (1969) observed pretending games and noted that they were distorted reflections of how the children lived, including the programmes watched. They observed how contemporary television favourites spawned similar games with different names e.g. **Batman, Superman** and 'Daleks' were all based on the 'cowboys and indians' or 'cops and robbers' format.

Although catchphrases (and actions) from broadcasts have long been incorporated into adult communication, Howe (1977) showed that they could also enter the repertoire of children's speech and activities. Cullingford (1984) thought children were more likely to incorporate into their language the chatty phrases of the comperes and the one-liners of the action heroes. Parodies of advertisements were easily made up and passed on for amusement, in the way nursery rhymes and singing games used to be.

After some time spent observing children in the classroom and playground, the present writer realised that television was not a major source of play among her pupils but it was still considered appropriate to investigate its role as an inspiration for play and language.

Although television has been available for half a century, there is continuing concern and curiosity about how children react to it. The present study was stimulated by the work of earlier researchers: Chapter 3 explains its development.

CHAPTER 3
DEVELOPMENT OF THE RESEARCH STRUCTURE

In the light of the literature review, the present author contemplated research methods relevant to the children with whom she was in contact. The following section outlines how the study evolved.

3.1 Initial thoughts

3.1.1 Access to TV sets and VCRs

An important factor in the children's choice of programmes appeared to be access to TV sets. This author suggested that the fewer the number of people who shared the set, the greater the likelihood of the child watching his own choice of programme. Access to a VCR could also influence viewing habits. The number of sets, the types of programme seen and the amount of television viewed would provide the necessary data.

3.1.2 Television and behaviour in school

It was thought that children's behaviour in school might be linked to a preference for a specific type of programme and if, in turn, this selection was dependent upon I.Q., self esteem, and social standing. It was also thought possible that the amount of time spent viewing might affect a child's approach to work and concentration in school. Investigation into links between the child's response to television and his attitude to school and to his peer group, could reveal any influence of television on his life. Additionally, it was hoped to discover which aspects of television programmes caused the most fear.

The author anticipated that certain recognised tests of I.Q., personality and self concept would need to be administered before observation took place, in order to provide a reference point. Direct observation would then be focussed on specific areas; for instance, use of language, the child's attitude to

other children, to adults, to law and order. Next, indirect observation would be followed by verbal questioning about the role of television in his life. Thus, it was hoped to discover how far a child's behaviour was attributable to television.

On consideration, the pre-test/post-test strategy was considered too rigid, instead it was decided to use the child as his own baseline with his own images as a reference point. Because behaviour in school also included language and play, it became apparent to the author that this was an important area for study. Consequently, this aspect of behaviour was eventually to become a separate issue.

3.1.3 The influence of television on children's emotional development

Initially, the author proposed to investigate the effects of educational and leisure television on a child's emotional development, and to attempt to discover whether the amount and type of television seen related to the character of the child, as seen in school.

It was soon realised that such an investigation would involve an element of longitudinal study, which would need either the same children over a longer time period than one academic year, or would require children of different ages from outside the contact group, i.e. infants and top juniors: this proved to be impracticable to organise.

It was decided to omit educational television from the study and concentrate solely on leisure television, as this was the area of most interest to the children and the author.

3.1.4 Perception of social reality

Several workers had observed that children obtained some of their general knowledge from television (see Himmelweit et al. 1958; Bandura & Walters 1963; de Fleur 1964; Noble 1975; Gorn et al. 1976). In the present study it was hoped to explore any relationship between children's perception of social reality and their viewing habits; also to investigate their feelings about the world around

them and, if possible, to assess what part television may have played in the process of socialization.

It was decided to obtain data mainly by observational methods. Because it was thought that these children would be better able to express themselves orally, there was to be an emphasis on tape-recorded discussions about their preferences for certain programmes. However, drawings were also seen as legitimate methods of investigating inner feelings, the pictures to include both those drawn without direction, and those suggested by the teacher.

3.2 Definitive issues to be studied in Phase One

By consideration of the preliminary issues and any envisaged difficulties, an amended set of topics for study evolved, to be called Phase One. The issues to be considered were as follows:-

(a) Children's access to TV sets and VCRs, and any perceived relationship with viewing habits, including likes and dislikes (4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4).

(b) Relationships between children's attitudes to school, their attentiveness, their behaviour and viewing preferences; also, if violence on the screen affects their behaviour (4.5).

(c) Children's perception of social reality, as observed in school (4.6).

(d) Television as a source of play, language and communication (4.7).

On completion of Phase One, it was expected that there would be further modifications before proceeding to Phase Two (4.8).

3.3 Methodology and its development

This study is limited in its scope by the need to teach while undertaking research. It was proposed that most data would be obtained from the observation of children in certain classes, with playground observation providing an additional source. These would provide an opportunity for empirical research in a tightly knit social area.

A cluster sample of the whole class as the group may restrict the area of validity (as it is then neither a random sample, nor a cross section of the population). However, it is still acceptable as a special study of one assemblage, in one area, and social grouping (Selkirk 1978). In dealing with such a group, the case study researcher has the opportunity to observe the characteristics of the single unit, whether an individual child, a group, or the whole class. It is then possible to attempt to analyse the associated elements.

Participant observation requires the recording of situations by someone involved in the activities of the group, although the reason for being present may be concealed (Skager & Weinberg 1959; Cohen & Manion 1980).

One advantage of observing a familiar group of children is their unawareness of anything unusual, and thus their behaviour is less likely to be affected (Evans 1968). The teacher, as a familiar, trusted and interested adult, could use the shared experiences to discover the relationships between the children and their viewing. However, any adult, including a teacher, may sometimes be given an answer the child thinks is required, rather than the truth (especially concerning feelings and perceptions) (James & Ebutt 1981).

It was decided to use direct observation to record the childrens' behaviour, language, attitude etc. One of the usual methods of direct observation is "Time Sampling", which involves short, regular observations over a certain time period. However, this was not practicable as the author had to teach a class at the same time as observing them. Therefore an "Incident Sampling Method" was chosen, i.e. the observation of an individual in selected

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incidents, or situations, in which he becomes involved. In addition to describing behaviour, also recorded would be a description of the circumstances in which it occurred, and the nature of any precipitating stimulus. After a series of such observations, an investigator may have sufficient data to draw inferences about each individual's typical behaviour pattern under naturally occurring conditions (Lovell & Lawson 1970).

Additional indirect observation of their outside activities was to be obtained from diaries, written work, drawings and discussions (Cohen 1976).

Data was to be augmented by tape recorded discussions and interviews, as it has been found that many people, especially children, were more willing to communicate orally than in writing. The interviewer can use the conversation to obtain relevant information on attitudes, beliefs and preferences which are otherwise difficult to discover. Being members of the interviewer's class, the co-operation and confidence of the children presented no problem, particularly as conducting the interviews in the classroom was another way of relaxing the children concerned. If circumstances demanded it, the interviewer could deviate from the basic plan e.g. changes in order of wording, presentation and emphasis although, afterwards, it would be more difficult to compare and generalize the data (Lovell & Lawson 1970; Wragg 1978; Cohen & Manion 1980).

As an additional source of illumination in the study, the author also decided to quote the children. Cane & Schroeder (1970) used "comments elaborated during interviews" (1970:38) and "notable points" (1970:39) to illustrate their book on teachers and research methods. Marsh, Rosser & Harré (1978) used the children's own words to describe classroom disorder. The authors accepted that some of the episodes may have been "elaborations produced to impress" (1978:30), however the point of interest was the way the pupils described the actions and the meanings behind them. Cullingford (1984) used quotations to illustrate his statistics. Similarly, Hodge & Tripp (1986) used extracts from interviews and individual comments to clarify how children think about television.

To summarise, data collection was to be by both direct (3.3.1 - 3.3.4) and indirect (3.3.5 - 3.3.10) observation, as described below:-

3.3.1 Observation, in normal school situations, of behaviour and language, including unsolicited comments made to the author. It was hoped to note any conversation about television, whether relating to the programmes mentioned, or to the act of watching.

3.3.2 Observation of the children's play, including whether television was the basis for their games, how they interacted, and the way they behaved with other children and adults from other classes. Direct observation is considered to be the best way to gather information on behaviour "in naturally occurring situations such as the play of children" (Lovell & Lawson 1970:108).

3.3.3 The recording of general discussions between the author and pairs of children, but directed towards television if possible.

3.3.4 Questioning groups of three or four children about certain categories of people (e.g. judges, women, engineers, detectives, rich people) in an attempt to discover their sources of knowledge.

3.3.5 In class, daily for one week, each child was to be given a list of the previous day's programmes. They were to be asked to mark those seen, and to select the one they had enjoyed most. The lists relating to the weekend were to be given on Monday. There was also space to name any videos they had seen (Cullingford 1984). (This collection of viewing data constituted the diary referred to in the text).

3.3.6 Similarly, every two weeks, lists of films were to be provided.

3.3.7 Each child was to name their six most liked and disliked programmes, with reasons. This was to be done in school, following a discussion of what people might want to look for in a programme (Halloran, Brown & Chaney 1970; Cullingford 1984).

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3.3.8 On two occasions, they were to name their favourite television characters.

3.3.9 Additionally, one favourite programme and one favourite character were to be drawn.

3.3.10 They were also to draw their eight most memorable scenes from television and then discuss them with the author.

Consequently, much data concerning children's viewing habits and behaviour was collected: the results (Phase One) are given in the following Chapter. Lists of programmes chosen, and a sample of interview transcripts, are given in the Appendices I and II.

N.B. Real names have not been used except where significant.

CHAPTER 4

THE STUDY: PHASE ONE

Phase One of the study was undertaken in 1985-86 and involved children in the author's class (to be known as Class A), which consisted of 17 boys and 10 girls. Their ages ranged from 8 years 8 months to 9 years 2 months at the start of the study. The children were all resident in the local school catchment area, which comprises three council estates and one private. The school has social priority status because of high unemployment and the number of single parent families in its area. The development of the research structure and its methodology were outlined in Chapter 3. A summary of the results and their interpretation are given in this chapter and are discussed, together with those of Phases Two and Three, in Chapter 7.

4.1 Access to TV sets and VCRs

4.1.1 Ownership

All 27 children in class A had at least one TV set in their homes and all but one of the main sets were colour receivers. 48% of the children had a TV set in their bedroom and another 25% had access to a set in a sibling's room. Two families had 3 sets, and one had 4.

13 children had access to VCRs in their homes - an average of 48%, compared with the national average of 42% (Brooks 1986).

4.1.2 Correlation with viewing habits

Analysis of each child's diary for the week 31/1/86 - 6/2/86, showed that the number of hours viewed ranged from none to sixteen hours per day. One boy mentioned that the TV set was left on all day and that he switched channels, thus seeing parts of several simultaneous programmes.

Using criteria based on an average child's viewing of about 12 hours per week, Himmelweit et al. (1958) divided the children into three groups, called occasional, moderate and heavy viewers ("addicts", 1958:385). At that time, the amount of available viewing time was much less than at present. Their findings for 10-11 year-olds were:-

Occasional viewers (0-7 hours/week)   28%
Moderate viewers   (8-20 hours/week) 41%
Heavy viewers   (>21 hours/week)   31%

Using the same definitions, the findings for Phase One were:-

Occasional viewers (0-7 hours/week)   0%
Moderate viewers   (8-20 hours/week) 12%
Heavy viewers   (>21 hours/week)   88%

Between 1958 and 1985 the national viewing average had increased by more than 100% to 25 hours per week (Barlow & Hill 1985). To take account of this change, the present author modified Himmelweit et al.'s definitions. The redefined categories and results were:-

Light viewers   (0-20 hours/week)   11%
Average viewers   (20-30 hours/week) 19%
Heavy viewers   (>30 hours/week)   69%

Further analysis reveals that 80% of these children viewed more than the national average and nearly two thirds of the heavy viewers had a TV set in their own bedroom.

Bechtel (1973) and Cullingford (1984) produced evidence that children frequently did other things while the television was on e.g. playing and eating. In the present study, only one boy said he watched television in the kitchen while he had his dinner. Five other children mentioned watching their own TV sets while lying in bed. As another 8 children also had sets in their bedrooms, it is probable that they also watched television while playing or in bed. Of the

13 children who had a TV set in their room, 2 were average and 11 were heavy viewers.

4.1.3 Summary

Comparison with Himmelweit et al. (1958), revealed a dramatic difference in viewing time. In 1958, 69% viewed for less than 20 hours per week, compared with 11% in the present sample, but variations in transmission hours account for some of this difference. In Class A, 80% of children watched more television than the present British average of 25 hours per week. Children with TV sets in their bedrooms were amongst the heaviest viewers. (These results are further discussed in section 7.1.2).

4.2 Favourite programmes (fig.1)

The division into types of programme is based upon Stein & Friedrich (1971) i.e.

Children's programmes but not cartoons

Cartoons, totally animated

Miscellaneous adult and family shows, including soap operas, quizzes and comedies

Violent, horror, crime, western and adventure programmes

Analysis of each child's diary showed that programmes in the adult and family category were the most popular during the week of the survey. Next came violent, crime and adventure programmes. Children's programmes and cartoons were joint third.

When the same procedure was applied to programmes chosen from memory a slightly different picture emerged. Although adult and family shows remained as the most popular category, there was a marked drop in the numbers of violent/horror/crime programmes. The liking for cartoons remained the same, but children's programmes had more appeal in retrospect. This change could be explained by the comfortable familiarity of regular children's programmes, whereas the programmes with more action were forgotten after a short period.

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4.2.1 Children's programmes (fig.2)

From the children's diaries, the most popular programmes in this category were serials and adventure programmes. The adventure programmes liked by 11 boys (and 1 girl only) were both American imports: Airwolf and The A-Team. Serials were liked by 6 boys and 6 girls, who named 4 programmes: **Grange Hill** (based on a British school), **Running Scared** (a British thriller) and two American situation comedies, Small Wonder (a lifelike robot girl) and **Charles In Charge** (an elder brother).

When listed from memory however, there was a remarkable increase in the apparent liking for adventure programmes. There were 33 preferences for children's exciting programmes: most were American series, especially **Street Hawk** (a super motorbike), **The A-Team** (ex-soldiers running from the law but doing good), **Knight Rider** (a talking car that fights for right) and Airwolf (a fantastic helicopter). The appeal of these programmes lay in the vehicles, main characters, fast action and stunts.

4.2.2 Cartoons (fig.3)

All but one of the children said that they watched cartoons; (the exception is probably mistaken, as cartoons were included in **Saturday Superstore** which, in fact, he had seen). If asked, all children said they enjoyed cartoons and were even selected as favourites by 15 children, but only 3 of whom were girls. Humorous cartoons were the most popular, with the favourite (10 boys, 1 girl) being **The Telebugs** (space creatures). The second most popular (6 boys) was **He-Man And The Masters Of The Universe** (a fantasy story of battles with monsters and strange beings).

From memory, their favourite cartoons again included humorous ones as the most popular, with **Scoobydoo** and **Tom And Jerry** getting 6 nominations (3 and 2 respectively, from girls). Only He-Man appeared in both diary and memory lists. One cartoon is often superceded by a similar one, so type is more important than the actual title. There were slightly more girls who selected

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cartoons from memory than from the previous evening: they "liked the dog", or because it was "funny" or "made me laugh". Boys often mentioned the pursuits and the ability of cartoon characters to fly, "go in the air", "stick to walls", to "be strong" and to fight.

4.2.3 Adult and family shows (fig.4)

By far the most popular programmes were soap operas, particularly **EastEnders** (15 viewers, with interest shown equally by both sexes). Situation comedies had more appeal for girls (8) than for boys (4). In addition, other comedy programmes were chosen, so it would seem that children used television for amusement. No-one selected quiz programmes as their favourite. Documentaries were represented by two choices of **The Marriage** (about a couple in the weeks before their wedding), and one choice of **Bluebell** (a biography of a dancer). Both of these documentaries had a stronger human interest element than normal for this category, and all choices were by girls. Sport was preferred by 6 boys, with only one girl choosing a sporting programme.

When favourite programmes were chosen from memory, there was very little difference except, sport and comedy were slightly less popular. Girls found soap operas enjoyable because they "liked the babies", or the main character, or the relationships between the characters ("I like **Coronation Street** because Ivy is back in with George"). The boys tended to prefer programmes with plenty of action and/or violence e.g. sport when "people get kicked in."

4.2.4 Violent programmes etc. (fig.5)

Many children preferred to watch this type of programme. The choice of favourite adventure programme was unanimous: an American drama series called **The Fall Guy**.

The crime group included several police series such as **Hill Street Blues**, **Starsky And Hutch** (both American), and **The Bill** (British). Hunter, **Magnum** and **Crazy Like A Fox** were American detective stories, while **Boon** and **Minder** were about British trouble shooters. All of these programmes had lots of action and

most involved firearms. (Comment: two-thirds of these programmes were American and only one was broadcast by the B.B.C.). Three of these programmes were scheduled to start after the 9 p.m. "watershed", i.e. they were unsuitable for young children and yet were chosen as favourites by 30% of the class. Cullingford (1984) had found half the children he studied preferred drama/thrillers.

Horror programmes were all scheduled very late in the evening. **Fear On Friday** (11.30 pm), **The Horror Movie : Blood Beach** (11.30 pm), **The Hatter's Ghosts** (10.05 pm) and **'V'** (10.32 pm).

It must be emphasised that fig.5 only relates to the children who selected the programmes as their favourites; many others watched them, either that night or another day. Three children had **'V'** recorded for viewing the following evening because their parents considered the broadcast was too late for a school night, but obviously they were unconcerned about the content.

From memory, very few children actually chose violent programmes as their favourites. There were a few who named crime series like **Dempsey And Makepeace**, ("because they are good", "it is very cool", "when they are mad with each other"), or other crime series with "plenty of police" or action. Other reasons given included: "he tears his skin off" (**Poltergeist**), "because it is bloodthirsty" (**Time For Murder**), and for the pursuits in **The Dukes Of Hazzard**.

4.2.5 Summary of favourite programmes

Some variations were found between nominations from the children's diaries and those from memory. For example, children's programmes were more popular in retrospect and violent programmes less so.

From both diaries and memories, the best-liked children's programmes were the action/adventure types, but mainly by boys. This agreed with Cullingford who had found they were rituals which "fulfilled expectations in which the heroes will always survive" (1984:6).

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Cartoons were also popular, especially with boys, (who preferred the action type), whereas any girls preferences were due to humour or the characters (see Cullingford 1984; Hodge & Tripp 1986).

Adult and family shows were the most popular, whether from diaries or memory: this confirms the findings of Himmelweit et al. (1958) through to Cullingford (1984). However, in contrast to Cullingford, soap operas were very popular – with both boys and girls. Both this sample and Cullingford's liked situation comedies because "the situation is always the same and the entertainment can be relied upon not to vary" (Cullingford 1984:6).

For a range of reasons, many children selected violent programmes as their diary favourites, e.g. the excitement of crime series, the thrill of stunts, and the fear of horror movies. However this category seemed less popular in retrospect.

4.3 Programmes disliked (fig.7)

When the children were asked to name the programmes they disliked, several found it impossible to give six names, and one girl said there were none because she "liked them all". Once again, it was adult and family shows that were mentioned most, although this time unfavourably. There were no nominations from the violent/crime category. Also disliked were some children's programmes and some cartoons.

4.3.1 Children's programmes (fig.8)

In the variety category, the programme especially disliked was **Playschool** because it was "too babyish", "not exciting", or because it "hadn't got the windows anymore". The miscellaneous group included those who found **John Craven's Newsround** "not funny", "not like cartoons", or "just saying words". This section also included some quiz shows that were not liked because they were "not interesting", "not fair", because they were "one against two", or "a child against a teacher".

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4.3.2 Cartoons (fig.9)

There were very few children who said they did not like cartoons. Reasons included: not liking the central character, or because there was not enough action, or "**She-Ra** is for girls".

4.3.3 Adult and family shows (fig.10)

The most disliked programmes were soap operas, all of which were mentioned. Reasons for not liking them included: "there are no kids", "it's just talking", "they're always in the Club", and "it's for women" (all **Coronation Street**); other children did not like certain characters, or the programmes were not considered funny. Soap operas were disliked by more boys than girls, and one boy mentioned several: "in **Dynasty** they always have affairs, in **Dallas** they are always fighting, and in **EastEnders** there is no action".

Another unpopular group of programmes included the **News**; reasons were "it's boring", "it's for men", and "always talking". This also applied to **TV-am** and the Weather **Forecast** ("and they get it wrong").

Unpopular films were mostly said to be "boring", although some disliked the hero (**Superman**), the chimpanzee (**Tarzan**), or thought no-one could have super powers (**Superman**), or just found the film too sad (**E.T.**).

4.3.4 Summary of disliked programmes

Some children found difficulty in naming six programmes they disliked. There was no correlation between programme type and sex.

Criticism of children's programmes was mainly because they were produced for younger children. Quiz shows were also less popular. Any cartoons disliked were mainly on account of the central character or its action or lack of it.

Many children disliked some adult and family shows. Soap operas were generally unpopular with boys because of too much talking and not enough

action: this agrees with Cullingford (1984). If a child liked a soap opera, he appeared to have liked several, but if he disliked one, then he often disliked others. News and weather were also unpopular, because of the talking, (which was also consistent with Cullingford's findings).

There was no mention of disliking violent programmes.

4.4 Films

In order to discover which films had been seen, checklists of those broadcast were provided and then analysed. Although some of these films were made for children, many of them were intended for adult audiences and were shown at a later hour; some of these may have been seen as private (or commercial) recordings. Listed below are some of the most popular films watched by the 27 pupils of Class A.

4.4.1 Films either made for children or shown early:-

66% Robin Of Sherwood
37% Return To Treasure Island
33% Son Of Sinbad
29% Thunderball

4.4.2 Films suitable for families :-

81% Boys In Blue
74% Superman
67% Smokey And The Bandit
62% Jaws 2
62% Flash Gordon
55% Raiders Of The Lost Ark
48% Live And Let Die
48% Airport '75
48% Airport '77
44% Kane And Abel
29% What's Up Doc?
29% Street Fighter

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4.4.3 Films not suitable for children:-

70%	**Rocky**
52%	**'V'**
44%	**Convoy**
44%	**Every Which Way But Loose**
29%	**Blade Runner**
29%	**Best Little Whorehouse In Texas**

The BBC and IBA guidelines state that material unsuitable for children should not be shown before 9 p.m. The authorities consider it is the primary responsibility of the parents thereafter, particularly as the evening progresses. However many films seen were originally broadcast after 10 p.m.

4.4.4 Summary

Films were very popular with most children. Sometimes films shown in the early evening were viewed by many children, but many intended only for adult audiences also had a large audience. Among films seen by the largest numbers were those being broadcast for the first time subsequent to favourable publicity. Some of the films listed above had also been seen on hired videos before being shown on television.

4.5 Television and behaviour in school

4.5.1 Attentiveness (fig.11)

Comstock (1980) suggested that television producers applied the principles of distraction and fast action as a way of holding a "child's transient attention" (1980:73). Consequently, Cullingford (1984) argued that "children who watch a large amount of television and have many regular favourites become accustomed to a constant state of indifferent attention" (1984:22).

De Walfe & Harré (1976) commented on the virtual impossibility of conducting personality studies in laboratories, because of the need to observe

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the subject's reactions to a large number of situations. In the present study, there was the constraint of being within school. However, even the reality of school as seen by the child depends on his view, which may be anywhere between the two extremes of "stubborn reality to dream fantasies" (1976:236).

The present author decided to investigate whether there was any relationship between attentiveness in school and the amount of television watched. Data was obtained from observation of the children in the classroom during lessons, and in the playground during dinnertimes and playtimes. Direct observation entailed using an Incident Sampling Method, where instances of selected behaviour were noted along with any precipitating stimulus (Lovell & Lawson 1970). This method allowed the observation of children's reactions to more varied situations, than time sampling over a limited period of time. The behaviours selected were derived from Stott (1978), i.e. easily distracted, unpredictable outbursts, evading learning tasks, hostile moods and refusal to work, can't concentrate, over active and fidgety (where the child is distracted from learning by the constant movement of his limbs, by swinging or sliding on his chair, and getting up and running around the classroom). Observations were recorded from January to July, 1986.

There were instances of children being easily distracted from their work, sitting fidgeting with their pencils, or tapping their feet. This appeared to be more noticeable with some children than others. Some fidgety children did not necessarily watch a lot of television, but 70% of the restless incidents were from heavy television viewers.

During working time, Paul was observed talking to others, calling out, tapping his feet and waving his pencil about, while during quiet reading time he made noises to disturb the others. Lesley clattered her pencil and ruler. Colin tapped his feet and frequently got up and went to talk to others.

Twice, after the entire school had watched cartoons on the VCR during a wet playtime, the majority of the class came back in a very fidgety, restless mood. There was much excited chattering and tapping of feet from many of them. In particular, Colin and Lee were talking out loud and laughing, while

Stephen was interfering with the others by taking their books, papers and pencils.

On another occasion, while the class was watching educational television, several children were observed not to be concentrating (Colin and Tracy fidgeting and whispering, Paul calling out guesses and playing with his hair, Ray tapping his feet, Ian swinging his legs, and others generally fidgety.)

There did seem to be a certain group of children who found it hard to sit still or to concentrate on quiet activities. They appeared to exhibit Cullingford's "state of indifferent attention" (1984:22).

By contrast, some heavy viewers were attentive, worked hard, and appeared to have a positive attitude to school. Therefore, it seemed unwise to suggest that there was a correlation between a high exposure to television and lack of attention in school, but that some other personality trait was responsible.

4.5.2 Aggressiveness (figs 12 & 13)

Many violent incidents were observed. Certain children were far more aggressive than others, and some retaliated rather than initiated incidents. Acts of aggression were performed by children from all viewing categories, but 69% of the incidents observed were attributable to heavy viewers.

While watching cartoons on the VCR during a wet playtime, Stephen punched a first year child and then kicked Michael, karate style, for telling on him. On another occasion he hit Julian in the back. One time, while lining up to return from the hall, he fought with Keith. These incidents could have been influenced by seeing the cartoons, or they might have been precipitated by being in a crowd.

Trying to establish relationships between aggressiveness and television was difficult because of all the other possible causal factors such as family and environment.

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Among the lightest viewers was Ian, who could be extremely aggressive towards other children. For example, he was seen to: move another boy's chair so that he fell to the floor, fight at dinner-time, hit other boys (and girls), throw pencils at people, knock over chairs and kick other children. He would then refuse to report to teacher and sulk, or pretend to run home.

Keith was another light viewer, who selected which programmes to watch but also occupied himself by making models. He was not as aggressive as Ian, but could annoy other children until they retaliated. He would call them names, take their pencils, move their chairs, hide their papers, and sometimes hit or kick.

These two examples apparently show little relationship between television and aggresion. However, they both admired **Rocky** and **He-Man** (and adventure series), and may have found their aggressive activities worth emulating. Otherwise, their behaviour must have been due to more complex factors.

Among the average viewers, Ray was inclined to aggressively overreact if someone irritated him. Examples include: when Lesley fell onto him he kicked her; he argued with Tracy over a chair and they ended up kicking and pushing to get it; when Carl took a shape from him, Ray knocked him over and kicked him; he and Colin were kicking and punching each other at playtime, then continued at the end of the P.E. lesson, even outside the headmaster's room. His favourite programmes were more in the family entertainment group, (**Last Of The Summer Wine, Grandstand** and **The Paul Daniels' Show**), but the characters he favoured were tough and included 'Rocky' and 'Rambo'.

Colin was one of the heavy viewers, whose parents used television to reward or punish him. One evening during the diary week he was late for his tea, sent to bed and saw no television. He was often involved in fights; he pulled Michael off his chair and then kicked him; he kicked others because he lost in football. He fought Lee Kung Fu style, kicked Ian in the head on the way home, and pushed Stephen off his chair. Of course, at times, he was on the receiving end of aggression. He preferred to watch children's adventure

programmes such as **Knight Rider, Street Hawk** and **Airwolf.** His favourite characters were from cartoons (**He-Man, Wizbit** and **Jimbo).**

Conversely, in the heavy viewing group were some children who were very gentle and prosocial (Carol, Nicola and Debbie). Their favourite programmes tended to be family entertainment and children's adventure, but they all watched programmes after the 9 o'clock "watershed" and frequently saw films of a more violent or horrific nature. Also in this group were Neil, Robert and Graham whose favourite programmes ranged from children's adventure to horror films, and yet they were generally polite, friendly and non-aggressive.

In the light of these relationships, it became impossible to state categorically that children who preferred to watch violent television were more pre-disposed to behave in an aggressive, or anti-social way. Other influences of their backgrounds were probably responsible for their social behaviour and are discussed in Chapter 7.

4.5.3 Summary of television's links with behaviour

Those children who were the heaviest viewers accounted for 70% of restless incidents observed in school, but not all heavy viewers were necessarily restless.

Heavy viewers also accounted for 67% of observed aggressive incidents. Liebert & Baron (1972) suggested that continued exposure to violence could cause a child so disposed to behave aggressively. There was a general tendency for the more aggressive children to admire aggressive television heroes.

4.6 Perception of social reality

Data was obtained from interviews: this was because children communicate more freely than by writing, and information is more detailed than from a questionnaire. The children were already relaxed with the interviewer, their class teacher.

The format of these interviews differed from those conducted in order to discover television habits. This time there were groups of three or four children, who were asked to say what they knew about certain topics written on cards (e.g. women, rich people, detectives, judges, London, etc.). The topics had been chosen so that they might be known to the children personally or through television or, possibly, both.

4.6.1 Results and analysis

Schramm et al. (1961) suggested that different people perceive programmes in different ways and put that knowledge to different uses. The various messages from television may be confusing to a child, but they may provide the only available information on how certain groups of people behave (Lusted 1985). Siegel's (1958) experiments based on stories about taxi drivers, indicated that children's knowledge of an unknown occupation could be modified by what they had heard on the radio. The author tried to discover what the children in the study knew about various occupations from television, e.g. did the children know what judges did and what they wore?

Tracy: "They wear a wig.... they go in court."

Graham: "They have a big hammer and bang on the table for quietness.... they send people to jail."

Carol: "They wear white wigs and a cloak."

Claire: "Judges are in court.... you plead guilty.... I heard it on the telly."

There was more uncertainty over the roles of solicitors and lawyers, unless the children had been involved with them in real life:-

Tracy: "I went to the solicitor's with my Mum about the hot water."

Debbie: "I've been to the lawyers with my Dad."

Colin: "Solicitors are in London.... do they work in a bank?"

Lisa: "Do solicitors give medicine?"

Richard: "Lawyers are posh people, with suits, and their noses in the air."

Lee: "Do they write your death bed down? What you're going to leave behind?"

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Minorities (usually black) were formerly portrayed on television as violent, victimised, stupid, funny etc. Television now presents a more positive approach but blacks are still seldom shown in a position of authority. If children's only previous experience of other races is through television, in reality they will expect them to conform to the television stereotype and will take more notice of anticipated behaviour (Dorr 1982). In the present study, it was noted that the children's knowledge of Africa was based on the severe drought, subsequent famine, and consequent fundraising activities. However, only one boy had more than just impressions - he even recalled his source as being the **News**:-

Pat: "It's miles away.... a hot desert."

Lesley: "It's dry.... they haven't much food."

Robert: "They've got lots of fruit.... bananas.... they wear long clothes.... live in tents."

Sarah: "It's where those starving people are.... they'd be pleased with our rain."

Ray: "There's violence there, it's on the News.... South Africa.... it's bigger than our country.... the people are a different colour, wear different clothes, not trousers because it's too hot.... cloaks."

Michael: "They're blackies."

Concepts of differing roles according to sex may also be imparted by television. In 1974, an analysis of programme content showed males in positions of authority, with females as passive consumers, usually as stereotyped "mothers" or "housewives" (Rossiter 1980).

When the children in this study were discussing women, these attitudes were reiterated. Women, according to them, "cook", "wash", "dry", "change the baby", "wash up", "make beds", "they do not do things like engineering" (Ray). This rather limited outlook on female occupations could have been as much a result of their environment as television. However, none of the groups mentioned women's jobs with which they were personally familiar e.g. in schools, hospitals, shops, police (even through television series with leading female roles).

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When asked about rich people some of their comments were obviously derived from television:-

Tracy: "They live in big houses, with posh clothes.... and a posh dog."

Karen: "They wear posh clothes.... have jewellery, real silver, real diamonds."

Carl: "Swimming pools.... a poodle.... they live in Dallas.... with oil rigs and big hats.... not likely to live in England."

Carol: "I've seen them on the telly.... lots of money in their purse."

Lisa: "They showed you on the telly.... is the Queen rich?"

Lee: "Samantha Fox.... in the papers, on telly, on the News."

Although the children had knowledge of the police , they were less sure about detectives:-

Sarah: "A policewoman.... an office man.... wears a posh uniform."

Keith: "No uniform, suits and ties.... have pen and paper."

Robert: "Men who look for things.... don't wear uniform, wears a coat with two buttons low down, and a magnifying glass to look for clues."

Pat: "They're like **Starsky And Hutch**.... coppers.... detectives.... they have guns."

Ray: "They don't use them much.... they don't ride in police cars.... they try to catch vandals.... they ask questions."

In many of these instances, Ray seemed to have more general knowledge of the world around him, but whether this was due to a more intelligent use of the media in general, or to his background is difficult to determine. A good deal of the other children's awareness of the world seemed to come from what they had seen on the screen.

4.6.2 Summary of perception of social reality

Television provided an important source of information and social reality for these children. Visual clues were absorbed from serious programmes, such as the **News** and from entertainment programmes (e.g. **Dallas**), thus confirming the

findings of Schramm et al. (1961), Bandura & Walters (1963) and Halloran (1970). That television could also change social attitudes had been demonstrated by Coates et al. (1976) and Gorn et al. (1976).

4.7 Television as a source of play, language and communication

Several authors stated that young children spent a lot of time playing games based on television, (Schramm et al. 1961; Lyle & Hoffman 1973; Gomberg 1961; Noble 1975; James & McCain 1982). From these previous studies the following work developed.

4.7.1 Play and other copying activities

Very few television-inspired games were noticed among children of Class A, possibly because, being about 9 years old, they were too old or self-conscious for this kind of activity. Most boys kicked a football every playtime; the girls played ball, skipped, chased each other or stood around talking. When television-inspired play was observed in the playground, it was mostly among 7 and 8 year-olds e.g. shooting and being killed.

Imitation of action, however, was observed. Having seen the film **Rocky** on a friend's VCR, Michael was seen to prance, announcing himself as 'Rocky', and consequently challenged Ian to a boxing match. Following the broadcasting of an international boxing match, Michael fought with both Ian and Mark.

Graham was occasionally be seen 'driving' the **'Knight Rider'** car, or acting as a robot with arms stretched out.

Seen either 'live' or as a video, the film that caused the most imitation was First Blood (usually referred to as 'Rambo'). On many subsequent occasions, children were observed shooting machine-guns. This character especially appealed to boys, and offered them behaviour patterns that could be imitated without other props:-

Stephen and Gary shooting each other, or miming guns as isolated incidents rather than as part of a game.

Lee, with a scarf round his forehead, holding an imaginary gun, saying:
"Look at me! Watch out, you're dead!"
Paul: "I'm Rambo."

A video about Robin Hood was re-enacted in the playground by Craig, Mark and Robert pretending to shoot bows and arrows. The "nutting" action of comedians Cannon and Ball was copied by Graham, Neil, and Claire. Stephen, sitting at his desk and muttering to himself, made the sign of the cross to ward off vampires.

Most of these incidents did not directly involve any other activity.

4.7.2 Language

Television was considered to be a central part of children's lives and they were thought to model a large part of their play and language on programmes seen. Freedman (1961) observed that it was the younger children who mostly identified with the models on television and copied their habits.

Howe (1977) showed how the stock phrases and fads on television could enter the repertoire of children's speech and activities.

Cullingford (1984) suggested that children incorporated into their language the chatty phrases of comperes, and the one liners of action heroes. Parodies of advertisements were easily made up and passed on for amusement, in the way nursery rhymes and singing games used to be.

As part of the present study, the author recorded discussions and interviews. She also listened to and made notes on children talking among themselves both in the classroom and the playground. Language overheard was mostly about the programmes children had seen, or planned to watch. Unless the author was directly addressed by the child, she chose only to eavesdrop and note any comments. In this way it was hoped that the children would express themselves more naturally, and not answer in the way they considered the teacher would want to hear.

Examples include:-

Tracy described one character as: "like a c-o-w, 'cos they say things like that on **EastEnders**. But it's a good programme, though." She knew that it was not an acceptable style of speech (which was why she spelt it out), but when aroused she called other people similarly. Paul described the police as "pigs" as in The **Young Ones.**

Colin:	"I always watch it, don't you, its beauty" (**Scoobydoo**).
Ray:	"Did you see **In Loving Memory** last night?"
Carl:	"Oh yeah. Did you see....?"
Ray:	"See where she went oh, not again!"
Colin:	"Did you watch **Ulysses**? It was brill. I didn't watch it all."
Paul:	"Saturn's rings are like Krypton on **Star Wars**".
Karen:	"Are you watching '**V**' tomorrow?"
Paul:	"It's on again tonight".
Lisa:	"We watched '**V**' last night. The man peeled his skin off and he was a lizard underneath".
Carl:	"Have you watched **Rambo**? The bit where he got the gun?"

4.7.3 Repetition of catchphrases and jingles

Occasionally phrases from signature tunes would be sung out in isolation. For example:-

Paul and, later, Richard: "We are the champions!"

Graham: "And here's Wogan...." and another time, "It's for you-oo...."

Paul was heard to sing part of the song from the film **Charlie And The Chocolate Factory**: ".... Oompa, loompa...."

The title of the cartoon **Scoobydoo** was used by a few children as a kind of verbal exclamation e.g., Graham was heard to sing out, for no reason: "Scooby-dooby-doo!" Stephen simply stated: "My name's Gadget" (from the cartoon of the same name).

It appeared that television was such an integral part of their lives that such spontaneous outbursts represented an expression of relaxation (see 7.5.2).

4.7.4 Advertisements

Advertisements mimicked were for 'Shredded Wheat' (Lee, Ray and, later, Paul), 'Trebor Mints' (Paul), 'Cadbury's Creme Eggs' (Ray), 'Tunes' (started by Keith then joined by Gary and Ray) and mushrooms (Michael). A book club leaflet mentioning a 'Transformers' book prompted Colin to sing the appropriate jingle.

4.7.5 Parodies

The advertisements for 'My Little Pony' were parodied by different children at different times. Tracy sang it alone while colouring, and on another occasion Mark started and was soon joined by Neil, Ray and Paul. The rhyme they sang to the correct tune was:-

> "My little pony,
>
> Skinny and bony,
>
> Take it to bed,
>
> And let it be dead."

Tracy also parodied the dwarfs' song from the film **Snow White**:-

> "Hi-ho, hi-ho,
>
> It's off to work I go,
>
> With a knife and fork,
>
> And a bellyfull of pork,
>
> Hi-ho, hi-ho."

A song from the programme **Spitting Image** was individually adapted by several children. Ray and Paul were heard singing their own version, but ceased abruptly when they realised they were being overheard.

An adapted version of the title song from **Postman Pat** was sung by Richard and Graham on separate occasions. Following the showing of a film called **Boys In Blue** the theme tune was heard several times sung and parodied by Richard, Lee, Ray, Paul and Keith.

4.7.6 Common experience

For many families, struggling on a low income, television may be the only affordable entertainment (Spurlock 1982). When children arrive at school in the morning, television is often a major source of conversation (Gomberg 1961).

The way in which television provided a common experience for children and a basis for conversation was also observed in the present study, when children met in the playground, when talking casually, or as a reliable source of information. In Class A, references to television were almost equally divided between films and regular programmes, (approximately 225 for each). These references included singing theme tunes, quoting catch phrases, "Did you see....?", as well as discussions of what was especially liked. However, conversations about films seemed to be more animated, presumably because they had made a greater impact.

Some children were able to recount whole scenes from films. Examples include:- Karen spoke at length about the **Gremlins** and about a werewolf film; Pat talked about 'V'; Paul about **Gremlins**; Carl described scenes from **Ghostbusters** and **Fear On Friday**; Robert remembered parts from **Alien**.

Transcribed below is an accidentally recorded conversation between seven boys, illustrating how a film could provide a common topic for discussion:-

Lee: "Did you see Convoy? There were these dead big lorries crashing, weren't there?"

Graham: "I liked the car going down that bank and ending up crashed, upside down!"

Lee: "I liked the bit where he drove down the road and there was a road block and he drove round the cones.... it was great that bit."

Carl: ".... and the bit where the sheriff got handcuffed to the table . and couldn't get off and the girl   lifted off the top of the table. It was funny that bit".

Gary: "Did you see 'James Bond'? (**Live And Let Die**). That bit where the boat went through the wedding and the cake crashed to

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	the ground?"
Lee:	".... Oh yeah! Good that bit...."
Keith:	".... Did you see that bit in 'James Bond' where he shot that man with make-up on and his face broke up and it wasn't him....?"
Mark:	".... but he came again...."
Keith:	".... he put a snake by the man's face and killed him."
Graham:	"Yeah, yeah...."
Lee:	"**Rocky**'s on tonight, isn't it?"
Mark:	"No, it isn't."
Lee:	"Yes it is, isn't it Ray?"
Ray:	"Yes."
Lee:	"See. It's on at 10 o'clock. I'm going to watch it."
Carl:	"Is it **Rocky 4**?"
Lee:	"No, just **Rocky** (1)."
Graham:	"I saw a video, **Live Of The Dead** (sic). It was great. It was about a man with an axe who cut people into little pieces. He held up a spade like this and threw a woman into the air and she came down on the spade and cut her head off."
Keith:	"Uhhh.... urghhh!"
Gary:	"Let's do it to you!"
Graham:	"Yeah! Yeah.... Yeah!"

Acting out dramatic incidents provided an opportunity to imitate scenes from television with which most were familiar. Lee often used an American accent:- "Help me Scotty!" and "loo-tenant." While changing from P.E., Paul started singing **The Young Ones** and the whole class joined in, again demonstrating the common experience of television.

4.7.7 Summary of television as a source of play, language and communication

There was less television inspired play among this group than had been expected from the literature. (See Gomberg 1961; Annis 1971; James & McCain 1982). Any observed play was as isolated actions rather than games based on television.

Language was about previous or forthcoming programmes and the object of the discussions was to relate to others. Advertisements and catchphrases provided sources of exclamatory remarks and ideas to parody, as had been noted by Howe (1977).

The influence of television was seen mostly as a fount of shared experience that separated viewers from non-viewers.

4.8 Reflections on the study so far

4.8.1 Before Phase One

The present study evolved from reading the literature and relating it to the children in the author's school. As explained in Chapter 3, (Development of the Research Structure), the preliminary areas of study were envisaged as covering children's access to TV sets and VCRs; the links between their response to television and their behaviour; the effects of television on children's emotional development; and their perception of social reality.

Subsequently, further investigation into some of these areas proved to be impracticable. For example, problems of longitudinal studies could not be overcome, and environmental factors appeared to be more influential in the development of behavioural patterns than television.

Consequently, even before the onset of Phase One, the problems to be examined had been modified. The study of children's emotional development was eliminated as being too ambitious in the given circumstances. Retained however, was the importance of children's access to TV sets and how they used them. The study of behaviour was reduced to only those aspects observable in school, such as attentiveness and aggression. The way in which television helped perception of social reality was retained, as was whether play and language could be attributable to television.

4.8.2 During Phase One

It was found that the possesion of a VCR did not influence the preference for films. Nine children who mentioned films did not own a VCR but watched either a friend's or a 'live' broadcast.

Many of the films described as memorable were not intended for children but were either seen as a video or as a late evening transmission. However, certain children mentioned only watching the more scary films when they were with their parents. Several authors, from Himmelweit et al. (1958) to Cullingford (1984), had commented on children's preference for adult programmes.

The impact or novelty content made films more memorable than the individual programmes of a series, unless unusually dramatic. When asked about their favourite programmes, most children named the familiar weekly series, but the memorable incidents came from feature films. It was consequently decided to investigate attracting programme elements in Phase Two.

There were many examples of play and speech directly attributable to television, but not other aspects of the children's behaviour in school. Was the behaviour due to television or some other socialising influence? It was therefore decided to study a second sample for further information.

People want to acquire information about others. They want to become socially aware of, and learn to conform with, other members of their group. This learning process is gradual and involves accepting the influences of others around them in order to help the individual attain his own objectives (Festinger 1974). Information about other people will be absorbed gradually as the child's social circle widens. Initially the family is most influential, followed by the school and peer group, and then other adults with whom the child comes into contact. There is likely to be more influence from a person with whom the child is in regular contact, who has a close rapport with the child and who is successful (Argyle 1964). Socialization is how a person conforms to the expectations of the group to which he conforms, and his behaviour is modified to fit in with these people (Secord & Backman 1976).

In the background of all these contacts and influences, are the characters the child sees regularly on the TV screen and who may become just as real to him as those of flesh and blood. Their influence may be just as strong to the developing child and will provide experiences beyond the lifestyle of the majority of the viewers.

4.8.3 After Phase One

The informal approach to data collection was considered to be valid in that children were unaware that they were being observed. However, owing to the need to continue teaching this class, such observations had been irregular and incomplete. Similarly, it proved impracticable to find out from whence children obtained their views of social reality (aggravated by the wide range of influences). On reflection, the author's analysis of children's written references to television had not been sufficiently methodical, but discussions recorded during lunchtimes had been worthwhile. As the study progressed and the children were observed more closely, various problems arose and the desirability of additional data became apparent. This was to be Phase Two.

4.8.4 Issues to be examined in Phase Two

(a) A fruitful source of information, worthy of further investigation was children's access to TV sets and VCRs, and any perceived relationship with viewing habits, including whether the circumstances under which they watched had any effect on their enjoyment (5.1).

(b) It was also decided to try to discover more about their likes and dislikes; particularly why some programmes were more attractive than others - especially films (5.2, 5.3 and 5.4).

(c) In view of some apparent contradictions, the relationship between behaviour in school and viewing habits warranted further investigation (5.5).

(d) As the influence of television on play and language was less than expected, further study was required (5.6).

CHAPTER 5
THE STUDY: PHASE TWO

Phase Two started the following school year (1986-87) with a similar group of children in the same school. There were 16 boys and 11 girls in Class B whose ages at the beginning ranged from exactly 8 years to 8 years 4 months, i.e. slightly younger than Class A. Significantly, 7 of these children (4 boys, 3 girls) had joined this second year class directly from the infant school.

The methodology in Phase Two was substantially the same as in Phase One. There were to be some changes in emphasis, as outlined in section 4.8.3. In addition, attracting programme elements were to be investigated: starting from lists of film titles, it was hoped that informal interviews with pairs of children would provide insight about their preferences, how they decided what to view and with whom they watched. As these discussions were to be tape-recorded, it was also decided to use the children's quotes as primary material (Cullingford 1984) and incorporate them in this study. A more systematic approach to written television references was also initiated by regularly studying the children's work books.

The results are summarised in this chapter and are discussed, together with Phases One and Three, in Chapter 7.

5.1 Access to TV sets and VCRs

5.1.1 Ownership

All 27 children in Class B had at least two TV sets at home, and all except two of the main sets were colour receivers. 70% of the children had a TV set in their bedroom and another 19% had access to a set in a sibling's room. Five families had 3 sets, one had 4 and one 5 sets.

70% (19) of the children had VCRs at home, compared with the national average of 42% (Brooks 1986). Barlow & Hill (1985) had shown that urban homes with children were the most likely to possess a VCR. Using money given by his grandfather, one boy bought his own VCR which was kept in his bedroom and occasionally borrowed by his parents!

5.1.2 Correlation with viewing habits

As in Phase One, diaries were kept for one week (31/10/86 - 6/11/86) and showed that the daily totals ranged from 45 minutes to 17 (!) hours. Using the modified classification (see 4.1.2) based upon Himmelweit et al. (1958), the following results emerged:

Light viewers	(0-20 hours/week)	7%
Average viewers	(20-30 hours/week)	38%
Heavy viewers	(>30 hours/week)	55%

Another finding was that 74% of the children viewed more than the national average of 25 hours/week (Barlow & Hill 1985). All but two of the heavy viewers had a TV set in their own room, and even these had access to a spare one (portable in one case). Three of the heaviest viewers did not possess a VCR. Although Lyndsey did not have a TV set in her room, "My sister's got one though, and I watch hers sometimes." Philip had a set "in our big Bobby's bedroom. Sometimes we watch it in there, and sometimes we take it into our bedroom."

A TV set in a bedroom also meant that a child could watch while doing something else. Examples of watching television while engaged in some other activity were:-

Philip: ".... I went back home to watch television and while I watched TV I played with my cars. I was playing stuntmen with my cars."

George: ".... and we watched television while we had our trifle."

Peter: "... we watched **Bergerac** and then we had a banana and bread and then we watched **Dempsey And Makepeace**...."

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Kelly: "On Sunday I watched **Hans Christian Andersen** and he made me laugh while I was having my dinner...."

References to watching television in bed were:-

Jason: "I played with my toys and I looked at my books and I watched television and I watched cartoons. Then I had jelly and custard and I went to bed. My brother's telly was on and my Dad came in and switched telly off."

Jason: ".... and I went home and I went in bed and I watched telly and I went to sleep."

Kelly: "After tea I went in the bath and I watched telly in bed. Then on Sunday morning I didn't feel well so I had the little telly in my room."

Joanne: ".... and went to bed and watched the TV and went to sleep."

Fred: "I watched the telly in bed."

Philip: "We watched 'V' in bed on our Bobby's portable."

Simon: "We watch (their television) till 10, then we go to sleep."

Emma: "I watch the television in bed." (This was an example of the portable television being taken to her room).

Linda mentioned television twice in the autumn term, while Joanne mentioned it three times. At Christmas they were given their own television sets. In the following two months, Linda mentioned it eight times and Joanne five.

In the three months before acquiring a VCR (at the end of November), Emma talked of television just once; in the next three months it was alluded to four times. Simon talked for two weeks about the VCR they were going to get: "We're getting a new video on Thursday and a new coloured telly. We've got the licence already." "In three days time we get our video." "Our video comes tomorrow." "We get our video today." "We got our video last night. We watched **Thundercats** three times and **Star Wars** and **Transformers**." Subsequently they watched videos most nights and several at the weekend.

These examples indicated that easy access to a TV set could lead to an

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increase in viewing time, as could a VCR, which also had the added advantage of allowing viewing to be rescheduled.

5.1.3 Viewing circumstances and selection of programme

It was difficult to find any definite information about who decided which programmes were watched. During early evening there appeared to be a joint decision by all children, switching channels as necessary. Later, adults tended to choose for the main set, which often resulted in children viewing on the second set available in every home. Thus, in practice, there was little restriction on what the child chose to watch.

Sometimes television was watched as a family - usually films, but often a series that the child was known to like. If a transmission was too late, parents sometimes made a recording. Hired video films were usually chosen by the parents alone. Thus, one way or another, parents helped children select some programmes.

Lyndsey said sometimes she chose what to watch and sometimes her sister; but downstairs if her "mum wants to watch something, she watches it." Martin said he was allowed to watch anything he liked and if his dad said no "my mum tells him to stop." Joanne said her dad watched sport all day, but she got bored watching it. Emma's mother called her to see **Dallas** or EastEnders if she was upstairs because "she knows I want to see it." Tom sometimes watched with his parents and sometimes upstairs by himself.

Philip watched 'V' on the portable TV set in his brother's bedroom when his mother was out, otherwise he thought that she would have not let him see it. Lyndsey watched a video of 'V' alone, but wasn't frightened. Sometimes she watched with her parents and, sometimes, with her sister on the portable set upstairs. James watched some late night horror films with his family, who made amusing comments about the monsters e.g. "That's Uncle Harold!"

Jane watched with her mother but kept it secret from her younger brother and sister. She watched some of **Halloween** "then we had to turn over and

watch **Halloween 3** because **Halloween** was too scary for my mum." Asked if she didn't mind, she said: "It was a bit scary, but not too much." Emma only watched frightening programmes with her mother: if shown too late they were recorded and seen the next day. Alan also mentioned seeing late films the following day.

Comstock (1980) stated that ownership of several sets could lead to a privatisation of the viewing experience. Access to another TV set meant that children were more likely to see preferred programmes, with or without their parent's knowledge:-

Louise: "If he (father) says that (I can't watch something), I
            go upstairs and watch on my own telly, anyway."

Jacky: "I chooses what I'm going to watch. If I can't watch it on my
            Mum's I watch it on mine."

Kelly: "I choose upstairs, and sometimes downstairs."

Philip, asked if his mother knew they were watching 'V' on the portable television, said: "No, she was out." Asked if she would have minded, he said: "Yes."

5.1.4 Summary of access to TV sets and VCRs

All 27 children had access to a minimum of two TV sets; 70% had a set in their own room; 70% of homes also had VCRs; 74% of children watched more than the national average. Examples were given of watching in bed, while eating or playing. The acquisition of a VCR or another TV set greatly increased the number of references to television made by that child.

Children possessing sets were able to watch whatever they wanted but, if they shared with a sibling, the choice was mutual. Parents were known to help choose programmes for the children or to record them, thus overriding the reason for late night scheduling. Several children were able to tolerate frightening programmes through viewing with their parents or siblings.

5.2 Favourite programmes (fig.14)

Children's diaries provided data about their favourite programmes. They also nominated 6 favourite programmes from memory and the results were analysed. The division into types of programme is based upon Stein & Friedrich (1971) (see 4.2). The most popular programmes from the diaries were adult and family shows but cartoons from memory. Children's programmes were given second place in both cases and were almost as popular as cartoons.

5.2.1 Children's programmes (fig.15)

From the children's diaries, the most popular programmes belonged to the 'variety' category, which consists of several elements, including music, jokes, and competitions. One popular play that week was **The Worst Witch**, made specially for Hallowe'en. Surprisingly, only 2 children chose adventure programmes as, from conversations, these seemed more popular.

However, when favourite programmes from memory were analysed it was apparent that adventure series gave more prolonged pleasure:-

Tom: "**Airwolf**.... has missiles.... **Knight Rider**.... the car talks."

Andrew: "I like **The A-Team** because they are always up to something and plans."

Philip: "I like **Airwolf** because he blows helicopters up."

Also popular in retrospect were films, whether broadcast or seen as hired videos: this closely correlates with children's conversations:-

Alan: "I like the **Karate Kid** it is good because the Kid he fights all the time."

Jason: "I like **Superman** when he flew."

Kelly: "I liked **The Sheriff And The Satellite Kid** because there is a boy and he has powers and he can talk to animals."

5.2.2 Cartoons (fig.16)

All children watched some cartoons during that week, even if they were not chosen as favourite programmes.

Dungeons And Dragons was a relatively long (25 minutes) weekly adventure series about children trapped in a land of magic. On Thursday evening, it was voted as favourite viewing by 6 boys and 4 girls (37%). In their diaries, other cartoons were also selected by more boys than girls, except **Spiderwoman**, (2 girls and 1 boy).

Similarly, from memory, cartoons were generally more popular with boys, one exception being **She-Ra**, which featured a female. Otherwise girls tended to prefer animal cartoons, whereas boys chose fantasy or adventure cartoons involving conflicts between men and monsters, robots and vehicles, including various transformations:-

David: "I like **He-Man** because it is exciting."

Andrea: "I like **My Little Pony** because it has a girl in it."

Louise: "I like **Trapdoor** because it is spooky."

Kay: "I like **She-Ra** because she gets her sword out and says something."

In general, cartoons were often the favourite programmes seen after school, whereas at weekends adult and longer children's programmes were more popular, but even these usually included cartoons.

About the popularity of cartoons, Stein & Friedrich (1971) stated "Cartoons are listed as favourites and watched frequently by many children in the sample, no matter what their other viewing preferences might be.... Boys more often name cartoons as favourites than do girls. There were no sex differences in the frequency of cartoon viewing" (1971:236).

5.2.3 Adult and family shows (fig.17)

As would be expected from their popularity, a wide range of favourite adult and family shows were named in their diaries. Situation comedies were the most popular, mainly influenced by one programme, **Fawlty Towers** (7 children):-

Jacky: "I like **Fawlty Towers** because it is funny and he's always doing things wrong."

Soap operas were very popular, but only among girls: **EastEnders** was chosen by five, followed by **Dallas** and **Emmerdale Farm** with three each:-

Sharon: "**EastEnders** is good because it is like what might happen to people."

Martin: "**EastEnders** is good and has lots of sadness."

Andrew: "I like **Crossroads** because they always argue."

Linda: "I like **Brookside** when Sheila got raped."

Emma: "I like **Emmerdale Farm** because it has got my name in it and horrible things happen nearly every day like crashes."

Situation comedies, variety, and comedy accounted for 47% of favourite adult and family shows. Also enjoyed were several quiz programmes where having fun is just as important as intellectual achievement. Obviously, being amused is important:-

Lyndsey: "I like **The Paul Hogan Show** because it's very funny and he's very good."

Jane: "I like Benny Hill because he is a funny man."

Documentaries were chosen as favourites by only four children:-

Joanne: "I like **Life On Earth** because it is interesting, it is about animals."

John: "I like **Body Matters** because it shows things in a funny way."

From memory, soap operas were just as popular as from the diaries, (this time including some boys), but other types of programme proved only half as memorable. Next in popularity were situation comedies with Fawlty Towers (6), again, being responsible for the popularity of this category.

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5.2.4 Violent programmes (fig.18)

From their diaries, only 10 children named programmes from this category as their favourites. Seven chose horror films: **Halloween, Halloween 3** and **Amarcord**, while two selected a crime series: **Dempsey And Makepeace**. All of these programmes were shown on the Friday or Saturday evening: **Dempsey And Makepeace** was transmitted 9-10 p.m., and all of the films started after 11 p.m.

When favourite programmes were chosen from memory, there were 16 nominations. Six were for horror films, nine for other adult films of a more violent nature, some of which had been seen on VCR. All of those broadcast had previously been given restricted viewing certificates for the cinema and were transmitted after 10 p.m. The B.B.C. states that a film starting after 10 p.m. may "represent the strongest possible material" (B.B.C. 1987). The original cinema classification may be no longer justifiable because films are sometimes edited for bad language, excess violence or sex. The films named were **Rocky, Halloween 2, The Birds, Ghostbusters, Gremlins, Return Of The Living Dead, Twilight Trap, Rambo** and **An American Werewolf In London**:-

> Jacky: "I liked **The Birds** because it is scary and one of the bird pecked someone's eye out."
>
> Martin: "I liked **Return Of The Living Dead** because it is a horror film."
>
> James: "I liked **Twilight Trap** because it had a green monster in it.... and I liked **The Birds** because a bird was eating a man's eye and one bird was stuck in the window."

5.2.5 Summary of favourite programmes

There were slight variations between programmes chosen from the diary and those from memory. Adult and family shows were the most popular from the previous evening and children's programmes from memory. Violent programmes were the least frequently preferred either way.

Favourite adult and family shows were predominately those providing amusement. In retrospect, soap operas retained their popularity but not sport or

quizzes. A large number of cartoons were watched, mainly by boys and after school: other programmes were more popular at weekends.

5.3 Disliked programmes (fig. 20)

Disliked programmes were mostly from the adult and family shows, with children's programmes next, followed by cartoons and finally the violent category.

5.3.1 Children's programmes (fig.21)

The most disliked children's programmes were mainly of a verbal nature. **John Craven's Newsround** was "only news and it is boring", stated John; "it is talking" said Peter; Andrew did not like it because it "was like watching a pillow". Quiz programmes were fairly unpopular. Lyndsey thought **Blockbusters** was "for grown-ups", and James "for teenagers, not children". Kay and Joanne could not answer the questions "because it has got hard words". Alan thought **Beat The Teacher** was "on too much" and Andrea didn't like it because it "had people talking".

Playschool was too young for them. "They play with teddies" said Kevin and Louise; "it is baby things" said Jason; they "make things" commented Sean.

In the adventure category, **The A-Team** was disliked by Kay because "there's fighting in it"; by Fred because "they keep making things like cars"; while Linda thought "B.A. is too fat". **Airwolf** was disliked by Martin because there's "too much killing" and yet Fred was upset "'cos nobody gets killed".

No-one mentioned any dislike of films or plays.

5.3.2 Cartoons (fig.22)

Cartoons were disliked by more boys than girls, but for no predominant reason. Naturally, certain cartoons were disliked by girls because they were directed at boys, for example **He-Man** had fighting which made Jacky "dream"

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and was "too boyish" for Louise. Other cartoons were targeted to a younger audience: **Rainbow** was considered "babyish" by John, Jason and David. Other criticisms were about the action being unrealistic: "**He-Man** falls off mountains" (Tom); "he doesn't get killed" (Fred).

5.3.3 Adult and family shows (fig.23)

The most unpopular programme was the **News**, closely followed by TV-am, the reasons for which included:-

David: "I don't like the **News** because it goes on."

Jacky: "I don't like the **News** because it is boring and it is just talking."

Jane: "I don't like the **News** because the people only talk and they tell you stupid things that may not be true."

Kelly: "I hate the **News** because all it is about is people getting killed."

Peter: "I don't like the **News** because it is not good and it is not funny."

Tom: "I don't like **TV-am** because they talk too much."

Sharon: "I don't like **TV-am** because there are a lot of boring people."

Philip: "I don't like **TV-am** because it has not got any action and it has not got funny things in it."

Joanne: "I don't like Anne, she talks stupid and I don't like her clothes" (TV-am).

Kevin: "I don't like **TV-am** because it is on too much."

The **Weather Forecast, Northern Life** and **Straight Talk** were also thought to have too much talking. Also unpopular were quizzes because they were "too hard" (Fred), because "it's only got questions" (Philip) and "people talk too much" (Alan).

Sports broadcasts were considered "stupid" by Joanne and "boring" by Jane; bowls were unpopular because of "too much talking" (Philip); football had "too many fouls" (Martin) and was on "too much" for Linda.

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Soap operas were only nominated by boys, e.g. Alan disliked **Dynasty** because it was shown so frequently and **Dallas** because "Bobby came back and he's supposed to be dead." Other soaps were disliked because of their characters e.g. Simon did not like Patricia and Beryl in **Sons And Daughters;** Fred and Sean didn't like **EastEnders** because Den was always "shouting" and "arguing". Fred also considered **Brookside** to be "boring", a word which was applied to all types of programme by most of the children at some time.

No-one mentioned a dislike of situation comedies or comedy programmes except for **The Benny Hill Show**. Reasons given included "because it makes me laugh too much" (Louise); "because it is too funny and he does silly things" (Emma); and "because it is stupid and daft" (Peter).

5.3.4 Violent programmes

Seven girls and four boys mentioned violent programmes, all of which were films which stimulated the imagination. Kelly generalised and said horror films "scare me". Jacky was more specific, not liking either **The Birds,** which were "scary", or **The Gremlins,** which was "scary and makes me dream and is horrible". Louise also thought **The Gremlins** was "horrible and frightening, where the treasure box lifts up and the gremlins come out". Opinions of **Halloween 3** varied from Jason thinking it was "horrible", to Jane thinking it "was not scary". Linda disliked **Halloween,** because "the little boy pulled the lady's head off".

5.3.5 Summary of disliked programmes

A wide variety of reasons were given for disliking programmes but the most strongly disliked programmes were of a verbal nature, whether meant for children or adults. Soap operas appeared to be either strongly liked or disliked. Sometimes characters were not liked. Disliked violent programmes were restricted to films affecting the imagination. However, what one child disliked another could like.

Children's comments about disliked programmes were noticeably brief

(particularly those in the violent category) probably because they were not used to expressing their thoughts. In any case, television was a part of their lives they did not normally need to think deeply about. (See also 7.5.2).

5.4 Attracting programme elements

Using data obtained from interviews, unsolicited comments and exercise books, the main reasons for children preferring certain programmes were categorised as follows:

5.4.1 Excitement
5.4.2 Anticipation of fear
5.4.3 Expectations of seeing blood and gore
5.4.4 Special effects

5.4.1 Excitement

Excitement, suspense and anticipation had their obvious attractions, particularly in the context of a familiar series: children were reassured to know that the hero was going to be threatened in some way but would finally come to no harm. Chases, crashes and explosions were guaranteed to hold the children's interest, while powerful vehicles and weaponry were also incentives to watch. Cullingford (1984) noted children's preference for thrillers (especially American) and thought that the violence was glossed over as being part of a ritual where the hero always survived.

Kelly recalled the scene in First Blood where 'Rambo' jumped off the cliff onto a branch which pierced his arm. Though frightened, she knew he would not be killed because it was only half way through the film! She did not like seeing a body fall out of the helicopter, so hid behind a pillow. Only "the best parts and not the scary ones" were watched. Fred enjoyed the chases in **First Blood**.

Tom and Jacky liked the scene in **Jaws 3** where Jaws broke the window of a room and tried to get at the people within.

Although **Blue Thunder** was shown four months previously, George and Tom remembered the crash of a helicopter, about which Tom wrote in his News: "Two planes came, he blew one up. At the end the train crashed into the helicopter". He spoke to people on his table about it and described the helicopters going "Pow! Pow!"

Andrew wrote about **The A-Team** overturning a truck so that it could be used for an ambush. He also vividly remembered a simulated plane crash shown on **Tomorrow's World**, which he discussed with Martin and Alan. Simon recounted the explosions in **Dallas** when both J.R's car and office were blown up by bombs.

Philip wrote in his News: "On Saturday I watched **Airwolf** and he went very fast and he headed for the mountain and when he was close he went down and the helicopter that was after him went into the mountain and blew up". He also liked the sword fights in **Robin Hood.**

Peter recalled the fight scene in the film **Dr. No** where a man was pushed into boiling water but couldn't climb out because of his metal hands. George thought films were best and enjoyed 'Charlie Chan' films "because of the action.... he shoots people."

5.4.2 Anticipation of fear

As the children usually knew something about a programme they were planning to watch, they usually anticipated frightening incidents and only occasionally avoided them. In cases of real fear, children either watched with someone else, or watched a recording early the following evening so they did not have to go to bed immediately and risk a bad dream. Other ways of watching frightening films included: hiding behind something or someone; repeatedly replaying on a VCR and thus becoming familiar with the action.

Martin thought **First Blood** ('Rambo') exciting but, nevertheless, watched part of it from behind a chair, as he did whenever **The Incredible Hulk** metamorphosed. He liked to repeatedly watch films so that he knew what was

going to happen and would not be scared. Philip would not watch 'Rambo' because he knew he would dream about it, but did not consider 'V' frightening because "It was only about fighting and spaceships crashing into houses." David and Jacky watched repeats of 'V', even though the monsters were frightening and despite possible bad dreams.

Kelly stated that seeing a film "the first time is horrible, but I like it the second time." She admitted watching things that frightened her. She enjoyed **Jaws** best, especially when 'Jaws' ate all the body except for the foot, but was frightened when "there was a bit of blood jumping out". She had liked the scene in **Superman** where he had fallen into the fire but had not been burnt.

In **Dr.No**, Simon enjoyed seeing 'James Bond' crawl "through the tunnels.... the water was keep coming through.... I thought he was going to drown, but he never." Both Alan and Simon preferred a 'James Bond' film to a series like **The A-Team**, because it was unpredictable whereas in **The A-Team** "they always manages to escape" said Simon.

Occasionally, children mentioned unpleasant scenes with disgust rather than fear. James would not watch **First Blood** because he thought it was too violent. (However, he had watched less realistic but still scary films like **Creature From The Black Lagoon**). David remembered 'Rambo' eating the slugs off his chest, while Martin thought of the rats jumping on to his back. By contrast, Sharon enjoyed seeing the man in **Ghostbusters** getting covered with slime from the ghost. Both she and Emma sometimes watched from behind their hands or a cushion.

5.4.3 Expectations of seeing blood and gore

During the course of this study, it became apparent that most children were very bloodthirsty, yet the author is unaware of any reference in the literature to this phenomenom. Wynne-jones suggested there was evidence that many primary children enjoy horror films, and prefer to see them on video so they "can stop and go back for favourite scenes again and again, and find out when the scary bits come" (1985:144). She said this could be seen in art work

and horror stories, as a "highly developed sense of the macabre" (1985:150). Conversely, Cullingford considered that children did not relish violence or linger over it (1984:69).

In this study, there were many instances of children stating their expectations of seeing blood and gore, however unpleasant, "even if they watch with hands covering their face, squinting through the cracks in their fingers, or from behind an armchair, they must still watch" (Wynne-jones 1985:144). In some cases, such scenes were remembered for over a year.

In **Jaws,** Tom and David liked seeing an arm bitten off and floating in the water, while Jacky said: "The leg goes down and you see all the blood!" Emma enjoyed seeing a lady being savaged by the shark and seeing her pulled under the water with blood pouring out. George liked it when "all the blood came out, he had a mouthful." Philip enjoyed **Jaws** 2 best of the three 'Jaws' films because "at the end this man's going to get ate, and he shoves an electric piece of wood in Jaws mouth and he gets blood all over him and he dies".

At his aunt's, Simon saw a video of **The Bogeyman** and later described a man being stabbed in the back twenty times. Kelly recalled a film, seen a year previously, about a gloved man who killed boys with knives and left blood everywhere. Martin told the class about a horror film of a crucifixion, where blood came out of the eyes and mouths of the onlookers.

Jane thought **Secret Amber** was good because "The man nearly died and she saved him. She had to stick a knife into the lump in his tummy to make him better and all the blood came out." However, she was not certain whether she liked to see a lot of blood, although she saw many films with plenty of bloodthirsty incidents.

Incidents such as these made a vivid and lasting impression: the children seemed to be simultaneously excited and disgusted (see 7.2.2).

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5.4.4 Special effects

Children often have an interest in gadgetry and special effects. Consequently they enjoy high budget programmes which feature such items as helicopters with concealed weapons, guns with several functions, dangerous stunts, spectacular crashes and explosions. Partcularly mentioned by Class B were supernatural powers, including the ability to fly. As part of the special effects girls often appreciated beautiful clothes and jewels.

Philip enjoyed **The Sheriff And The Satellite Kid** because of its length and because the Kid could remotely control helicopters. Martin said the device could also make animals talk, and Kelly liked the way it tidied up the house by magic. From 'James Bond' films, Kelly remembered how the steel teeth of the character 'Jaws' were attracted to a large magnet; Martin recalled how in **Goldfinger**, a hat was thrown which decapitated a statue; Peter enjoyed seeing 'James Bond' assemble a small helicopter from parts in bags, and use a little gun with various switches and different functions to it.

Reasons given for liking **Mary Poppins** were by David as "they had tea on the roof" and by Kay because of people flying - a reason she gave for also liking **Superman**. John told Fred about the old lady flying through the window after her chair had been sabotaged by **The Gremlins**. In Poltergeist, Tom was impressed by some airborne effects and a tree trying to eat a boy. Simon also remembered the transparent woman ghost in **Ghostbusters**.

Sharon thought films "had more exciting stuff in them" and she remembered a man's head being cut off "and you saw the head rolling on the piece of glass." Simon liked seeing 'Rambo' jump off a cliff, while Martin thought he was "indestructible", and Alan liked seeing him stitch his cut arm. They commented on **The A-Team** stunts, especially the way they overturned or blew up vehicles and jumped off roofs.

Kelly enjoyed **Dallas** and **Dynasty** because of the beautiful clothes; additionally Emma liked their jewels; Martin liked J.R.'s ten gallon hats, but all three stated that, given the choice, they preferred films.

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5.4.5 Amusement

Cullingford (1984) noted that children watch television to be amused, and so programmes that make them laugh are high on their lists of favourites. Humorous programmes may be films, cartoons or adult or children's comedy series.

Amongst films, Lyndsey and Kelly enjoyed **The Sheriff And The Satellite Kid** because the horse spoke to the sheriff. Kelly also mentioned the part in **The Mouse In The Moon** when a rocket crashed into the Queen's window and she couldn't get out. Tom liked the part in **Splash** when she screeched and all the TV sets shattered. Martin enjoyed Ghostbusters, especially when the dogs came out of the cupboard and chased a man.

Scenes from cartoons were twice written about by Philip: once when **The Pink Panther** had his toe bitten by a crab; another time about a scene from **Roadrunner.**

A scene from a more serious programme, **Grange Hill**, gave Andrea a vicarious pleasure while watching others do the naughty things she dare not do: a girl put itching powder down people's backs.

As a favourite comedy series, Kelly mentioned **George And Mildred**, and Peter named Porridge because "He tells jokes and makes me laugh!"

5.4.6 Summary of attracting programme elements

Children are attracted by excitement and by the uncertainty of the outcome of any action affecting the hero. Sometimes children wanted to be frightened and would watch a programme even if it meant hiding behind a chair or covering their eyes for certain scenes. Similarly, they wanted to be repulsed by the sight of blood and gore. Postponing viewing until early the following evening (by recording) reduced the risk of bad dreams. Familarity through subsequent viewing reduced any fear. Humorous interludes provided a release of tension in frightening films.

Adding to any programme's appeal were special effects, in the form of gadgets, fast cars, clothes or stunts and the fantasy figures endowed with supernatural powers such as the ability to fly.

That comedy shows were both universally popular and virtually absent from lists of disliked programmes indicates not only the pleasure they give but that they also serve as a source of relaxation.

5.5 Television and behaviour in school

5.5.1 Attentiveness (fig.11)

Between September 1986 and March 1987, observations were made in both the classroom and the playground, as described in Chapter 4.5.1. The frequency at which children were seen to be fidgeting, restless or unable to concentrate was not as great as in Phase One. However 90% of observed incidents were from heavy television viewers.

Simon often tapped his desk or flicked the pages of other children's books with a pencil or ruler. This was usually done in a good-natured way, and thus was tolerated by the others on his table. Rather than sit correctly, he would also loll on the desk, or balance half over the chair back and the desk. His inability to sit still may have been due to tiredness, as the TV set in his shared bedroom regularly was not turned off until 10 p.m.

Tom also sprawled across his desk: he, too, had a set in his room which he watched until late. Sean, unable to concentrate, wandered round the class, chatted and fidgeted. Other incidents seen included daydreaming (Kevin), quietly chatting (Philip and Darren), or simply not working (John and James).

It is speculative how much classroom behaviour was imitative, which could account for the differences between the two classes. Whatever the underlying reasons, Class B was far more hardworking and self-disciplined.

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5.5.2 Aggressiveness (figs 12 & 13)

Observed behaviour exhibited both pro-social and anti-social examples. Certain children who watched a lot of television (including many adult films) were very good at helping others. For example, Darren helped Philip give out books, and shared his pencils with others. Kelly was very hard working and polite. Jane was an average viewer who watched many late programmes with her mother. She was always first to attend, to obey and generally assist in the classroom.

In both frequency and nature, aggressive behaviour was also far less than in Phase One. The children worked and played together much better. Even in the playground there were very few aggressive incidents, mostly of a minor nature. Often they involved pushing, but occasionally a child played too roughly. A few girls became annoyed by what was said about them. Only two real fights reported and one possible incident of bullying.

There were three relatively serious incidents. Tom and Fred fought one lunchtime following a disagreement over a game. Simon and Sean also fought after an argument, and then nearly ran home. All four boys were heavy viewers who enjoyed action and exciting adventure programmes with strong heroes e.g. **He-Man, Batman** and 'Rambo'. On one occasion, Sean reported that David and Jacky waited for him on the way home from school and then hit him: both denied touching him.

In general, heavy viewers were the most aggressive, with 64% of observed acts being attributable to them.

5.5.3 Summary of television and behaviour in school

There appeared to be a direct relationship between attentiveness, aggressiveness and heavy viewing. Although both Phases showed similar viewing patterns, behaviour in Class B was significantly better: less restless behaviour, fewer and less severe aggressive incidents, fewer aggressive children. Clearly, something other than television had a greater influence on behaviour.

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5.6 Television as a source of play, language and communication

Several writers (Schramm et al. 1961; Gomberg 1961; Opie & Opie 1969; Annis 1971; James & McCain 1982) stated that children copied games and play from television. In Class A, the influence of television on play and language seemed to be less than expected, and so the observation of Class B was used as an additional source of data.

5.6.1 Play and other copying activities

(a) Physical education lessons

When children were given a free choice, there were some examples of television-inspired play using the available apparatus. Similar findings were made by Bandura & Walters (1963) in a series of controlled experiments.

Philip was observed sliding across the bar on his stomach. He explained that he was "an army man. I saw this on a film of army men". Simon called out: "I'm Superman, the greatest man in the world!", then he went down the slide. James, also on the slide, exclaimed: "I'm going to get eaten by Jaws!" James' action was copied by Sharon, and adapted by Jacky, who jumped off the box shouting: "Watch Jaws get me!" (The film, **Jaws 3**, had been shown a few days previously).

(b) In the playground

How television programmes provided a basis for games was not always easy to observe without verbal clues. Then, as part of a school project on play, children named their favourite playground games: 13 games were named after television programmes, of which 7 were cartoons and the rest children's programmes or films. Most games usually involved chasing and capturing each other in the style of 'cops and robbers'. The rules for play involved typical actions from the series.

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George wrote about playing 'The A-Team': ".... If Hannibal, Face, Murdoch and B.A. get caught they always get away. Then they get caught again and then they get away or make a plan to escape. Colonel Decker and his men are too late because the A-Team get away before they get back and they say they will get them again but they don't."

Peter described 'Street Hawk': ".... the cops chase the baddy and they shoot at him. Then they tell the man who is on Street Hawk and he catches the baddy and gives him to the policemen...."

Simon's description of 'Batman' also showed how the traditional elements of chase/capture/escape had been transferred from the screen to the playground: ".... you have to be careful you don't get caught by Batman and Robin or you will be attacked and put in jail. You sneak up to them and catch them and fight them and the boss of the baddies gets away."

Consequent to Simon and Kevin bringing in their books and stickers about the cartoon series Thundercats, an adaptation of it was played which involved chasing and shooting accompanied by loud noises. Five boys were involved and girls were not allowed to join in.

Martin, Alan and David were observed playing 'Thomas the Tank Engine'. This involved little more than running round, following each other, sometimes holding onto coats, and occasionally making train noises: "Ooo--ooo!"

One playtime, James and Martin only had time to start a game, about which James explained: "I am a vampire bat". When asked what he was going to do, he replied: "I don't know yet. I might decide to rip someone's guts out. Martin's just a vampire, I'm old". Tom said they played Ghostbusters in the playground, but could not explain what they did.

Another morning, before school, George, Peter, Jason and Fred were running round and round the author in the playground, making Indian warhoops and similar noises. They were watched with interest by several others, including

Sharon, and then joined by David and John, who adapted the game to sword fights:-

Sharon:	"I think they're copying **Grange Hill**, where they walked in the corridors."
Lyndsey:	"Yes, they wouldn't go in."
Author:	"Go in where?"
Sharon:	"They kept walking up and down the corridors, they wouldn't go into their classrooms."

Following the transmission of the film **Superman**, came the longest lasting game. Instigated by George and Peter, it consisted of each boy wearing his coat fastened at the neck like a cloak, who then chased each other and other children. Others joined on different occasions, and for differing lengths of time. No other characters were needed, as everyone was 'Superman'.

After the Zeebrugge ferry disaster, several girls acted out being on board, and being injured. This occupied both playtimes of the following school day.

(c) At home

Games often involved toy collections modelled on regular television series, many of which had been heavily advertised during children's programmes, particularly in December.

At Christmas, several of the children had been given such presents, e.g. Philip received **Transformers**; Kevin a **Thundercats** sword; John a 'Rambo' figure and Tom a **Knight Rider** car. Andrea, Louise, Lyndsey, Kay, Kelly and Sharon were given **My Little Pony** things. In general, fewer references were made to these toys with the passing of time.

Emma went to a girl's party where the gifts had included **My Little Pony** and **Care Bears**, then the following week she wrote in her News that she "went to the town and I got a **My Little Pony** ruler with all the times tables on the back." Louise wrote: "We played with **My Little Pony** castle and I was Her Majesty."

Martin wrote about playing a game of **Lost Valley Of The Dinosaurs** with his sister. For his birthday Tom had **The A-Team** set which consisted of figures and cars. Also from **The A-Team,** Alan and his brother were bought Hannibal figures by their father. John and his brother ".... played **Transformers.** My brother was second captain and I was first. We played for a long time then I had my dinner. I played **Transformers** again. I was second captain this time. I liked it. I played it this morning."

Other television-inspired play mentioned was by Sharon and Lyndsey, who played '**Jaws**' in the swimming baths. Simon and Martin painted Simon's go-cart and then used it to play 'The **A-Team**'. Simon reported playing a game with David and Fred involving 'Frankenstein', 'Dracula' and a werewolf.

(d) Imitation

Some children imitated action seen on television as isolated incidents and not part of a game. For example, coming back from assembly, Simon was sparring, dancing, and saying to no-one in particular: "I'm Rocky.... I can fight anyone!"

Alan, sitting writing his News, suddenly asked the others near him "Did you see Rambo go.... (miming the action of a machine gun)? I'd just get a knife and kill them." After a little more conversation he continued to write his News, which was completely unrelated to the film.

5.6.2 Language

The only observed example of language being directly derived from television was Philip's useage of the American word 'elevator' (from **Danger Mouse**) and he had to think very hard before he could give the British equivalent. Sometimes, however, there were conversations about who had seen certain programmes; also individual scenes of special interest or excitement were discussed.

5.6.3 Repetition of catch phrases and jingles

There was very little copying of catch phrases and jingles by Class B. By contrast, both had been noted in Class A and by other writers (Howe 1977; Cullingford 1984).

However, there were instances of theme music being repeated by the children. Martin, George, Peter and David ran out to play singing the tune from **Grandstand**. The other two examples were both based on the **Batman** theme. George, coming in from play, asked: "What does Batman's wife say when it's time for dinner? Dinner, dinner, dinner, dinner, Batman!" Martin, while waiting to go on the apparatus in P.E., started singing "Da-da, da-da, da-da, da-da, Fatman. Come and get your dinner, Fatman!"

5.6.4 Advertisements

The only reference to a television advertisement was by Joanne: "My Mum's going to get me some (medicine) today, the kind that's advertised on telly, you know, with bubbles in it."

During Phase One, television advertisements for 'Shredded Wheat' were quoted by several children while using it in a cookery lesson. When the same lesson was repeated with Class B, no reference was made because it was not currently advertised.

5.6.5 Parodies

The advertisement for **My Little Pony** was parodied by David, Peter and Martin when they saw Andrea's embroidered picture of a horse. It differed slightly from that quoted in Phase One:-

> "My little pony,
>
> Skinny and bony,
>
> Take it to bed,
>
> And bite off its head."

5.6.6 Common experience

Kay went to a fancy dress party as 'Dorothy' from **The Wizard Of Oz;** several others were dressed as television characters whom she was able to identify. At the Scout Concert, Jacky enjoyed most of all a skit of Cliff Richard and **The Young Ones,** mainly because she had seen the original act.

Martin went to the fair and got his face painted as 'Dracula'. Philip visited 'Flamingoland' and was pleased to see figures from **Star Wars** as part of the display.

At school, they were sometimes asked to act out dramatic incidents. Television frequently supplied both the ideas and the dialogue; furthermore, they all knew their roles because of the familiarity of the characters. There was usually lots of action but only little dialogue - even that was terse, and spoken with an American accent, e.g. Martin: "You're a cop!"; with a mimed gun, Jason shot Darren who spun round dramatically before falling to the floor dead. Clearly, television provides children with information about characters and events they would otherwise not experience at first hand.

5.6.7 Summary of television as a source of play, language and communication

During Phase Two, it was apparent that children made more use of television as a source of play than during Phase One. Cartoons and children's programmes were used for updated versions of 'cops and robbers'.

Commonality of experience through television was incorporated into games. Play was enhanced if the appropriate props were available (whether at home or school); toys based on television series were often collected.

Television did not appear to provide a direct source of language except as part of a game. The parodying of rhymes was similar to the use of nursery rhymes.

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5.7 Reflections after Phase Two

All children in Class B had access to at least two TV sets and were able to watch whatever they wished. An increase in the interest shown in television was apparent in those children who acquired their own TV set or VCR during the course of the study. The children of Class B were slightly younger than Class A but still exhibited a preference for amusing adult and family shows, as well as soap operas. Children's programmes retained a position of pleasureable familiarity. They disliked those programmes which made demands on them.

Research showed that some programmes had greater appeal because of their excitement, amusement and special effects. These elements occurred in regular series and in films, but it appeared that films were more memorable because of their uniqueness.

Compared with Class A, there was a greater use by Class B of television as a source of play. The children were less inhibited, more sociable in their interaction and talked freely about what they did.

Although Phase Two followed a similar pattern to Phase One there were some interesting observed differences: these will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.

It was thought that the study so far did not do sufficient justice to the considerable interest shown in cartoons by both classes. Consequently, an extension to the research investigated children's interactions with cartoons in more detail: called Phase Three, the results are described in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 6
THE STUDY: PHASE THREE

Phases One and Two showed that children enjoyed a variety of programmes. From their diaries, it was apparent that, in the peak viewing time immediately after school, whenever there was a choice of children's programmes, cartoons were often selected. It was therefore decided to add a third phase to this study in order to find out more about the popularity of cartoons. Data was to be drawn from all previous interviews and observations, and from further discussions with Class B.

In this study, all but one of the children stated that they watched cartoons, (the exception probably saw them in **Saturday Superstore**). Cartoons were often the most popular programmes during the week (figs 6 & 19). Analysis of weekend preferences is difficult because children's long variety programmes often incorporate several cartoons.

6.1 Cartoon viewers

6.1.1 Gender (figs 3 & 16)

"Boys more often name cartoons as favourites than do girls. There was no sex difference in the frequency of cartoon viewing" (Stein & Friedrich 1971).

For both classes combined, cartoons were chosen as favourites by 88% of boys and 79% of girls. In his written News, one boy's references to television accounted for 57% of all items, of which 44% related to cartoons.

6.1.2 Age of viewers

Schramm et al. (1961) noted that cartoons were one of the earliest

favourite programmes, being chosen by children as young as 3 years old. Stein & Friedrich (1971) found that children commonly named cartoons as favourites, and watched them habitually, regardless of any other viewing preferences. Cullingford (1984) suggested that younger children liked cartoons, but after the age of 8 years they tended to prefer adult thrillers to children's programmes.

Hodge & Tripp (1986) conducted several experiments with different groups of children. When asked who were their favourite television characters, younger children were more likely to choose cartoon characters than older ones. 76% of the 6-8 year-olds preferred cartoon characters, compared with 28% of the 9-12 year-olds who, by now, tended to prefer characters from dramatic series. When asked who they would most like to be on television, Hodge & Tripp found that 35% of the 8-9 year-olds wanted to be fantasy figures, compared to 29% of the 12 year-olds. Reasons given included the ability to perform superhuman activities such as flying.

Children in Classes A and B had previously been asked to name their favourite programmes (see 4.2 & 5.2). Analysis of their diaries showed that cartoons were considered as favourite programmes by approximately 19% of Class A and 26% of Class B; comparitive figures from memory are 21% (Class A) and 35% (Class B). This difference could be accounted for by that, midway through each Phase, Class A had an average age of 9 years 2 months, while for Class B it was 8 years 6 months.

When asked who or what they would like to be (not necessarily to do with television), Class A responded as follows: 46% chose a hero from television (mostly 'Rambo' or 'Rocky'), 21% some kind of pop star, 29% something practicable (like a policewoman, or sportsman), and 4% wanted to be a cartoon character which, if chosen by a girl, tended to be an animal:-

Lisa: "I would like to be **Top Cat** because he is fun and he is the master of all the cats and when he has got plans he bangs on the top of the bin and all the cats come and when he tells them they do as they are told and at the end he brushes his teeth."

Tracy liked **Tom And Jerry** best, because "it's always Tom what gets the

blame for things. Tom, I mean Jerry, always shots things and then he has to try and get them and things get smashed and he gets told off by his owner."

With Class B, however, television did not predominate: 50% chose something practicable (like a tennis player, nurse, artist etc.), 18% wanted to be another person (like Royalty or Sylvester Stallone), and 32% wanted to be something from cartoons. That this last group were ridiculed by the majority ("You can't be that.... it's only a cartoon!") showed that the children perceived the difference between fantasy and reality. Some of the reasons for choosing cartoon characters were:-

George: "I would like to be **Spiderman**, because he can tie people up with his spider web to catch them. I'd call the police and the police took the bodies away to jail for ever."

Peter: "I would like to be **Iceman** because he can put ice on people and he can go up into the sky but he only puts ice on bad men and saves the good men from danger."

Philip: "I would like to be **Karate Kid** because he fights bad people and jumps up and kicks them in the head.... I would fight people and jump up and kick them in the head."

Jason: "I want to be **Banana Man** because he eats bananas and he helps people and he puts the bad boys in jail and he flies in the sky and he changed back into a boy."

David: "I would like to be **Superman** because I have some powers to save the people and help people and I like to fly."

Alan: "I would like to be a wizard he can turn people into a frog and disappear and fly in the sky and magic it all."

Kay: "I would like to be **She-Ra** because of what she looks like, and what she does, and she does have super powers and I've got her doll."

32% of Class B children wanted to be a cartoon character, compared with only 4% of the older Class A children. Some of the older children chose real or fictional television characters.

6.2 Cartoon programmes

6.2.1 Appeal of cartoons (fig.24)

When asked to name their favourite characters from television, 93% of Class A and 96% of Class B chose at least one cartoon character. When asked to draw their favourite television character, almost equal numbers of boys and girls drew cartoon characters. Their choice was often dictated by simplicity, for example 33% of Class B drew **Wizbit**, consisting of a triangle with face, arms and legs. Ian produced coloured pictures of **Tom And Jerry** and was also quite adept at drawing **Dogtanion** because he had learnt the simple lines necessary. During undirected activities, children sometimes chose to draw cartoon characters, perhaps because their simple outlines made it easy to get a recognisable likeness.

The appeal of cartoons is partly because they do not have the restrictions imposed by human actors and hence can be even more wild and imaginative. The popularity of cartoon characters is mainly because of their supernatural powers. As with films (see 5.4) additional attractions are fantastic vehicles and other gadgetry. Philip enjoyed watching **MASK** because of shooting things down; he was also able to trace pictures of these vehicles from comics. Debbie enjoyed seeing the castle in **Dungeons And Dragons** floating away after the wizard died.

Cartoon programmes are often commercially exploited by encouraging the children to collect a series of models, a characteristic of that developmental stage. In Class B, 90% of girls collected **My Little Pony** items, 60% **Care Bears** and 50% **She-Ra**. Of the boys, 73% collected He-Man toys, 67% Transformers, 53% MASK and 40% Thundercats. Only a few programmes gave rise to goods appealing to both boys and girls e.g. **Bugs Bunny** and Road Runner. All of these toys were heavily advertised during the same hours as these cartoons were transmitted. As many of these items belong to a set, children are further encouraged to build up a collection which, in turn, maintains allegiance to the programme.

6.2.2 Feature length cartoons

Around the Christmas of Phase Two, **Dumbo** and **The Snowman** were broadcast and were recorded by some families. Two months later, Andrea was joined in discussion by Sean :-

Andrea: "We watch **Dumbo** and **The Snowman**".

Interviewer: "Do you watch it quite often?"

Andrea: "I watch it every time we go home."

Interviewer: "Don't you get sick of it?"

Andrea: "No.... in **Dumbo**.... Dumbo blows a great big circle and it changes into an elephant.... and in **The Snowman**, when the boy flies he sings a song, and I always copy."

Sean: "The song that the boy sings is 'I'm walking in the air' and I always join in."

Interviewer: "Oh yes.... I liked it when the snowman went indoors."

Sean: "I liked it in the advert, when the boy was going inside to build the snowman and his hands like that (mimes cold hands) and the snowman came to life and got a snowball and chucked it at him, right, and the boy kept missing on the snowman, right, and then his mum opened the door and.... it was freezing cold, and they go in and go splat, splat all over the floor, and then he has some soup, hot soup right, and he drunk it and when the boy wasn't looking he melted.... right.... and at the end he was outside."

The Snowman was also enjoyed by Darren who wrote in his News: "I watched **The Snowman** on tape.... He (the boy) made a snowman and he put a hat and scarf on it and went to Father Christmas land."

These films appear to have made a more memorable impression than ordinary short cartoons - possibly on account of their length or perhaps because of a stronger story.

6.2.3 Violence in cartoons

In Chapter 2, this author reviewed the work of Siegel (1956), Mussen & Rutherford (1961), Lövaas (1961), Bandura (1963) and Stuer et al. (1971). Several of these studies suggested that more aggressive play or speech patterns could be observed after children had watched cartoons featuring aggression. Gerbner (1972) analysed violence in cartoons and concluded that children's cartoons were many times more violent than adult programmes. Most acts of violence were in response to some problem, but given a humorous treatment and usually perceived by the children only as such.

Lisa watched **Tom And Jerry** and thought it "dead funny" because Tom was "batted" on the head by his owner when really Jerry had made the mess. Claire enjoyed Tom being beaten with a brush.

Philip: "**Danger Mouse** saves people and does dangerous things like goes through fire in his car, and he goes down elevators when it goes down and falls on top and when it goes to the top floor he has to get off before he gets squashed. It's exciting, and it's funny."

However, some programme monitors thought that there was too much (unjustified) violence. The B.B.C. (1972) considered that some American productions such as **Road Runner Show, Penelope Pitstop** and **Dastardly And Muttley** were among the worst offenders. Some children were often attracted by this violence: previously quoted (6.1.2) is a statement from Philip about wanting to emulate **The Karate Kid** jumping up and kicking people in the head. Other children said similar things about programmes they liked:-

George: "I like **The Mysterious** Cities Of Gold because people put stones on and knock people off cliffs because they're baddies and they try to save their friends."

Emma: "I like **She-Ra** because she's very strong and she fights people, sometimes with **He-Man**. And she fights for good, and helps people, ordinary people, or she fights people with powers like her."

Simon: "In **Road Runner**, he moves fast and the fox tries to blow him up, but the fox gets blown up with his own things.... In **Thundercats** they have different coloured clothes, its like a uniform, and special for their leader, and they fight other baddies, they just fight there's no action." (This comment about fighting not being action was explained by saying that no-one got hurt and it was just drawings not people).

In spite of the amount of violence portrayed in **Road Runner** some children sympathised with the coyote who always comes off the worse:-

Kelly: "I don't think it's fair 'cos the wolf (coyote) don't get anything to eat.... when he walks on the rock and that one stands on the edge and the other stands on another edge and that one (coyote) falls down and the other (Road Runner) always stays up."

6.3 Effects of viewing cartoons

6.3.1 Need for fantasy

Maccoby (1961) considered that children preferred fantasy to reality on television because it was easier to follow; fantasy also enabled children to escape from parental and other tensions of life. Howe (1977) subsequently suggested that younger and less able children preferred fantasy to reality. "All children need some fantasy programmes, such as cartoons for younger children.... Young children's liking for cartoons.... is a natural and healthy developmental phenomenon" (Hodge & Tripp 1986:216). The largeness of the gap between fantasy and reality, as in cartoons, helps children build up the capacity to discriminate between the two. It is also a continuation of the moral training begun in fairy stories. A largely visual message conveyed by a cartoon seems to make a stronger impression than by other media. Children know that "good would triumph, and that the baddie would be caught" (ibid. 1986:52).

The children in Class B were aware of the unique nature of cartoons. The

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following conversation took place when talking about the different types of programme on television:-

Interviewer:	"What have we missed out? What types of programme?"
Tom:	"Cartoons."
Interviewer:	"Right.... cartoons. What is a cartoon?"
Tom:	"It's got colours in it."
Darren:	"It's funny."
John:	"It's a.... a.... it's a children's little film, with adventures in it."
Kelly:	"There's drawings in it.... not people."

Their appearence on television invests cartoon characters with as much authority as real people, e.g. Paul (Class A) stated that cows went after red because he had seen it on television, which was then confirmed by Lee: "On **Bugs Bunny** when they, they always have red things and they go after them then."

Interviewer:	"But what's **Bugs Bunny**?"
Lee:	"It's a rabbit."
Interviewer:	"A real rabbit?"
Paul: (laughs)	"No.... just a cartoon."

6.3.2 Cartoons and attentiveness

That cartoons command attention is partly based on the principle of distraction and fast action: "whatever would hold a child's transient attention" (Comstock 1980:73). Hodge & Tripp (1986) studied children's reactions while viewing cartoons, and found they had "mainly deadpan expressions, with some smiles at a few incidents, and general relaxation and smiles when the film was stopped" (1986:64).

A similar response was noted during the present study when the entire school watched cartoons one wet playtime. The return of the teachers went un-noticed by the children who were intently staring at the screen, even though these cartoons had been shown on at least three previous occasions. As the programme finished the children visibly relaxed, laughed and chattered.

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(Previously noted were some aggressive incidents as the children left the hall-see 4.5.2). By way of contrast, shown a few weeks previously was a recently transmitted television film which resulted in an air of restlessness. One possible explanation why cartoons could be shown several times and still command attention is that, as they do not rely on dialogue, an auditory stimulus was provided by frequent sound effects. Calvert et al. (1982) had found children's comprehension improved with auditory stimuli.

6.4 Summary of Phase Three

Although cartoons were watched by all children, they tended to be chosen as favourites by the younger ones, particularly boys.

The appeal of cartoons lay in humour, exciting adventures, super-powers and gadgetry. Toys which exploited a cartoon series were a way of maintaining a programme's popularity.

Children were aware that cartoons were animated drawings and so violence could be enjoyed because, in reality, no-one was hurt. Cartoons provided an element of fantasy in the children's lives, gave them excitement and laughter, fun and relaxation, when they were part of a mixture of programmes seen.

Phase Three completed the collection of data for this study. In Chapter 7, there follows a discussion of all results, from which conclusions are drawn.

CHAPTER 7
GENERAL DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The present study involved children from two consecutive classes of 8 - 9 year old children in a social priority school. Some aspects of the study were common to both groups. The discussion follows the same order as Chapters 4 and 5 - see Contents page.

Phase One was designed as a field study using participant observation and followed up with interviews. Thus, the parameters were much looser than in a controlled laboratory situation. Nothing was expected to be proved, but it was hoped that the study would serve to illuminate the role of television in these children's lives and perhaps confirm some earlier findings.

When Himmelweit et al. completed their classic survey in 1958, television was a relative novelty and not all households had a set. Today a TV set is a piece of furniture - it is "present all the time in the familiar environment of our homes, for much of the time switched on. The unique power of television as a medium through which we may be influenced in various ways lies mainly in the fact that we spend a great deal of time looking at it" (Howe 1977:7). The findings of this study agree with only the first part of Howe's statement, because it can be demonstrated that television plays a varying role in different children's lives and that children react in different ways to it.

7.1 Access to TV sets and VCRs

7.1.1 Ownership

In the present study, 87% of homes had more than one TV set, of which 18% had three or more sets; 59% of the children had a set in their own room, and another 22% had access to one in a sibling's room.

VCRs were not sufficiently common to feature in early research. In 1985 Barlow & Hill stated that 30% of British homes had a VCR, and in 1986 the Sunday Times reported 42%. In this study, 59% of homes had a VCR; furthermore, the remaining children had all seen videos at "their aunty's" or "at friends".

7.1.2 Correlation with viewing habits

A comparison of children's viewing hours in England and the U.S.A., between the years 1958 and 1985, is tabulated below.

Year	Average viewing Hours/week England	U.S.A.	Source
1958	11-13		Himmelweit et al.
1961		14-21	Schramm et al.
1978	14-21		Greenburg(in Cullingford)
1983	23		D.E.S.
1984	14-21		Cullingford
1985	25	25	Barlow & Hill

In this study, the weekly average of 35 hours was 40% higher than Barlow & Hill's 1985 figure, and ranged from 9 to 66 hours, i.e. 69% of these children watched more than the 1985 average.

Tabulated below is a comparison between the viewing statistics of the present study and those of Himmelweit et al. (1958).

	Hours/week	Himmelweit	Present study
Occasional viewers	<7	28%	0%
Moderate viewers	8-20	41%	9%
Heavy viewers	>21	31%	91%

Compared with Himmelweit et al., many more children of the present study are heavy viewers, but it must be remembered that there were only two television channels in 1958. Accordingly, the various categories have been redefined so as to take into account the national average rather than actual viewing hours, i.e. both sets of definitions are compatible with the concept of the national average as being 100%.

Category	Himmelweit's definitions hours/week	Revised definitions hours/week	Revised % of sample (c.f.above)
National average	12	25	
Occasional viewers (<66% nat.av.)	<7	<16	4%
Moderate viewers (67%-167% av.)	8-20	17-41	70%
Heavy viewers (>167% av.)	>21	>42(*)	26%

While these redefinitions produce more statistically acceptable results, they do not put into perspective the magnitude of time spent with television: 42(*) hours is exactly 25% of one week; 31.25 hours is the time accounted for by school - thus 60% of children spent a greater time watching television and presumably were more influenced by it. Children with TV sets in their own rooms tended to be heaviest viewers.

According to the Surgeon General's Report (1972), the number of hours

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spent with a 'live' TV set does not necessarily mean it is being watched intently. In 1980, Comstock stated "viewing is discontinuous. It is frequently non-exclusive. It is often interrupted. It changes with the type of programme" (1980:30). By means of a camera behind the television, Bechtel (1980), found that the room was often empty, or that the people in there were otherwise occupied and not looking at the set. This experiment was repeated by Summers (1985) with similar results.

The present study found that, although many children watched in bed, while eating or playing, there were not as many as the 80% quoted by Lyle & Hoffman (1972). Indirect evidence that viewing was non-exclusive includes: the sheer amount of time the TV set was switched on; also the sets were in the rooms where the children usually played. One conclusion is that children tended to watch whenever their attention was attracted by a stimulus such as sound or movement, but being out of context, the children may have not understood what they saw.

Whereas Himmelweit et al. had found bedtimes were not much later than for non-viewers, Cullingford (1984) suggested "children's habits must have changed since the 1950's" (1984:15), as he found children of 8 years regularly watched until 9.30 p.m., and that "to children 'late' is after midnight or late night movies" (1984:15). Half of the 8 year-olds often stayed up for late horror films and Cullingford wondered if VCRs would change this pattern. During the present study it became apparent that children regularly stayed up late, especially at weekends. In addition, those with VCRs were able to watch late night movies at a more reasonable hour, which also enabled the principle of the 9 p.m. "watershed" to be ignored.

The Surgeon General's Report (1972) commented on the increasing multiplicity of TV sets which was leading to a "differentiated and specialised audience" (1972:85). Comstock (1980) found that access to more than one set resulted in children often viewing in isolation, thus separating adult and child experiences. Furthermore, when children watched 'live' or recorded television with their parents discussions and explanations were possible, but not when children watched alone.

As young children have not yet reached the developmental stage of interpreting what they see on television, "an adult watching with them can have an impact on their understanding of programmes" (Choat 1988:16). Corder-Bolz (1980) suggests that, if parents and other adults discuss television programmes with children, they will absorb these critical viewing skills so that television may ultimately play a more positive part in the children's lives.

In the present study VCRs were to be found in 59% of homes and were used for both showing hired videos and for convenience, i.e. when scheduled programmes did not appeal and/or to allow late programmes to be seen at an earlier hour. Watching adult programmes at an early hour often increased the privatisation of the experience.

7.1.3 Viewing circumstances and selection of programmes

Schramm et al. (1961) stated that for the first ten years of his life a child watched with his family and therefore saw the same programmes as they did. Lyle & Hoffman (1972) realised that parents had little influence over their children's viewing because, at least during the early evening, children controlled the set. Cullingford (1984) found that children switched on television early in the evening, but it was the following adult programmes that they preferred to watch. Perhaps viewing with their family increased the attraction of the adult programmes.

The investigation into the accessibility of TV sets and VCRs showed that most of the children in the present study had access to at least one other TV set which they usually watched without adult company and therefore had virtually unrestricted choice of programmes.

The more recent phenomenon of VCRs has resulted in the development of a new pattern of viewing. Barlow & Hill (1985) showed concern at the number of violent videos that young children had seen. Pressure from the peer group to watch certain videos could help reinforce any contained messages by implying that the behaviours displayed are socially acceptable.

In the present study, a video was rarely hired with the child in mind except, perhaps, for a birthday party or because of illness. Usually it was the father's choice and many of the films thus selected were of an adult/violent type despite which the children were usually allowed to watch.

With hired videos, the evolving pattern of individual viewing was reversed and the whole family watched together. It is possible that the enjoyment of the films was enhanced by the novelty of watching together. Frightening videos were especially mentioned by these children in the context of viewing with their parents, often nestled on the settee. Watching together, the emotional circumstances "reinforces the bonds among viewers watching in company.... and hence weakens its emotional force" (Hodge & Tripp 1986:137). This closeness was obviously important to these children, and not only made suspense and horror films bearable, but was enjoyed for its own sake. Under such relaxed circumstances indications of attitudes and values could be more forthcoming from the parents, even the many inarticulate ones. Similarly, such expressions would be more potent, the child more receptive and thus more likely to incorporate any such messages into his own behaviour pattern.

7.1.4 Summary

This part of the study revealed the interesting dichotomy that is developing between the increasingly private viewing of 'live' television and the family togetherness experienced during a hired video screening. It would be interesting to find out how this pattern develops in future years.

7.2 Television programmes and hired videos

7.2.1 Likes and dislikes

Several workers have found that children enjoy a wide range of programmes, many of which were meant for adults (Himmelweit et al. 1958; Schramm et al. 1961; and the D.E.S. 1983). Cullingford (1984) stated that many children switched on television early in the evening, but hardly watched until

prime adult time. He found that most children above the age of seven were almost indifferent to children's programmes except cartoons, and preferred adult television. Favourite programmes were thrillers, such as **The Professionals, Starsky And Hutch** and situation comedies, like **Open All Hours**. He also noted a lack of enthusiasm for programmes like **Blue Peter** and soap operas.

The present study confirmed the general popularity of adult programmes among children aged 8.0 - 9.7 years. In contrast to Cullingford's (1984) findings, soap operas were generally well liked, particularly EastEnders (non-existent in 1984). Situation comedies, which were liked by 17% of the 1984 sample, were chosen by 52% of the present group. In particular **Fawlty Towers** and 'Allo 'Allo were mentioned. Various police thrillers appealed to 89% of Class A, and 22% liked **The Fall Guy**, a series about stuntmen. The slightly younger children in Class B seemed less interested in the police thrillers, but preferred various adult films (55%). Cartoons were also more popular with the younger children including **Dungeons And Dragons** (named as favourite by 37% the following morning) and He-Man (52% from memory). As further confirmation of earlier findings, there were just 3 children who enjoyed **Blue Peter** the previous evening, even though 11 watched it.

One common reason for disliking programmes was that they were not targeted at their own age group, e.g. 22% disliked **Playschool** because it was "too babyish" but, nevertheless, continued to watch. Programmes such as the **News, Weather, Northern Life** or **TV-am** were disliked by 60% because there was "too much talking" or "not funny". Soap operas were liked or disliked by equal numbers of children (42%). A few children from the younger Class B disliked frightening adult films.

Himmelweit et al.(1958), Lusted & Drummond (1985) and Cullingford (1984) thought that, with the introduction of extra channels, children switched over in order to watch the type of programme they preferred. In the present study, analysis of the diaries indicated much changing of channels, often seeing only parts of programmes, until something suitable was found. Thus, the present study confirms Cullingford's statement that children "watch a great deal of what they do not particularly like" (1984:6), i.e. television watching is a pastime.

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7.2.2 Attracting programme elements

In the early stages of this research, it became apparent that children's discussion of individual films and dramas was much more animated than for regular programmes. Consequently an attempt was made to discover which programme elements attracted and held children's interest.

Himmelweit et al. (1958) stated that children wanted to experience heroism and adventure, even at second hand. Maccoby (1961) suggested that viewers could become addicted to excitement on television. Halloran et al. (1970) found that boys, in particular, were stimulated by exciting programmes, aggressive heros and feats of prowess. Miller (1970) thought lower class culture emphasised masculine toughness. Tannenbaum & Zillman (1980) considered that the viewer may be physically aroused by excitement and want to copy such behaviour.

Most children in this study frequently watched exciting films, many of which were intended for late evening adult audiences, but they also enjoyed children's adventure programmes. Children in multi-set households tended to watch a greater number of action programmes (also noted by Comstock, 1980).

Children of both classes vividly remembered the exciting parts of films, e.g. crashes, explosions and burning, an observation also made by Cullingford (1984). The fascination of blood and gore was shown by many of these children, regardless of sex and personality. As such scenes did not personally involve them they expressed distaste but not empathy. Sometimes gory sequences were parts of horror films, but the major attraction was the anticipation of fear. Very often such films were enjoyed even more when seen for a second time on video. Probably this was because the knowledge of where the suspense was leading reduced the element of fear and thus enhanced the enjoyment of the remaining anticipation.

One attraction of higher budget films was the lavish use of props e.g. fast cars, missile-laden helicopters and jewellery. Comedy programmes featuring visual, slapstick humour were high on the list of favourites. A combination of

humour, stunts and gadgetry was guaranteed to make a film popular. Hence the attraction of the 'James Bond' films, **Smokey And The Bandit** and **Star Wars**.

Children could often relate the story of a film, or describe certain incidents, even after several months, whereas after watching regular programmes they could remember very little. One possible clue is provided by Bechtel (1973) who observed that viewers concentrated more for films than for regular programmes.

Some other reasons why these children were attracted to films and found them memorable were: their novelty value, including style, storyline and the possibility that harm could befall the hero (unlike a regular series); also their length.

Thus, films stand out from the 'moving wallpaper' of other television programmes, which are often passively seen but not actively watched.

7.3 Television and behaviour in school

7.3.1 Attentiveness

Comstock (1980) was aware of various techniques used by television producers in order to maintain children's attention. Later, Cullingford (1984) suggested that children who watch a lot of television would become so accustomed to seeing favourite characters and visual activity, that it would lead to a "state of indifferent attention" (1984:22).

Many of these children spent a very high proportion of their leisure time watching television (see 7.1.2). Consequently, whether this affected their ability to concentrate in the classroom was investigated. Using the incident sampling method, data was obtained about the relationships between observed behaviours and the situations in which they occurred. The behaviours looked for included signs of restlessness like tapping feet, pencils and rulers, and distracting others from their work.

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In Phase One, 70% of such behaviours were observed from heavy viewers. During Phase Two, there were fewer incidents overall, but 90% of those observed were from heavy viewers (see fig.11). In contrast, there were some heavy viewers who were hard working and had a positive attitude to school. However, there would seem to be a general relationship between heavy viewers and restlessness. Any conclusions must take into consideration other, perhaps more dominant, factors influencing behaviour such as the child's own personality and upbringing (the latter perhaps resulting in long hours spent in front of television). Peer influence would also be important and could help explain why more incidents were observed in Phase One than Phase Two.

An indirect cause of restlessness could be lack of sleep. Children "need at least an hour's quiet and tranquillity before going to sleep.... and the average 10 year-old needs between 10 and 12 hours sleep a night. Otherwise, they become irritable and you get problems" (Horne 1985). The children in this study were aged 8.0 to 9.7 years. Usually, those children who watched the longest went to bed late. One boy regularly switched off his TV set at 10 p.m., while others sometimes had seen later programmes.

Generally, the results of this study confirmed the suggestion that television may affect children's attitudes and behaviour in school. The heaviest viewers tended to be the least attentive but whether this was due to television alone and/or lack of sleep and/or some other factor is open to speculation.

7.3.2 Aggressiveness

One aim of this study was to investigate children's reactions in school to violence seen on television. Again, incident sampling was used to obtain data. Aggressive incidents observed included verbal and physical acts, from swearing to kicking. Some children were involved several times and others never. Television is obviously only part of a complexity of causes including the child's personality and environment. However, some children were seen to be acting aggressively more frequently than others.

At one time or another, 18 children of Class A were observed behaving

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aggressively, of whom 11 (61%) were heavy viewers. Of these, some children were only occasionally aggressive, but others were responsible for many physical attacks (see fig.13). Analysis of violent incidents showed that 67% of aggressive incidents were associated with heavy viewers. In Class B, although fewer incidents were observed, 90% were by heavy viewers (see fig.12). The differences between classes may have been because peer pressure encouraged those in Class A to behave more aggressively, or because the children of Class B were slightly younger.

The results of previous research were at variance, partly dependant on whether laboratory or field experiments were involved. The laboratory experiments of Bandura (1965); Kuhn, Madsen & Becker (1967); Rosenkrans & Hartup (1967); Hanratty & O'Neal (1972) suggested exposure to violence may increase the tendencies of children to behave accordingly. As children do not always imitate every action seen there is no justification for stating that, just because it is shown on television, it will necessarily be copied. However, they may copy those behaviours which fulfil a need, or which offer hope of a reward. Each child will, therefore, imitate according to its particular needs, some of which may not occur until some time afterwards.

Bandura (1969) noted that observational learning enabled the observer to acquire large segments of behaviour at one time. Watching others may also strengthen (or weaken) inhibitions about performing similar activities, and enable novel responses to become part of the observer's response repertoire. He suggested that watching television is part of the learning process. In this study, children were observed to use words and actions copied from the screen, but indirect imitation through other children could have been responsible (as in some of the games, 'Rambo' actions etc.).

Berkowitz (1962) stated that a boy is more likely to copy acts of violence if he is personally familiar with them and if he needs to prove his manliness which, in turn, is important to children from poorer families. As the present study was undertaken in a socially disadvantaged area, Berkowitz's findings were considered to be most relevant to the boys. Several of the more aggressive children also came from homes with social problems and might be even more

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likely to act aggressively. Thus the influence of television upon aggressiveness is open to conjecture.

Eron (1963) found a positive relationship between the violence rating of favourite programmes and aggressive tendencies in boys, but not in girls. Generally, he found that boys who watched more television were not as aggressive as those who watched it less; he was unsure whether this was because they were temperamentally less active and had discharged any aggressive impulses through fantasy, or had less opportunity to act aggressively because of the amount of time spent watching television. The findings of the present study differ from those of Eron in that heavy viewers were most likely to behave aggressively in school.

Eron (1972) suggested "that viewing violence regularly at age 8 leads to more aggressive behaviour on the part of the viewer at that time and also in subsequent years than does viewing non-violent programmes" (1972:261). The Surgeon General's Report (1972) reversed this logic and concluded that aggressive people may seek out aggressive programmes and that any relationship between the two could be the result of a third variable i.e. the influence of family and background.

Television programmes often conclude with acts of violence: under certain conditions such acts may lead children to understand that violence is socially acceptable. On British television, Cumberbatch (1987) ranks in descending order acts of violence by channels as: ITV1, BBC1, BBC2 and ITV2. The children in this study almost exclusively watched ITV1 and BBC1.

Children interpret what they see and hear on television in the light of their own experience. Viewers with a lower level of mental development may not be able to judge for themselves what constitutes socially acceptable imitation. Children's admiration for aggressive television heros (like 'Rambo' and He-Man) may lead to copying, e.g. karate-style kicking. The division between fact and fiction may be indistinct, particularly because News broadcasts tend to give prominence to 'bad' news which often involves violence and death e.g. the Hungerford massacre and its similarity to the 'Rambo' films.

Over the years, there seems to have been a concentration of research into the effects of televised aggression on children. Could this be due to researchers being adults and parents? Could it be due to a more selective perception on the part of the researchers? Could it be that aggressive behaviour is easier to observe and relate to a screen model? A quarter of a century ago, Bandura suggested that children simply imitated what they saw. Present day research indicates a more complex phenomenon; it is possible that children may be already predisposed to respond to certain incidents, while their interaction with others and with television is determined by their social and emotional needs.

There appears to be no single explanation for aggressive behaviour in school: that much time is spent viewing violent television can only be suggested as one of the causative factors.

7.4 Perception of social reality

Phase One of the present study attempted to investigate the way children acquired a sense of social reality from television. The process of learning about the world around is a gradual one and children pick up clues for behaviour from numerous sources. Several workers have shown that television has a particularly strong influence in this respect, particularly among children from low socioeconomic groups (Noble 1975; Dorr 1982; Greenfield 1984).

A child needs to conform to the behavioural expectations of the group to which he belongs (Secord & Backman 1976). Initially a child models himself upon members of his family; other influences follow later, such as school, peers and television. The most frequently seen and/or most powerful model will have the greatest effect upon a child, particularly if the child is lacking in self-esteem (Argyle 1984). Most television personalities and characters are overtly self confident and it is upon these that social learning is often based. These models perform in various ways but the only behaviours to be deliberately copied by children are those which are relevant to their needs, as dictated by circumstances and stage of development. However, other things seen may be subconsciously retained (Brown 1965; Ross 1974).

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Raffta (1983) analysed the social and anti-social values of three popular children's shows and found that, because anti-social values were projected more intensely, they were possibly easier to recall and copy. A child's learning will also be affected by his previous knowledge and by those with whom he is watching. Thus, a heavy viewer will be more influenced by television if he habitually watches the same kind of programme in his own company: a description applicable to many of the children in this study.

Noble (1975) suggested that a young child's lack of reasoning and experience means that he is unable to analyse and interpret actions seen on the screen. Adult interpretation and discussion may help children to appreciate what they saw, but many children of this study viewed alone. This lack of explanation may thus produce in children a distorted view of reality.

Schramm et al. (1961) wondered whether children who watched television for several hours each day would have difficulty in later life distinguishing between the real and the fantasy world. The problem was further explored by Morison & Gardner (1978) when they gave children pictures of real and imaginary creatures to classify: older children found this task easier. These experiments showed the gradual understanding of the real and fantastic in the world they see around them.

Harré & Secord (1972) considered that children's ideas of themselves in relation to others, their perception of the world around them all affected the degree of influence television had on their own personal construction of reality. This was a complicated, interrelated, developmental process and no single contribution was dominant, but all played their part in shaping the individual character.

Discussions with children from both classes showed that, in some instances, their knowledge of a subject was derived from television alone, e.g. Africa is a place of famine (**News**); rich people have swimming pools and wear large hats (**Dallas**). Their image of the role of women was similarly restricted, being centred on the home. Surprisingly, they did not mention women as teachers or shop assistants. Despite featuring in numerous television

programmes, policewomen went virtually unmentioned, except when discussing the subject of detectives. Obviously their view of women was based mainly on their mothers, but some concepts of women's domestic roles could have been acquired from television programmes and advertisements. Significantly, in children's television programmes, 70-85% of the visible characters are male, while women have only limited roles (*Durkin 1985*).

Conversation with these children revealed a view of the world which was given authority because "it was on the telly". As Donaldson stated: "for children the images of reality received from popular entertainment programmes are a major part of their information about the world" (1985:26).

A more detailed investigation into the sources of these children's concepts was impracticable due to them moving to a new class teacher.

7.5 Television as a source of play, language and communication

7.5.1 Play and other copying activities

Writers have long been aware that young children used television as a source of play. Gomberg (1961) studied 4 year-olds and found that television provided a source of common inspiration for play in 80% of boys. Using certain key words as a stimulus, others knew what was happening and could join in because television was an experience common to them all. In general, television inspired games were fast moving and played with shrill voices.

Opie & Opie (1969) commented that pretending games were influenced by parents, books and television and tended to reflect how the children lived. Lyle & Hoffman (1973) found that 60% of the children copied from television, especially from action and adventure programmes such as **Batman**. Similarly, Noble (1975) found that children up to 7 years old would play in a stereotyped manner using television as the inspiration.

Observations during the present study showed that several games involved chasing, screaming and excitement. Many games were updated versions of

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'cowboys and indians' and were called e.g. **'Batman'** or **'Superman'**, as appropriate.

The stages of play also serve as guides to the child's developmental stage. When children pretend a stick is a gun, or that they are riding a horse, they are developing their representational thought which leads to divergent thinking, language, problem solving and impulse control. When they play at being someone else, for instance a mother or 'Superman', they are learning to understand the position of others and to get a change of perspective (Pepler & Rubin 1982). The children in the present study played in different ways as befitted their developmental stages.

In Class A, most boys kicked a football every playtime. The girls played ball, skipped, chased or stood talking. There were very few television inspired games, probably because these children were over 9 years old and fairly mature. Occasional actions, like sparring (in the style of 'Rocky'), driving a car, or gunfighting, were the limits of their copying activities.

The children of Class B averaged 8 months younger, were less mature and, as would be expected, more copying activities were observed in the playground. Games involving chasing and shooting were the most common, e.g. **'Thundercats'** among the boys. The more immature boys also played **'Superman'**, in which coats were used as cloaks and there was lots of 'flying' around. Some boys played at being vampires: this had less activity but relied more on the imagination. Girls tended not to base their play on television but, for the whole day after the Zeebrugge ferry disaster, some acted being trapped when the ship capsized. Obviously what they had seen on television had made a deep impression and they were possibly acting out their fears in this way. (In 1982, James & McCann considered that television provided children with an additional means of exploring their environment, capabilities and feelings). By the end of the year, football was beginning to gain in popularity as the boys reached the developmental stage of requiring social play and a mutually agreed set of rules.

For both classes, copying activities were particularly noticeable during P.E. lessons. The apparatus provided a stimulus for such actions as sliding, jumping

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and climbing which were often based on recent programmes, such as **Jaws** and **Batman**. Outside school hours, at the swimming pool, 'Jaws' was a popular game.

Children reported playing games at home which involved television-based toys. **Thundercats** and **The A-Team** figures were most popular among the boys. The girls collected **My Little Pony**. The popularity of these toys related to the developmental stage of these children: they wanted to collect, to conform and to identify with a group.

Certain aspects of play observed were directly attributable to television; the more dramatic and exciting programmes were the ones most frequently imitated. Television provided a mutually shared reality upon which children could base their play, providing it was appropriate to their stage of development.

7.5.2 Language and communication

Children learn to communicate firstly from their family, later from friends, school and, probably, television. Children may understand more than they can actually say. Templin (1957) found children's language improved with the frequency at which adult language was used in their presence, one source of which was increased exposure to television. Ferguson, Drummond & Alvarado (1984) have described television as a "language system" because it provides not only speech but also narrative structures and may thus explain and increase vocabulary.

During this research, television-inspired language mainly involved conversation about programmes seen or forthcoming. Consequently, to have seen certain programmes assured membership of an exclusive group. Non-members were occasionally heard trying to direct the conversation to something they had seen, in order to gain inclusion. (A similar phenonemon can be observed with adults!) With these children, the conversation was usually a brief "Did you see....?", "Yes, are you going to watch....?", and not a discussion of the programme content. The fact that an experience had been shared was considered to be an end in itself. What was important was sharing the experience.

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When the author asked these children about their leisure viewing, their responses were mostly restricted to degree of enjoyment, otherwise, any home viewing was seen as superficial and irrelevant. However, they were capable of intelligently discussing those programmes seen at school, partly because of the environment, but also because they knew questioning would be forthcoming (Cullingford 1984). Meaningful discussion was also limited by the vocabulary of these children.

Howe (1977) showed that children could acquire phrases from television, and Cullingford (1984) stated that they parodied advertisements and copied one-liners from comedians. Examples noticed during this study included: parodies of theme tunes (**Batman**) and advertisements (**My Little Pony**); advertisements were repeated by Class A but not the younger ones. Class A also made more frequent use of verbal exclamations based on phrases from television: these quotations were made so casually that they could only have been a natural expression of relaxation.

During the present study, children were often surprised to be told that certain words were socially unacceptable even though they were part of their home vocabulary. Swearing was sometimes used as a means of non-physical attack and, hopefully, was not punishable. Strong language was far more common among the children of Class A, which was in keeping with their generally more aggressive behaviours. Belson (1978) found that boys who watched numerous programmes with verbal violence were more likely to swear and use bad language. With these children, the incidents of swearing, threats and bad language were mostly from boys, usually those who viewed heavily. Wynne-Jones (1985) quoted teachers who "were concerned about the swearing and the abusive and often filthy language which is now heard in school, and the threats made in vicious terminology, the noticeable aggression and violence both in behaviour and language" (1985:150).

It was not easy to attribute specific words to the influence of television (except "elevator" - 5.6.2), but it was apparent that television did make a significant contribution to their vocal output: phrases and tunes were frequently repeated which, being recognised by other children, also assisted in the

socialization process (Harré 1976). Thus, the common experience provided by television gave them a sense of belonging to a group. As videos become more popular, perhaps individual viewing will gradually reduce this element of commonality, with consequent social implications (see 7.5.1).

7.6 Cartoons

For children, cartoons are a major source of television entertainment because of their well developed characters, strong story lines, humour, and their inherence of exploiting situations which would be otherwise impossible.

Noble (1975) suggested that cartoons mostly appealed to viewers at lower levels of mental development, who are only capable of interpreting what they see in very simplistic terms. As cartoon characters are usually portrayed in terms of good or evil (e.g. in **He-Man**), the plot is readily understood by young children who, otherwise, may not have the ability to analyse the subtlety of human characters. Furthermore, young children may have difficulty in appreciating the role-playing of an actor, particularly if seen in different programmes.

Mussen & Rutherford (1961) and Bandura & Walters (1963) observed children thinking and acting more aggressively after watching cartoons. Greenfield (1984) suggested that cartoons nowadays were less violent, e.g. Tom **And Jerry** used to consist of a series of isolated acts of violence, thereby implying that violence had no consequence. She considered that modern cartoon characters had positive relationships with each other and provided better models for children, and she thought that pain and the consequences of actions should be portrayed in the interests of realism. In recent years, some cartoon makers have responded to criticisms of violence by seeking guidance from child psychiatrists in order to suppress those scenes which could adversely affect a child's mental development and emphasise those more positive traits such as generosity and sympathy.

Bettleheim (1983) argued that fairytales and fantasy provided a means of escape for the child from any mental problems they may have had and that

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cartoons were a modern form of fantasy, especially useful to the young child or the non-reader. "Far from being trivial forms that stunt the growing mind, (they) have a positive cultural value and as important a role as the humble fairy tale" (Hodge & Tripp 1986:32). Furthermore, as cartoons often depicted otherwise apparently impossible solutions, they may somehow help children learn how to cope with uncomfortable aspects of life.

Criticism of cartoons is often based on the number shown, their violent content and amount of time spent watching them. The B.B.C. (1974) tries to provide a "balanced diet" of programmes to suit all tastes and to give the child an opportunity to experience all sorts of entertainment, an altruism which ignores the competition between the B.B.C. and I.T.V. Thus, in the present study, many children chose to switch channels until they found a cartoon and hence avoid other programmes.

In the Channel 4 programme **Right To Reply** (July 1987), television producers argued in favour of violent cartoon programmes on the grounds that children have always enjoyed frightening and violent fairy tales and legends which, in turn, have evolved into comics, films and television. The present author disputes this argument for several reasons:

(a) In historical times, there was a tradition of storytelling within the family circle: the expected frisson of fear would thus be alleviated by the psychological and physical reassurance provided by other members of the group (children watching alone do not have such support). Furthermore the conquest of evil would have been directly attributable to the goodness and valiance of the hero figure.

(b) Apart from appealing to different senses, the replacement of the spoken word by the printed one (books and comics) eliminated any feedback to the narrator, who otherwise might have modified his story accordingly. A similar argument can be applied to both television and the cinema. In addition, frightening passages in the text could be avoided by turning the page but could always be returned to if and when desired. There is less control over the screen.

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(c)   The emergence of the cinema made films a vivid means of reaching the emotions of the audience. However, the effort and cost limited the frequency of cinema-going. Shuttleworth & May (1962) studied the most frequent cinema-goers (teenagers) who went to the cinema 4 or 5 times a week: these 12 or so hours would be classed as "light" viewing by present day television standards. Consequently any direct influence of films upon the average cinema-goer would be minimal. Furthermore, there were restrictions on the entry to the cinema for young people.

(d)   By having television in their homes, children could watch whatever and whenever they wished - frequently violent cartoons. The increasing number of TV sets per household has resulted in children watching without adult reassurance, guidance or support. This study has revealed that some children view their own choice of programmes for many hours each day, often watching alone and therefore vulnerable to any influences.

(e)   The advent of the VCR has further increased the number and types of programmes available. They also allow repetition as desired, so that shots intended by the director to be momentary can be slowed or even stopped. Repetition of horrific scenes is of serious concern to some researchers (e.g. Wynne-jones, 1985).

(f)   The argument that violent cartoons have the same harmless effect on children as comics and the cinema is further disputed by the present author on the grounds of the constant availability of television and the long hours spent viewing. Most children in this present study were "heavy viewers" by any standards and thus are more likely to have had their developing attitudes and values influenced by scenes of violence described as children's entertainment.

Many programme makers have been criticised for commercially exploiting cartoons such as **He-Man** and **Thomas The Tank Engine**. However, also available are products derived from more "educational" programmes e.g. **Blue Peter** and **Sesame Street.**

7.7 Conclusions

The present study was undertaken to further illuminate earlier research into children's responses to television. It was based on investigating the viewing habits (and their possible effects) of two consecutive junior school classes. Because of the limited time available and being a non-experimental situation, it was almost impossible to ascertain whether any behaviour exhibited was attributable to television or to some other circumstance, such as the home environment. Schramm et al. (1961) wrote: "It is seldom that we can point to any behaviour of a child and say that this is due solely to television. Television contributes to it, catalyses it, or gives it a particular shape.... it is seldom that the causes of any complex behaviour in human beings are simple or single causes" (1961:146).

Present day television broadcasts are mostly regulated by national bodies such as the B.B.C. and I.T.A. but, with the advent of satellite television, children will be able to watch without restriction for twenty four hours a day. The spread of cable television and video output will also increase this availability.

In order to minimise any harmful effects of television, children need to know how to critically assess such aspects as screen violence and stereotyped values. The importance of adults to counteract imparted attitudes has been suggested (e.g. Berkowitz 1962; Corder-Bolz 1980; Choat 1988). As viewing is tending to become a more solitary experience, this author feels that schools may need to take on this interpretive and explanatory role, thereby logically developing the suggestion of Masterman (1983; 1984). Obviously finding time for such an activity is a problem and could only be incorporated in the proposed National Curriculum under a broad subject such as English.

Television tends to mirror evolving society. However, different people respond to this reflection in different ways: some will be bored, some passively entertained, some mentally stimulated while others may react in a physical way. School also mirrors society; the attitudes brought to it by children and teachers

reflect the way they are influenced, in turn, by broader influences in their own environments, including the media.

Research into the influence of television on children has been carried out since the earliest days and is of continuing importance because television is a powerful medium and is regularly watched by children. It is also important to teach children about the way the medium operates, how to view critically, and how to derive the maximum benefit from it.

7.8 Suggestions for future study

In the light of the present study, the author considers the following aspects to be worthy of further investigation:-

(a) The effects of privatising viewing experiences brought about by the proliferation of TV sets (7.1.4).

(b) The consequences of using VCRs to control viewing experiences (7.1.4).

(c) The relationship between heavy viewing, consequent late bed times and the ability to concentrate in school (7.3.1).

(d) How children's perception of social reality is influenced by television (7.4).

(e) Whether the use of strong language in schools is attributable to television (7.5.2).

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

PROGRAMME LISTINGS

LIKED AND DISLIKED PROGRAMMES
(Number of votes shown in **bold**)

CLASS A (PHASE ONE)

Favourite programmes from diary (31/1/86 - 6/2/86)

Children's programmes (fig. 2)

Variety:	1	Jim'll Fix It
	1	No. 73
	1	The Wall Game
Serial:	3	Grange Hill
	5	Small Wonder
	1	Charles In Charge
	3	Running Scared
Play:	0	
Film:	2	101 Dalmations
Adventure:	5	Airwolf
	7	The A-Team
Miscellaneous:	1	First Class

Cartoons (fig.3)

Fantasy:	1	Ulysses 31
	7	He-Man
Adventure:	2	Fireball XL5
Humour:	11	The Telebugs
	3	Jimbo And The Jet Set
	3	Wizbit
	2	Superted
	1	The Giddy Game Show
	1	Alias The Jester
Miscellaneous:	2	The Wind In The Willows
	1	Book Tower

Adult and family shows (fig.4)

Situation Comedy:	1	Mind Your Language!
	1	Young Doctors
	1	Don't Wait Up
	1	All In Good Faith
	1	One By One
	4	Duty Free
	1	Never The Twain
	2	Sons And Daughters
Soap Opera:	3	Dynasty
	15	EastEnders
	2	Albion Market
	2	Brookside
	1	Coronation Street
	2	Emmerdale Farm
	1	The Colbys
Variety:	1	The Noel Edmonds Show
Comedy:	2	The Two Ronnies
	1	Les And Dustin's Laughter Show
	4	Spitting Image
	2	Blackadder
Quiz:	0	
Documentary:	1	Bluebell
	2	The Marriage
Film:	1	Chance In A Million
	1	The Girl Most Likely
	1	Film '86
	1	The Ghost Goes West
Sport:	1	Snooker
	1	Grandstand
	1	Supercar
	3	The Big Match Live
	1	Sportsnight
Miscellaneous:	1	The Adventure Game

Violent programmes etc. (fig.5)

Horror:	3	'Fear On Friday'
	2	'The Horror Movie'
	5	'V'
	1	Hatter's Ghosts
Film:	1	A Taste Of Honey
	1	The Norsemen
Crime:	1	Hill Street Blues
	2	Crazy Like A Fox
	2	Starsky And Hutch
	3	The Bill
	4	Boon
	5	Magnum
	4	Minder
	3	Hunter
Adventure:	11	The Fall Guy

CLASS A (PHASE ONE)

Favourite programmes from memory

Children's programmes (fig.2)

Variety:	1	Tickle On The Tum
	3	Stooky
	1	Playschool
Serial:	4	Fonzy
	2	Monkey Magic
	1	Supergran
Play:	0	
Film:	0	
Adventure:	11	Street Hawk
	8	The A-Team
	8	Knight Rider
	6	Airwolf
Miscellaneous:	1	Blockbusters

Cartoons (fig.3)

Fantasy:	1	Battle Of The Planets
	5	He-Man
	3	She-Ra
	4	Spiderman
Adventure:	1	Batman
Humour:	6	Scooby Doo
	6	Tom And Jerry
	1	The Pink Panther
	3	Danger Mouse
	1	Doddle Duck
	1	Superted
Miscellaneous:	1	Rainbow

Adult and family shows (fig.4)

Situation Comedy:	6	'Allo,'Allo
	1	Hi-De-Hi!
	2	Last Of The Summer Wine
	2	Me And My Girl
	2	Girls On Top
Soap Opera:	6	EastEnders
	8	Dynasty
	5	Dallas
	6	Coronation Street
	1	Albion Market
	1	Brookside
	1	Falcon Crest
Variety:	2	The Paul Daniels Show
Comedy:	1	Game For A Laugh
	1	Russ Abbott Show
	2	The Young Ones
Quiz:	3	Full House
	1	Play Your Cards Right
Documentary:	0	
Film:	1	Tarzan
	2	E.T.
	1	Return Of The Jedi
	1	Indiana Jones
	1	'James Bond'
Sport:	1	Wrestling
	1	Racing
	1	Grandstand
Miscellaneous:	1	Ballet
	1	Story International

Violent programmes etc. (fig.5)

Horror:	1	Poltergeist
Film:	1	Time For Murder
	2	Murder On One
Crime:	3	Dempsey And Makepeace
	1	Juliet Bravo
	1	T. J. Hooker
Adventure:	1	Blue Thunder
	2	The Dukes Of Hazzard

CLASS A (PHASE ONE)

Disliked programmes

Children's programmes (fig.8)

Variety:	7	Playschool
	1	Let Us Pretend
	2	Saturday Superstore
	3	Tickle On The Tum
	1	Wide Awake Club
Serial:	0	
Play:	0	
Film:	0	
Adventure:	1	Airwolf
Miscellaneous:	2	Beat The Teacher
	3	John Craven's Newsround
	1	Blockbusters

Cartoons (fig.9)

Fantasy:	4	She-Ra
	2	Spiderman
	1	He-Man
Humour:	1	The Giddy Game Show
	2	Superted

Adult and family shows (fig.10)

Situation comedy:	1	Supergirl
	1	Operation Julie
	2	'Allo, 'Allo
Soap Opera:	8	Dallas
	7	EastEnders
	8	Coronation Street
	6	Dynasty
	2	Crossroads
	2	Sons And Daughters
	1	Emmerdale Farm
Variety:	0	
Comedy:	0	
Quiz:	2	Bullseye!
	1	Bob's Full House
Documentary:	6	News
	1	Weather Forecast
	1	Flick Through The Pages
	2	Farming Outlook
	1	Panorama
Film:	5	Superman
	2	E. T.
	1	Superman 3
	1	Tarzan
Sport:	2	Darts
Miscellaneous:	1	Sheila
	1	Spytrap
	1	Songs Of Praise
	1	TV-am
	1	Stooky
	1	Top Of The Pops

Violent etc.

There were no programmes mentioned in this category.

CLASS B (PHASE TWO)

Favourite programmes from diary (31/10/86-6/11/86)

Children's programmes (fig.15)

Variety:	1	Cheggers Plays Pop
	2	The Muppet Babies
	2	Wide Awake Club
	5	Playschool
	1	Crackerjack
	1	WAC Extra
	3	Blue Peter
	2	Pie In The Sky
	1	Record Breakers
	1	The Giddy Game Show
	1	Beat The Teacher
	1	Tickle On The Tum
	2	Scragtag And Teatime Telly
Serial:	4	Grange Hill
	1	Falcon Island
	2	Cuckoo Sister
	2	Worzel Gummidge
	1	Return Of The Antelope
	1	Henry's Leg
	1	Flicks
Play:	7	The Worst Witch
Film:	1	Lassie The Voyager
	2	'Laurel And Hardy'
Adventure:	2	Airwolf
Miscellaneous:	1	Splash
	2	John Craven's Newsround
	4	Hart Beat
	1	Animals In Action

Cartoons (fig.16)

Fantasy:	3	Spiderwoman
	5	He-Man
Adventure:	1	Mysterious Cities Of Gold
	4	Trapdoor
	10	Dungeons And Dragons
Humour:	4	Thomas The Tank Engine
	5	Superted
	2	Alias The Jester
	1	Garfield In Paradise
	2	Heathcliffe & Co
	3	Jimbo And The Jetset
	4	Captain Caveman
	1	Chucklehounds
Miscellaneous:	1	Rolf Harris Cartoons
	2	Rainbow

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Adult and family shows (fig.17)

Situation Comedy:	1	The Two Of Us
	1	Golden Girls
	7	Fawlty Towers
	2	George And Mildred
	3	Full House
	2	Girls On Top
Soap Opera:	1	Dynasty
	2	Brookside
	5	EastEnders
	1	Coronation Street
	3	Emmerdale Farm
	3	Dallas
Variety:	2	New Faces
	1	3-2-1
	1	Blind Date
	1	Child's Play
	1	Mona Lisa Is Sad
	2	Wogan
	2	The Muppet Show
	1	What's My Line?
Comedy:	1	The Two Ronnies
	1	Spitting Image
	2	The Goodies
	1	Kenny Everett
	1	The Best Of Dave Allen
Quiz:	2	Play Your Cards Right
	1	Bullseye
	1	The Krypton Factor
	1	Strike It Lucky
Documentary:	2	Life On Earth
	1	Save A Life
	1	The Secret Life Of Paintings
Film:	1	Silk Stockings
	2	Island Of The Lost
	1	The Incredible Shrinking Woman
Sport:	1	News and Sport
	1	Bowls
Miscellaneous:	1	Micro Live
	1	Fay Weldon
	2	Wheldon Talking
	1	Farming Outlook
	1	Worlds Beyond

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Violent programmes etc. (fig.18)

Film:	4	Halloween
	2	Halloween 3
	1	Amarcord
	1	Abbott And Costello Meet Mr Jekyll And Mr Hyde
Crime:	2	Dempsey And Makepeace

CLASS B (PHASE TWO): Favourite programmes from memory

Children's programmes (fig.15)

Variety:	1	Let's Pretend
	3	WACaday
	3	Wizbit
	3	Why Do You Pick On Me?
	1	No.73
Serial:	8	Grange Hill
	1	Bewitched
	2	Henry's Leg
Play:	0	
Film:	5	The Sheriff & The Satellite Kid
	3	Superman
	1	The Karate Kid
	1	The Return Of The Jedi
	2	Star Wars
	1	The Spaceman And King Arthur
	1	Cinderella
Adventure:	6	Airwolf
	5	The A-Team
	1	Airfox
	3	Knight Rider
	1	Street Hawk
	4	T-Bag Strikes Again
Miscellaneous:	1	Zig Zag

Cartoons (fig.16)

Fantasy:	14	He-Man
	1	Batman
	1	Turtle
	1	Gobots
	1	Transformers
	1	My Little Pony
	2	Rainbow Brite
	3	She-Ra
Adventure:	6	MASK
	6	Trapdoor
	1	Dungeons And Dragons

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	1	CAB
Humour:	1	Popeye
	2	Tom And Jerry
	1	Gummy Bears
	2	Bugs Bunny
	2	Tweety Pie
	1	Voltron
	3	Top Cat
	2	Alias The Jester
	2	Pie In The Sky
	1	Inspector Gadget
Miscellaneous:	2	Rainbow

Adult and family shows (fig.17)

Situation Comedy:	6	Fawlty Towers
	1	To Have And To Hold
Soap Opera:	1	Dallas
	1	The Colbys
	2	Emmerdale Farm
	3	Crossroads
	7	EastEnders
	1	Coronation Street
	1	Brookside
Variety:	2	New Faces '86
	1	Body Matters
Comedy:	1	The Paul Hogan Show
	1	The Benny Hill Show
	2	Two Ronnies
Quiz:	0	
Documentary:	2	Life On Earth
Film:	0	
Sport:	0	
Miscellaneous:	1	Morning Glory

Violent etc. (fig.18)

Horror:	2	Halloween 2
	2	The Birds
	1	Return Of The Living Dead
	1	An American Werewolf In London
Film:	3	Rocky
	1	Gremlins
	3	Ghostbusters
	1	Twilight Trap
	1	'Rambo'
Crime:	0	
Adventure:	1	The Dukes Of Hazzard

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CLASS B (PHASE TWO)

Disliked programmes

Children's programmes (fig.21)

Variety:	5	Playschool
	1	Wide Awake Club
	3	Splash
	3	Wizbit
	2	Cheggers Plays Pop
	1	3-2-1
	1	Blue Peter
Serial:	2	Grange Hill
	1	Batman
	1	Dr. Who
	2	Henry's Leg
	1	Heidi
Play:	0	
Film:	0	
Adventure:	2	Airwolf
	4	The A-Team
Miscellaneous:	5	Beat The Teacher
	4	John Craven's Newsround
	7	Blockbusters

Cartoons (fig.22)

Fantasy:	1	Rainbow Brite
	1	My Little Pony
	6	He-Man
	1	Gobots
	3	She-Ra
Adventure:	1	Dungeons And Dragons
	5	Trapdoor
Humour:	1	Popeye
	2	Superted
Miscellaneous:	4	Rainbow
	5	Moomins

Adult and family shows (fig.23)

Situation Comedy:	0	
Soap Opera:	1	Brookside
	3	EastEnders
	2	Sons And Daughters
	2	Dynasty
	1	Dallas
	1	The Colbys
Variety:	1	New Faces '86
Comedy:	5	The Benny Hill Show
Quiz:	1	Bullseye
	1	World Wise
	1	Count Down
	1	Passing The Buck
	2	Master Team
	1	Telly Addicts
Documentary:	11	News
	1	Weather
	1	Straight Talk
	1	Let's Play Chess
	1	Let's Go Maths
	1	Wildlife
Film:	1	The Queen
	1	Lassie
Sport:	6	Football
	1	Bowls
	4	Sports 4
Miscellaneous:	1	This Week Next Week
	10	TV-am
	1	Morning Glory
	1	Northern Life
	1	Wogan
	2	Highway
	1	Day Time On Two

Violent programmes etc.

Film:	3	The Birds
	2	Gremlins
	3	Halloween
	2	Halloween 3
	1	'Horror Films'

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APPENDIX II

A. EXAMPLES OF INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

1. Class A: Paul and Lee
(Interviewed during lunchtime, 29/1/86, in the quiet area.The author first
established whether either had spoken on a tape recorder before. Each owned
one and were familiar with tape recorders and microphones).

Author:	What else have you got in your bedroom?
Lee:	Tape recorder.... and my telly.
Author:	Is it the same telly you use for the computer?
Lee:	Yes. I've got a radio.
Author:	Is your TV colour or black and white?
Lee:	Black and white.
Author:	Have you got a radio in your room?
Paul:	Yes.
Author:	And a television?
Paul:	No.
Author:	So you have to go downstairs to watch?
Lee:	Haven't you got a television?
Paul:	My brother's got one, and sometimes he lets me go in. Sometimes I pinch it.
Author:	John's 14 now? (nods) Does he want to watch the same *kind of* things as you watch?
Paul:	Yes. **Spitting Image!**
Author:	I know you like **Spitting Image**. Do you watch it every week? Why do you like it?
Lee:	'Cos they take the mick out of Prince Charles and put massive lugs on. It's brilliant!
Paul:	Yeah, I know. In this week's, right, he goes like this (mimes gun) and the little baby shoots Prince Charles.
Lee:	They put Madonna on with big lips going like this (mimes).
Paul:	And do you know Madonna, right, there was a finger in her belly button, right! They made it into a mouth.
Author:	Who else do they take the mickey out of?
Lee:	President Reagan.
Paul:	Oh, it was beaut that one!
Lee:	Maggie Thatcher. They hate her, they always put a massive carrot nose on her, don't they?
Paul:	Yeah, I know, they put a bald head on her, don't they?
Lee:	They'd taken her wig off.
Author:	Do you understand the jokes they say, or is it just the funny faces?
Paul:	No.... it's like, they swears and all that.
Lee:	They said **Live Aid**.
Paul:	They say they're all scared of Geldorf.
Author:	What do they use for it ?
Paul:	Puppets.
Author:	Puppets made from rubber rather than hard faced puppets, so they can bend it.
Paul:	I've got it on videotape. I've taped them all.
Author:	Have you? I didn't realise you'd got a video as well.

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Lee:	The best films I like is comedies.
Author:	What sort?
Lee:	I like **The Two Ronnies**.... what else is there?.... All them old films, the ones with the car race.
Paul:	**Carry On Laughing.**
Lee:	Yes, **Carry On Laughing**, there's **Carry On Camping.**
Author:	So you like films, rather than shorter programmes, do you? You like comedy more than exciting ones, do you?
Lee:	Yeah.
Author:	What about you?
Paul:	Comedy ones.
Author:	Which ones are your favourite?
Paul:	**Spitting Image!**
Author:	Yes! Apart from **Spitting Image?**
Paul:	I dunno.... **Carry On Laughing**, that's all.
Lee:	Yeah, **Carry On Camping**, they put them on again. There's Carry On **Boating** and ....
Paul:	.... and **Carry On Camping**.... it's a beauty that one.
Lee:	See where they make their own water, and he dresses up....
Paul:	No, but, what about the part where they go in the field and say oh there's a cow, and say who's got red on? And put some down his jumper.
Author:	Is it true that cows go for something red?
Paul:	Dunno.
Lee:	It is, yeah. 'Cos when they.... on **Bugs Bunny** when they, they always have red things and they go after it then.
Author:	But what's **Bugs Bunny?**
Lee:	It's a rabbit.
Author:	A real rabbit?
Paul:	(laughs) Just a cartoon!
Author:	So can you say it's true just because it's on a cartoon?
Lee:	I like American football.
Paul:	Oh, it's beauty that, yeah, but I switch over 'cos it's Spitting Image isn't it?
Lee:	Did you watch it last night?
Paul:	No....
Author:	Do you watch anything like **Coronation Street?**
Paul:	Yes.... I watch **Coronation Street, Dynasty, Dallas**, and The Colbys. It's beauty that.
Lee:	I watch **The Colbys, Albion Market**....
Paul:	.... It's daft that....
Lee:	.... **Coronation Street**.... and ....
Paul:	.... **Brookside** and **EastEnders**.
Lee:	Oh yes, **Brookside** and **EastEnders**, they're the good ones.
Author:	Are they funny?
Paul:	Yeah.
Lee:	No.... but they're still good.
Paul:	Do you know Damion, right, he said all the rats in the rubbish, so he got his friend, got a rat, a big one like that. And his friend he got a gun and shot the rat right in the face.
Author:	What about some of the other things the other boys mentioned.... **Street Hawk, Airwolf**....?

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Paul:	Oh yeah.... **Airwolf**.... beauty. Street Hawk's a bit daft.
Lee:	Yeah, I know, it's just made up things like that.
Paul:	I like **Airwolf**.
Lee:	**Airwolf**'s my best. I like that. **Knight Rider**'s allright.
Paul:	Oh, it's beauty that.
Lee:	The only trouble is **Airwolf** and **Knight Rider** are real.... they're the only things that are real so, **Street Hawk**'s made up but **Knight Rider**'s real. It's in America, right.
Author:	So it's real things that have happened?
Lee:	Yeah.
Author:	Real things put on film for you to watch?
Lee:	Yeah.
Paul:	You know in Stockton, right, in Leslie Brown's, they have a big massive car outside, right, a real one, and it's exactly the same as **Knight Rider**, only say, it's a Porsche....
Lee:	It had buttons in it, didn't it?
Paul:	Yeah, buttons.
Lee:	There was a raffle on, and anyone who won the raffle was going to ride to school in it.
Author:	Did you buy a ticket?
Lee:	No.
Paul:	I've got a **Knight Rider** car, it's that big.It cost fourteen quid. I'm going to get Airwolf.... it's the same one only different, it's a helicopter.
Author:	Can you shoot missiles?
Paul:	No.
Lee:	I like putting posters up on my walls. I've got Santa Claus, Back To **The Future**.... I've seen those two.. Airwolf, Street Hawk....
Paul:	'Rambo'.
Lee:	I've seen 'Rambo', on the video.
Paul:	Part Two's on now.
Author:	What else have you got on video?
Paul:	**Spitting Image! Clash Of The Titans.**
Author:	Who chooses them?
Paul:	Our brother.
Lee:	I chooses ours. On Friday, when I was off, I got Exterminator about a robot. All his skin comes off and the metal moves inside.
Author:	Have you got a video, then?
Lee:	Yeah.
Paul:	At his party we watched **Gremlins**. Beauty **Gremlins**.
Lee:	We got **Beverley Hills Cop** when I was off, 'cos there's never nowt on television when you're off, it's boring because there's nothing to do nor nothing, so I watched the video.
Paul:	It's beauty **Gremlins**. You know what they do? Right, Spike, he's the leader, right....
Lee:	.... he tries to kill his old mam.
Paul:	Yeah, he gets his mam, and puts a dartboard and four darts on her. And Spike starts carol singing,and this old lady in a chair with a cable thing that goes dead fast, and she says go away, and they open the door and she jumps off her chair....
Lee:	.... and goes flying out of the window.
Author:	Do you watch any scary ones?

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Paul: Oh yeah.

Lee: Dracula.... it's good that one.

Author: Does Dracula scare you?

Paul: Yeah.

Lee: No, it's just a bit of fun really.

Paul: I don't watch horror movies now, because every time I go to bed I keep thinking Dracula's here, right. There was this comedy one, right. I went to bed about one o'clock, because there's these horror movies on, there's this comedy one, they had no writing it just went on the screen, and this man opened the door and Dracula's there.... and he took a fit!

Author: Then when you went to bed you had another fit? (nods) Who said you shouldn't have any more horror films, you or your mum?

Paul: Me.

Author: Does your brother want horror films?

Paul: No.

Author: Doesn't he like them either?

Paul: No.

Lee: There was one on at half past twelve the other night and he had, this woman, he was always getting in there and she was gabbing away and he always goes in this way and so he got his pellet gun and aimed right up her bum and it hit her and she went "Arghh!"

Paul: There was this beauty one, right, and I can't forget his one, right, on about last year, and this man put a big screw in his head and went (mimes with sound pushing it in), and he died, right, and they buried him, the police came and put a hosepipe on the soil and this hand stuck up.

Author: Wasn't he really dead?

Paul: No.... it was just like, you know, when you dig it up right, don't you, well you put like water on and it sunk down and his hand came up....

Author: And you were lying in bed and thought "Ohhh!"

(Interview curtailed because of afternoon school).

2. Class A: Richard and Michael
(Interviewed during lunchtime, 28/1/86, in the quiet area. Both shared tape recorders at home with other siblings).

Richard: I've got a record player. It's mine. I'll kick her face in if she touches it.

Michael: We've got a radio.

Author: Have you got a television in your room as well?

Richard: I have.

Michael: One upstairs and one downstairs as well.

Richard: So have we. One downstairs in the sitting room and one in my room. I have it up on the roof.

Author: Do you let Sal come in and watch television?

Richard: No. She can take it out. But sometimes I don't let her have it.

Author: Is it a colour portable or black and white?

Richard: Colour. Sometimes I lock the door.

Michael: Mine's black and white.

Author: Is it colour downstairs?

Michael: Black and white.

Author: Who chooses what you're going to watch in your family Michael, 'cos there's a lot of you?

Michael: Our Andrew, then me, then Paul, then our Carol.

Author: Because she's the youngest, she watches what you boys want? (nods) So does she get the programmes she wants, or does she have things you boys want, like **Street Hawk**?

Michael: She likes it!

Richard: I like wrestling. It's on every Saturday. I always watch it and say go on, kick his face in!

Michael: I watch Airwolf and all.

Richard: I do.

Author: What's **Airwolf** about?

Michael: It's about a helicopter.

Richard: Yeah.... a fast helicopter that goes about.

Author: With somebody driving it?

Richard: Yeah.... two people drive it.

Michael: Hawk and....

Richard: .... Yeah, Hawk and.... Centeeny or something.

Author: You said Hawk drives it. Is that anything to do with **Street Hawk**?

Richard: No it's something completely different. They're all black like **Knight Rider, The A-Team**, they're all black or white or summat.

Author: What are black or white?

Richard: The vans, or what they drive on are all black.

Author: They were driving in a white car in **The A-Team** on Saturday.

Richard: Oh yeah, but the main things they always drives in are always white.

Michael: Black.

Richard: I mean black.

Author: So **Airwolf** is a helicopter driven by Hawk and....

Richard: Yes Hawk and oh....

Michael: Centeeny.

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Richard:	Yeah, that's right.
Author:	So what kinds of things do they do, then?
Richard:	Well they help people, getting away things, and they've got missiles on it.
Michael:	Guns.
Author:	Are they good or bad?
Michael:	Good. Goodies or baddies.... I don't know.
Richard:	Goodies. They fight the bad people and.... um.... Airwolf's top secret, see.
Author:	What, the actual machine?
Richard:	That's the helicopter. It's American.
Michael:	It's not in real life.
Author:	But it's made in America and pretending to be American? So they help the goodies....?
Richard:	It was like in German hands until Stringfellow Hawk and Centeeny pinched it, 'cos the man in America built it....
Michael:	.... created it.
Richard:	.... and they pinched it, so he had to pinch it back because they were going to do bad things with it.
Author:	So he's got it back and is using it for good things?
Both:	Yeah!
Author:	So that's **Street Hawk**. **Knight Rider** is a motor bike is it?
Richard:	No **Knight Rider**'s the car....
Michael:	.... **Street Hawk**'s the motorbike.
Richard:	**Knight Rider**, right, he's with the law, like **Airwolf**. He just fights bad. But **The A-Team**, that's different, they want to be caught by the Government.... by soldiers.
Author:	They want to be caught by the soldiers?
Michael:	No.... 'cos they escaped from a military base.
Richard:	They're always escaping from it see. And they survive as underground soldiers, they're properly escaped see.
Author:	But they still help other people don't they?
Michael:	Colonel.... catches them, but they get away still don't they?
Author:	Who do you think is the best person in those stories you've just told me?
Both:	**Airwolf.**
Author:	Which of the people?
Richard:	I think Stringfellow Hawk is the best person. He does the best things.
Author:	Which night is that on?
Both:	Saturday.
Richard:	After the wrestling. **Knight Rider** isn't on now, it's a new series, to be on. **Fall Guy**'s on, on Fridays.
Author:	That's just started again, hasn't it?
Richard:	Yeah.
Michael:	It's on instead of Tarzan.
Richard:	It's on instead of **Knight Rider**. Then when that's finished, new programme of **Knight Rider**'s on.
Author:	How do you find out what's coming on?
Richard:	On the books, and it told you about **Knight Rider** and showed you, about the new one....
Michael:	It showed you on telly what's coming on.

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Author: So you remember what's coming on?

Richard: And it showed you the picture and it was on Friday night and they said this is going to be on after **The Fall Guy**. That's what we think anyway.

Author: You mean after **The Fall Guy** series finishes?

Richard: Yeah.

Michael: After **Fall Guy** sometimes its....

Richard: **Constant Hot Water.**

Michael: Yeah. *Constant Hot Water....* its excellent.

Richard: It's a comedy.

Author: That's not as exciting as the others, is it ?

Michael: 'Tis.

Richard: It's a comedy. Yeah, the van like, they go down, there's this man who likes this lady, like, and they live....

Michael: .... next door....

Richard: .... and he lives down Billingham and this lady lives at Scarborough and they go off in the van, and things fall off it.

Author: What other funny ones do you like?

Richard: Not much comedies on now. It's usually in the summer. Rambo's good.

Author: You can't call that a comedy!

Michael: It's a film.

Author: You've not got a video?

Richard: No, me friend has. We haven't watched it right through, but we've watched a bit of it. And **Baby**, about a baby dinosaur, and his parents get killed. Just little arrows with tranquillisers.

Author: What have you seen on video?

Michael: I watch my friend's, Stephen's.

Richard: But what did you watch?

Michael: I used to watch **Superman**.

Richard;   I watched **Rocky 2**, a few days ago at my friends. It's dead good, **Rocky 2**. And Rocky wins....

Michael: .... no, no, this other man wins and they have another fight....

Richard: That's just a little boxing fight, and the big fight comes at the end, he fast forwarded it too much to the fight at the end.

Michael: Rocky, Rocky punches the blackie, and the blackie punches Rocky, and they both fall down, and both get up, and fall down again but Rocky gets up in time and he wins.

(The interview was curtailed because of afternoon school).

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3. Class A: Lisa and Sarah

(Interviewed during lunchtime, 6/2/86, sitting in the quiet area. Sarah used to have a tape recorder and is used to hearing her voice, but Lisa had only heard herself when recording at another school).

Author: Did you watch 'Rambo' the other night like you said you were going to?

Lisa: 'V'.

Author: No, you said you were going to watch 'Rambo' last week.

Lisa: I watched 'Rambo' and I watched 'V'.

Author: You told me about 'V'. Do you still think about it?

Lisa: Ummmm.

Author: Did it frighten you?

Lisa: No.... like.... 'V' never and 'Rambo' never.

Author: Did Craig watch as well? (nods) And Mum and Billy, everybody together?

Lisa: Yeah. And we watched another film what I might have told you about where this man was crawling on some sand and this man, this monster under the sand got his guts out under his belly.

Author: While he was crawling on the sand?

Lisa: Yeah.

Author: While he was still alive?

Lisa: No. And this little girl and this policeman was.... There was a little girl and a little boy when they were younger and they went to this hiding place, and when the woman went there all the bodies come down from the ceiling.

Author: Ummm. Have you seen that one Sarah?

Sarah: No.

Author: Was that one **Blood Beach** where he was crawling along the sand?

Lisa: I think so.

Author: Did you watch that?

Sarah: No.

Author: Didn't you watch something like that the other day?

Sarah: **Film '86.**

Author: Didn't you watch one on Saturday or Friday.... **Fear On Friday?**

Sarah: Yeah.

Author: Do you always watch those?

Sarah: Yes.... it's really frightening, it's excellent.

Author: Doesn't it make you think about it?

Sarah: No. One night there was this, like this, monster came out this camera and it went "Arghhh" and it was really fun, excellent.

Author: Is your Mum watching with you?

Sarah: Yes.

Author: You don't mind if your Mum's there?

Sarah: No.

Author: Would you watch it by yourself?

Sarah: (nods)

Author: You would!

Lisa: I would. I watched where they pulled the skin off by myself.

Author: What about when you go to bed afterwards? 'Cos you must go to bed more or less straight after because it's late.

Sarah: No. Usually I go with my Mum.... That's 9 o'clock or 12.

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Author:	**Fear On Friday** is later than 9 o'clock isn't it?
Lisa:	My Mum doesn't like me going late because if it's school time we might not wake up.
Author:	What about Friday night and Saturday night.... does she let you stay up later then?
Lisa:	Yes she might. But on Sunday night she won't let me stay up because it's Monday next day, for school. Only about 9 o'clock or 8 o'clock on Sunday, except.... Billy [stepfather] got loads of films the other day, all horror. Some were horror, one was just a film.
Author:	Just a film. Aren't they as interesting?
Lisa:	The horror ones are better. I only watched about four of them, or two.
Author:	Why was that....?
Lisa:	'Cos.... 'cos last night I was playing with my sewing machine.
Author:	Do your Mum and Billy let you watch any of the films you want to?
Lisa:	Sometimes, yeah.
Author:	Do they ever say you can't watch this because you're too little?
Lisa:	It doesn't matter, 'cos I play with my sewing machine instead.
Author:	You don't mind?
Lisa:	No.
Author:	So sometimes you can't watch them?
Lisa:	Sometimes, if they're rude!
Author:	I see. Do they let Craig watch those?
Lisa:	No.
Sarah:	If my Mum says that, I go upstairs and watch my own television.
Author:	Do you? If your Mum said you can't watch?
Sarah:	Yes.
Author:	Does she know you're watching upstairs?
Sarah:	No, but when she comes up to give me a kiss and she says "You turn that telly off now".
Lisa:	My Mum sometimes gives me a kiss when I go to bed.
Sarah:	My Mum gives me one every night.
Author:	So your telly wasn't stolen in the robbery Sarah?
Sarah:	No.
Author:	Do you have a telly Lisa, or Craig?
Lisa:	No. My Mum might get us one.
Author:	But you've got the downstairs one that you can use?
Lisa:	A big one, and a video.
Author:	Do you have a video?
Sarah:	No, not now, it got stolen.
Author:	Does your Mum make you go to bed at a certain time?
Sarah:	Sometimes, if it's like school times I usually go to bed early, but like I have to go to dancing late now so I don't get much of a chance to watch television now. Before, I watch television, after I come home from dancing I go straight upstairs, get washed, get my nightie on and go into bed and watch television for 5 minutes.
Lisa:	When I go home from school I watch ITV, then I watch.... then I have my tea.... then I watch the telly.
Author:	How do you know what to watch on telly? You said you always watch ITV....?
Lisa:	Yeah.
Author:	Do you just watch ITV or do you watch certain programmes?

Sarah: I don't look at the ITV, I just switch on what I like.

Author: How do you know its on?

Sarah: I don't, I just switch it on and think that looks nice so I sit and watch it.

Author: So you don't choose a programme to watch, you just press the knobs until you find something suitable?

Sarah: Yes. If we.... if we know that, if we look in the paper in the night and we think we might watch that, and we wait and we wait and switch it over and have a go and there might be anything on.

Author: You said you liked watching ballet.... that's not on very often is it?

Sarah: No.

Author: So you've got to look for it.

Lisa: The other day, when the ice skating was on, I watch it sometimes, but not often.

Author: Do you watch skating?

Sarah: No because I'm dancing then. We take our little next door neighbour so I don't get much television watched.

Author: No.... you do so many other things.

Lisa: Miss.... you know **Coronation Street**? You know them sewing machines, I've got one like that only its littler.

Sarah: There's one programme I watch, **Bluebell**. First it was Kelly or something, then she went to this office and asked if she could have her name changed to Bluebell and so yes, she did, and they thought she was a good dancer and she's going to teach the other girls. And at the end, what I've seen, there's going to be a war and she's had a baby.

Author: That series goes on for a few weeks doesn't it? (nods) Would you like to listen to what you've said now?

The tape recorder was rewound and they listened to themselves talking before afternoon school.

B. TAPED DISCUSSIONS USING CARDS : CLASS A ONLY

The author had made 16 cards labelled with different topics that the children may have known from their environment or from watching television. For each group of children 8 cards were placed face down on the table, each child turned one over and then they discussed whatever they knew about the topic shown. The topics were:- muggings, attack and safety; Africa; women; comprehensive schools; burglary; engineers; detectives; journalists, editors, newspaper writers and printers; America; police; postmen; rich people; judges, lawyers, solicitors; politicians, Members of Parliament; teachers; living in London.

1. Lee,Paul and Richard (discussion recorded at lunchtime 27/2/86, in the quiet area).

Author:	Judges, lawyers and solicitors. What do any of you know about them?
Lee:	A judge is what sentences people to one year, or two years, or three years, or life for murder.
Richard:	Someone who's done bad things.
Paul:	A solicitor means, its like for divorce or something.
Author:	What about the other two?
Paul:	Oh is it like the pigs, I mean the police?
Richard:	Lawyers is people like who get hired to do things. Like people all get dressed up in posh suits and posh things with their nose sticking up.
Lee:	Do they write your death bed down? What you're going to leave behind.
Author:	You mean the will? (nods) If people are arguing about it they can go to a judge.... anything else?

Author:	Next one.... what do you know about living in London?
Lee:	I've never been to London.
Author:	What, is there anything.... do you know?
Richard:	Half the people there are pop stars and things like that, posh people.
Paul:	Oh yeah, the Queen lives there right....
Richard:	In the White House.
Paul:	.... and Maggie Thatcher lives there, Number 10.
Lee:	All the television programmes get made in London.
Author:	Yes, a lot do....
Paul:	There's a big stream with like four lions on, all around, like lions.
Author:	Yes. Trafalgar Square.
Paul:	That's right.
Lee:	Does a lot of the News come from there?
Author:	Yes, both the main news programmes come from there. Is it only posh people who live there?
Paul:	Yeah, like the Queen and Maggie Thatcher.
Author:	There's more than those two....
Richard:	Oh some sort of other people, what do you call them, them people

	what go round in the streets just lying around on benches?
Lee:	Homeless.
Author:	Oh yes, tramps.... is that London?.... (nods) You take a card Richard.

Richard:	Teachers.
Author:	Ah! You should know plenty about that!
Lee:	If you do anything bad you get shouted at.
Richard:	Yeah, you get shouted at a lot.
Author:	Only if you do something bad?
Richard:	Can't really say much!
Author:	Go on, I won't beat you over the head!
Lee:	You have to do work a lot.
Richard:	And they get bossy some of them.
Paul:	On the **News** they said teachers still cane you.
Author:	In some places they do.
Paul:	Our Dad said he got caned.
Lee:	Five lashes.
Paul:	Mr. Smith's still got a cane.
Richard:	I know, they don't use it any more now.
Lee:	They shouldn't give us lines.
Richard:	Sometimes they use wooden slippers, or wire if you do something bad, or a belt, a leather belt.
Lee:	Mr. Smith's got a cane ain't he? You can see it, it's half wore out. I bet he's hit a few people with it.
Author:	It's been in school a long time.
Lee:	It's weared out, it's got chips off.
Author:	Is that all you know?
Richard:	No. .
Lee:	We know a bit more....
Richard:	.... but we're not talking about it!
Paul:	They shouldn't give you lines, or go on detention.
Richard:	Yeah.
Paul:	You shouldn't work too much.
Richard:	There's only a few teachers who's nice. Mrs. Brown wasn't.
Paul:	Mrs. Jones was. Every time Mrs. Brown shouts you can.... the whole school shakes.
Richard:	You're alright because you don't send anybody on detention a lot.
Paul:	No.
Richard:	Mr. Smith I don't like. He says the amount of lines he'll give is 3, he goes and gives somebody 16.
Author:	Perhaps it depends what they've done.
Lee:	If Mr. Smith gives me a lot of lines me Dad says, right, we'll go down the Law Centre. Only he doesn't go down to the Law Centre. Only he doesn't do nowt, it's me Mum does all the work. He's soft me Dad.
Paul:	Ian said, right, his Dad did nearly all the lines.
Author:	Right, let's try another one. Who's turn is it?

| Lee: | Postmen. |
| Richard: | Ours just comes in and the dogs bark a bit, but I know one where he comes in, right, and posts the letters then has to run out, right, or the dog'll get him. |

Lee:	I don't like the postman because they bring all the bills.... I wouldn't like bills.
Paul:	The dog near us barks back.
Lee:	I like **Postman Pat**.
Richard:	**Postman Pat** and his silly white cat.
Paul:	Our postman posts letters through our door and every time letters come I pinch the stamps.
Richard:	The postmen aren't very good because some of them are a bit stupid with the dogs, if they're on a bike they put the bike in the way, or the bag, or a letter.
Lee:	Our postman's good.
Richard:	Ours is. He gives us laggy bands.
Lee:	He likes us because we haven't got a dog.
Richard:	We have, but he doesn't harm them.
Paul:	Our postman's daft. He's dead slow and ·gormless.
Richard:	The postman down our end goes (mimes a funny walk).
Author:	Next card.

Lee:	Rich people. I wouldn't call them so rich.
Paul:	Maggie Thatcher's rich.
Richard:	The Queen.
Lee:	I'm not rich.
Paul:	Maggie Thatcher's rich.
Lee:	Oh! Samantha Fox!
Richard:	The Queen.
Author:	How do you know people are rich?
Lee:	'Cos they go on the papers, they go on telly, they go on the News, things like that.
Paul:	Oh yeah. Like the way they eat and the clothes they wear and things like that, and they go like that (mimes eating).
Richard:	They don't Paul, they go like that.... take a little titchy bit on the end of their spoon, about a speck, and go (mimes to laughter). Or get their cups and go (mimes with pursed lips and finger out).
Lee:	Oh, Clint Eastwood.
Paul:	And they've got tissues and every time a bit goes in their mouth they go (dabs mouth).
Richard:	Yeah, every time they take a little bit they wipe their mouths on a hanky.
Author:	Next....?

Richard:	Police.
Lee:	I hate them! I hate them!
Author:	Why?
Paul:	Because....
Lee:	When you're doing something wrong they take you to the police station.
Author:	Have they taken you to the police station?
Lee:	No.
Paul:	Guess what I call them? Pigs. Because on this, The Young Ones right, there's these people with spiky hair, Vivian. He pinched loads of money and he banged his head on this lamppost and said "Oh blimey the pigs are coming."

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Author:	But you've never been taken to the police station?
Lee:	No, but me Dad, me Dad, every time a police car goes past, he hates them, he shouts at them and all that. He's been pulled up for going too fast ....Me and me Dad were driving along this highway and we were going across the River Tees and this man tried to commit suicide to himself. He tried to jump over the river. We called the police and they just about got him, the divers went in and he came up choking and that.
Author:	So your Dad called the police?
Lee:	Yeah.

Author:	Now.... politicians, Members of Parliament.
Richard:	Maggie Thatcher.
Lee:	David Hasseloff, or David Havelot, or David....
Richard:	Mr.Brittan.
Author:	Heseltine?
Lee:	That's it!
Author:	What do you know about him?
Lee:	He resigned. He didn't want to resign he said its just one of those things.
Richard:	Mr. Brittan, he's resigned.
Paul:	On **Spitting Image** it showed him, didn't it.
Lee:	Yes, he put a helicopter on his head.
Paul:	He said "Outrage, outrage."
Richard:	**Spitting Image** is about it.
Lee:	I wish Maggie Thatcher resigned.
Paul:	Arthur Scargill.
Richard:	Neil Kinnock! Neil Kinnock, the freckle face!
Lee:	Neil Kinnock, yeah.
Author:	What did they do?
Richard:	They put the miners on strike.
Paul:	You know Neil Kinnocks stopped **Spitting Image** and all, every time he says stop **Spitting Image** and they're loads of time....
Richard:	.... Hey its about time somebody stopped him.
Paul:	He's a bit in the head.
Richard:	A bit in the head! I don't think he's a bit in the head, I think he hasn't got a brain. He puts miners on strike and everything.
Author:	Who does?
Richard:	Neil Kinnock.
Lee:	Neil Kinnywig!
Richard:	Neil Wig!
Lee:	He's been burnt.
Author:	I'm afraid we must stop now. The others will be coming in any minute.

The interview was curtailed because of afternoon school.

2. Graham, Tracy and Carl
(Interviewed during lunchtime, 3/3/86, in the quiet area and using the cards).

Carl: Teachers.
Author: Well, that's something you know a lot about, so that's a good start.
Carl: Mrs Cattermole's our teacher. We've got eight teachers in our
            school. Most of the teachers are boring.
Author: Right Graham, you look as though you want to say something.
Tracy: They talk a lot.
Graham: They teach us.
Tracy: They help you.
Graham: Mr. Smith's our head teacher.
Tracy: Mr. Smith tells us Jesus stories, and gives certificates out.
Author: Do you like getting certificates and book tokens? Because lots of
            schools don't get them.
Tracy: Don't they?
Graham: I've had 2 book tokens and 3 certificates.
Tracy: I've had 3 certificates.
Carl: I haven't had one yet.
Author: You'll have to get busy, get reading....
Tracy: I can never read because my Mum's always busy.
Graham: I know. My Mum's always watching **Sons And Daughters**.
Tracy: My sister's always doing her bedroom.
Graham: Teachers are big. Our teachers are called Mrs Cattermole, Mrs
            Brown, Mrs Jones, (he lists the rest of them).

Graham: Judges, lawyers, solicitors. A judge has got a big hammer and he
            bangs it on the table.
Author: Yes. Why does he do that?
Graham: For quietness. Laws are things that you have to obey.
Author: But it doesn't say laws, it says lawyers.
Carl: They're people what get other people out of jail.
Tracy: I don't know what a lawyer is.
Graham: I haven't got a lawyer.
Tracy: I don't know anything about them.
Author: Do you know anything about judges?
Tracy: They wear a wig. They go in court.
Carl: The wigs don't fall off.
Graham: Glued on.
Tracy: They only sit like that....
Graham: .... and send people to jail....
Tracy: .... and see if you're guilty or not guilty. What else is on the card?
Carl: Solicitors.
Tracy: My Mum goes to the solicitors. She goes there about the gas. The
            gas! I mean the hot water.
Author: Because something has gone wrong?
Tracy: No, before we had about three weeks with no hot water.
Author: What did she ask the solicitor to do?
Tracy: I dunno, she just went to the solicitor. They help you about the gas
            and hot water and things like that and tell you what to do.
Graham: Things about the house.

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Tracy:	Rich people.
Graham:	They have lots and lots of money.
Tracy:	Of course they have lots of money. They have big houses.
Graham:	They keep a treasure chest under the floor.
Carl:	They have big houses with swimming pools in.
Author:	How would you know a rich person if you saw one?
Carl & Tracy:	They'd have posh clothes.
Tracy:	They'd have a posh dog.
Carl:	A poodle.
Graham:	A big one, as big as me.
Author:	So they'd have posh clothes....
Tracy:	A big massive house.
Author:	.... where might you see them?
Tracy:	They might live in the village, near the hills....
Carl:	Live in Dallas.
Tracy:	Dallas, yes.
Author:	Why are those rich people in Dallas?
Graham:	They have big hats.
Carl:	They all have oil rigs.
Graham:	They have big hats that come out here.
Author:	Do all rich people have big hats?
Carl:	No, just people on **Dallas** have big hats.
Author:	Do we have rich people in England?
Tracy:	No.
Graham:	No.
Carl:	Yes.
Tracy:	Yes.
Graham:	In Scotland, Ireland....
Tracy:	Ireland! Well you can have them in Ireland, can't you?

Carl:	Police.
Graham:	Beebarp, beebarp, beeebarp....
Carl:	People call them the boys in red, I mean the boys in blue.
Tracy:	They catch people.
Graham:	They have hard hats so no-one knocks their heads off. You hit them over the head and boingggg....
Tracy:	They have truncheons don't they?
Graham:	Yeah. To bang you on the head....
Tracy:	.... to knock you out, in case they're going to get away.
Author:	Which people would they do it to?
Carl & Tracy:	Robbers!
Graham:	I know, they sometimes put out their legs and trip them up.... on films they have guns.
Tracy:	I know they do, the film people always have guns.
Graham:	Bang, bang, bang (mimes shooting with hands held straight out).
Author:	Our own police or foreign?
Carl:	Foreign.
Tracy:	Foreign, I think.
Author:	They have guns for real?
Carl & Graham:	No.
Author:	Do all policemen have guns for real?

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Graham:	No.
Carl:	Yeah, most of them.
Author:	All the time?
Carl:	Not all the time.... they don't take them all the time.
Tracy:	They have police dogs.
Graham:	**T.J.Hooker** has guns.
Author:	What do they have to do to have guns?
Graham:	**T.J.Hooker.**
Carl:	They have to know how to handle them.
Tracy:	Sometimes they go "Freeze!" like on **Dempsey And Makepeace** they go freeze but don't really shoot.
Author:	But people stop?
Tracy:	Yeah. The people stop and if they don't stop they'll fire, but if they do stop they'll just walk to them and when they get to them they'll put their guns away.
Author:	Is **Dempsey And Makepeace** in England?
Carl and Tracy:	No.
Graham:	In Ireland, I think.
Author:	You said police dogs?
Tracy:	Yeah. On telly there was this dog and they look for things....
Carl:	People with guns.
Tracy:	.... things like.... guns....
Graham:	In forests.
Tracy:	On **Blue Peter**, no **The Really Wild Show**, it said that in the police court, you know when people come to visit the others, like in jail, well they have seats there, a table and two seats don't they, in **The Really Wild Show** there was a table with a hamster, and it sniffs out this certain, like gunpowder or something, and when they smell it....
Graham:	.... it goes to this button and switches the alarm on....
Tracy:	.... it presses this sort of button in the cage and the alarm goes, so the police know.
Graham:	When robbers hide their guns in the forest, like under the leaves, the dogs sniff it out and find them.
Author:	So the dogs are useful?
Tracy:	And hamsters.
Graham:	They have police cars, with a sign on top and go "Beebarp".
Tracy:	We've seen a policeman on Portrack with his horse, this morning.

Graham:	Politicians, Members of Parliament.
Author:	What do you know about those?
Carl:	Maggie Thatcher's the....
Tracy:	Prime Minister.
Carl:	She's the Prime Minister.
Graham:	Houses of Parliament.
Carl:	She's the ruler of the people of Parliament.
Graham:	Houses of Parliament.
Author:	What did you say she was Tracy?
Tracy:	I dunno.
Graham:	She rules England.
Tracy:	She rules Parliament.
Graham:	London.
Tracy:	She's Prime Minister.

Author:	Does she just rule London?
Tracy:	No, she rules quite a lot of places.
Graham:	England.
Tracy:	Scotland.
Carl:	The Queen rules.
Tracy:	If the Queen marries a man, does that make it king?
Author:	The Queen is married isn't she?
Tracy:	Is she?
Author:	But not to a king, to the Duke of Edinburgh.
Carl:	What's M.P.'s?
Author:	It's short for Members of Parliament.
Graham:	Members of Parliament. Servants of the Queen.
Author:	Yes, that's one way of putting it. Where do they work?
Graham:	In the Houses of Parliament.
Tracy:	In London.
Graham:	Is that where Guy Fawkes tried to blow it up?
Author:	Yes, a long time ago.
Tracy:	Postmen.
Graham:	They collect letters from the postbox.
Carl:	**Postman Pat!**
Graham:	(sings) **Postman Pat** and his silly old cat!
Author:	You don't watch **Postman Pat** do you?
Carl:	I have to, 'cos my sister watches it. She'd boot, she'd try to boot me in if she can't watch it.
Tracy:	(singing) **Postman Pat** and his black and white cat!
Author:	But do you have to watch it?
Carl:	'Cos if she doesn't see it she gets mad.
Author:	But you don't have to watch it with her?
Carl:	I do. I like watching things on the big telly.
Graham:	We've got three tellys.
Author:	What else about postmen, apart from **Postman Pat** and collecting letters?
Tracy:	They sort them out like om this big machine. They have a box there, a box there, a box there.... Loads of boxes, and like put them all in this big box thing and it has a long pipe and when it comes down there's holes here and the letters just come out into the boxes, to sort them out quick.
Graham:	(sings) **Postman Pat**.... it's like **The Boys In Blue**.
Carl:	The boys in red.
Author:	Do the postmen wear red?
Tracy:	No.
Author:	Why do you call them that then?
Carl:	Because they use the letter box, and the letter boxes are red.
Author:	Oh, the pillar boxes.
Graham:	Pillow boxes - we've got loads of them in our airing cupboard!
Tracy:	Ohh!
Author:	Living in London.
Carl:	My cousin lives in London.
Tracy:	My sister's Dad lives in London.
Graham:	(sings) London Bridge is falling down!

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Author:	Is it really?
Graham:	No.
Tracy:	London Bridge comes up like that and the ships go through (mimes with hands lifting up).
Graham:	It's a cracker!
Author:	That's Tower Bridge, but it is in London. Who lives in London, what kind of people?
Tracy:	The Queen.
Carl:	Members of Parliament.
Tracy:	My sister's Nana lives in London. Her real Dad comes for her and takes her to London and she gets lots of presents.
Carl:	Maggie Thatcher. Prince Edward.
Tracy:	Oh what's it called? Princess?
Graham:	Diana.
Carl:	Princess Galatina.
Graham:	Princess Galatina!
Tracy:	Lot's of rich people do.
Graham:	People.
Author:	Are they all rich people?
Carl:	No. Some of them have to live on the streets.
Graham:	Tramps, like tramps. They walk around the town of London.
Author:	What else might it be like?
Carl:	I don't know I've never been.
Graham:	Really, really boring.
Author:	Why?
Graham:	I dunno. Nothing much to do.
Carl:	You could go sightseeing.
Graham:	You could get run over.
Tracy:	You can go to museums.
Graham:	I don't like museums.
Tracy:	Have you seen the London, the panda that died, it was sad that, I was nearly crying.
Carl and Graham:	Ahhh! Oh diddums!
Author:	Where did it live before it died?
Tracy:	I think it was in a zoo.
Carl:	London Zoo.
Tracy:	Do you watch One By One where there's a Zoo?
Author:	I'm sorry to stop you Tracy, but there's the bell, we must stop.

The interview finished abruptly and the children listened to the tape they had made.

3. Craig, Ray and Pat
(Interviewed during lunchtime, 12/3/86, in the quiet area and using the cards).

Author: What do you know about journalists, editors, and newspaper writers?

Craig: I don't know anything about them.

Pat: Neither do I. (This was just after the industrial dispute at Wapping when confrontations between the police and strikers had been featured at length on all news programmes).

Ray: Editors are when a show finishes, it says it on a film when it's finished.

Author: Yes, it can say edited, usually directed and produced.

Ray: Do they produce a show?

Pat: Are they in films?

Author: No, books and newspapers. What does a journalist do?.... No?.... A new series on television called **Hot Metal**....

Craig: I've not watched that.

Ray: No.

Craig: It's on at the same time as **Spitting Image**.

Ray: **Spitting Image** is not on now. That's all Paul talks about.

Author: O.K. Let's try the next one.

Craig: Africa.

Pat: It's hot. It's like a desert place.

Ray: There's a lot of violence there. It's on the News.

Author: Which part of Africa is that?

Ray: South Africa.

Author: What else....? It's hot and dry....?

Ray: It's bigger than our country.

Pat: It's miles away.

Ray: It's all different contin.... countries.

Author: Yes, it's all different countries in one continent Africa. What are the people like?

Ray: They're a different colour from us.

Craig: Do they have sandals?

Ray: They wear different clothes from us. They don't wear like trousers, they wear cloaks.

Author: Why do you think they wear a cloak rather than trousers?

Ray: Trousers are too hot.

Author: You did very well there.

Pat: Detectives.... Like coppers.

Craig: Police.

Pat: Like Starsky And Hutch.

Ray: They're like police but they don't wear.... like police black....

Craig: Uniform.

Pat: **Cagney And Lacey**.

Author: What do detectives do then?

Craig: Chase robbers.

Pat: They chase robbers. They don't wear uniforms.

Craig: Do they just wear masks to cover their face?

Author: Detectives?

Craig:	No, robbers.
Author:	How are detectives different from policemen?
Ray:	Detectives don't ride about in police cars.
Pat:	They don't wear hats.... big hats.... or flat ones.
Author:	So what kind of clothes do they wear?
Ray:	Like normal clothes.
Author:	What is their job mainly?
Ray:	To try to catch vandals. When the vandals do it they ask the people what happened.
Author:	So they ask questions. Do they do anything else?
Pat:	Yes.... finding things, like where they've touched something....
Craig:	Fingerprints.
Ray:	Like, trying to find, if like the robbers have shot something like a hammer, they find it.
Author:	Do they have guns?
Pat:	Yes. Coppers and detectives have guns.
Author:	Do they use them much?
Ray:	Not much.
Author:	Do they use them very much?
Pat:	No they just use them a bit....
Ray:	.... when they're trying to catch vandals and things.
Author:	Burglary in your home. Have you ever been burgled?
Pat:	Yes.
Author:	Was much stolen?
Pat:	Just money out of me Mum's purse.
Craig:	No.
Ray:	Yes.... the video was stolen two year ago.... and some things upstairs.
Author:	Do many people round your way get burgled do you know?
Ray:	There was one down our end about a month ago when someone went on their holidays, and someone broke in and stole the video, and he lived right next to them.
Author:	Do you think you could be burgled or do you think your house is quite safe?
Craig:	I dunno.... it might, if there are lots of burglaries down our end.
Author:	What would you do?
Craig:	Phone the police.
Craig:	America.
Ray:	My cousin went to America. It's a massive place.
Craig:	Is it in a song?
Author:	I think there are a few songs with 'America' in.
Pat:	Is it quite hot?
Craig:	Are there flies that go on your face?
Ray:	When my cousin was there he found a frog in his bed.
Pat:	They're not the same as our skin. They're tanned.
Author:	Do you mean white with suntan or brown like in Africa?
Pat:	(nods)
Author:	What kind of cars do they have?
Pat:	Massive cars.... old fashioned cars.
Ray:	They have like, these big black cars with instead of two doors, they

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	have three.
Author:	What kind of people live there?.... No?....

Author:	Alright, next we have engineers.
Ray:	People who fix cars.
Pat:	In a garage.
Ray:	Make cars.
Pat:	Fix cars.
Author:	Anything else?
Craig:	Trains?
Pat:	Motor bikes.

Ray:	Comprehensive schools.... Albany's one.
Pat:	You have to wear uniform.
Ray:	It's very big.
Author:	The building, or the numbers of people?
Ray:	The building and the numbers of people.
Pat:	It goes up to the fifth year. You leave when you're 16.
Ray:	When I go to the youth club we all see it.
Author:	What do you think it would be like, Craig?
Craig:	I dunno.
Pat:	It would be rough because there are big people there. They bully you.
Ray:	You have to do dead hard work.... it's difficult to find your way around because it's big.
Pat:	It's got all different places, it's got loads of classrooms and different teachers, so you don't know half the teachers.... and you can go on different dinner halls....
Ray:	Yes, you have like different money instead of dinner money and buy your food each day.

Pat:	Women.... They wear skirts.
Ray:	Some of them have longer hair than boys.... they wear different shoes.
Pat:	They have high heels. My Mum can't walk in them. A handbag and a purse, men have wallets but not a handbag.
Ray:	They wear make-up
Pat:	Earrings.
Ray:	Boys wear earrings.
Author:	What do they do, what jobs, what work?
Craig:	Washing floors.
Pat:	Wash up and make beds.
Ray:	They don't do things like engineering.
Pat:	They do the cooking.
Craig:	Our Dad does the cooking. The Sunday dinners.
Author:	Doesn't your Mum like cooking?
Craig:	No.
Pat:	My Mum hates ironing.
Author:	Is that something else that women do?
Pat:	(nods)

Author: Muggings, attacks and safety. What is mugging?
Pat: When someone robs you.
Ray: When someone....
Craig: Rapes you?
Ray: .... they hide and when you walk past they jump on you.
Pat: They hit you.
Ray: My Nana was mugged.... they caught them, they were only 13.
Author: Where are you likely to be attacked?
Pat: My sister got attacked. You know those pellet guns, she got
           attacked with one of them.
Ray: When we were walking over the play area to go to the youth club,
           there were these two men were shooting at us with pellets.
Author: But you were alright?
Ray: (nods)
Author: We must stop now, there's the bell.

The interview was curtailed because of afternoon school.

C: TAPED CONVERSATIONS WITH THE AUTHOR REFERRING TO DRAWINGS OF THEIR FAVOURITE TELEVISION PROGRAMMES, CLASS A ONLY

1. **Lee**, recorded in the classroom at playtime, 18/6/86.

Author: Can we look at these pictures you drew a few days ago. What was it about **Convoy** that you enjoyed?

Lee: Oh, when the convoy of lorries was coming and this lady screamed and the man jumped up and it made me laugh to see him. Then all the police cars lined up to try and stop them. It was fun.

Author: Was it exciting?

Lee: A bit, mainly it was fun, it made me laugh.

Author: Now the football.

Lee: That was Brazil v Spain and I liked it 'cos Brazil won and they're on our side.

Author: Do you watch much football?

Lee: Yeah! I like it, specially the goalie 'cos they're interesting and they have to save the match.

Author: Do they?

Lee: Yeah, 'cos everyone blames them if he lets goals in and they lose.

Author: Now **Jossy's Giants**. What was that?

Lee: It was a film, about football and there was this lady playing football, see with the boys and she was taking over him and Jossy's Giants were winning and this lady with a microphone, this reporter, she talked to the goalie and he let a goal in.

Author: So they lost?

Lee: Yeah, then they got her and locked her in the men's dressing rooms and that made me laugh.

Author: Now **The Little Vampire**.

Lee: That's when the Mum was going out and she wondered what the noise was outside the window and it was the little vampire.

Author: Why, didn't she know?

Lee: 'Cos it was the boy's friend but she didn't know about it. She wouldn't have liked it, but it's dead good.

Author: And this one.... '**V**'.

Lee: No, it's 'V2', 'V' was on before. This spaceship came and attacked Los Angels (!) and Diano came down and went to this house and after the family who had helped get him. Then he got out took the spaceship and the aliens went after him.

Author: What did you especially like about the film?

Lee: I liked the action.

Author: Did many people get hurt?

Lee: Oh yes and green stuff came out of the aliens and blood from the humans and this woman before, like, she'd had a baby to a lizard thing and she was a star child and they called her Elizabeth and she saved the people.

Author: So you liked all the action?

Lee: Oh yes, loads of things got blown up, houses, all Los Angels, ships .... and everything blows up and lots of explosions and things, it was great!

Author: Now **Live And Let Die**....

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Lee:	Oh the best bit was where this boat went over the field into a picnic, or a wedding or something, and ended up in the swimming pool!
Author:	Was that James Bond?
Lee:	No, it was the bad guys who were after him, he got away.
Author:	Why did you like that?
Lee:	'Cos it was funny! 'Cos boats like that are not supposed to be in a pool but in rivers and things.
Author:	And **Rocky 4**?
Lee:	The bit where he was hitting the punchball dead fast, he was like a machine (mimes bang, bang, bang) I'd like to do that and fight.
Author:	Did he win the fight?
Lee:	He did in **Rocky**, this was **Rocky 4**, it was different.
Author:	And lastly **The Gremlins**.
Lee:	Oh, when Gizmo was stuck on the dartboard and Stripe and the others were throwing darts at her.
Author:	Did they kill her?
Lee:	No, 'cos she fell down behind the chair and this boy saved her. She was their mother! Stripe was the one with white hair.
Author:	What did you like best about that film?
Lee:	It was dead exciting, I got it for my birthday.
Author:	To keep?
Lee:	No, we hired it.
Author:	Do you like films or ordinary television best?
Lee:	I think I like films best, because my Dad says like there's a film on and its a comedy and I like comedies 'cos they're funny.
Author:	And you remember them....?
Lee:	Yeah! 'Cos they're good and we talk about them.... I like James Bond, 'cos all the gadgets and stuff he has.... that case in the train where he pulls the knife out and he fights.... I don't get things like **Superman** now, just films.
Author:	Thank you Lee, go out and finish your playtime now.

2. Paul, interviewed in the classroom at playtime, 19/6/86.

Author:	Can we look at these pictures you drew Paul? What did you like best about **Rocky**?
Paul:	The final fight.
Author:	Why was that part best?
Paul:	I dunno.... I suppose 'cos Rocky was punching Ap all the time and then he won.
Author:	Was it exciting?
Paul:	Yeah, 'cos first I thought he'd lose, but he didn't he won.
Author:	Now **Police Accadamy 2**.
Paul:	Oh the bit where they were in this cafe and this man was making a noise with his cup going, (mimes someone slurping a drink), and it was dead funny.
Author:	Was it exciting?
Paul:	There were some fights but not much.
Author:	Now **Raiders Of The Lost Ark**.
Paul:	Indiana Jones, he was trying to pinch this golden egg, no face thing, and he had to go through things and spears came at him and

Author:	a stone, a big stone, came rolling down, but he jumped out of the way, then he got up and these men with bows and arrows were all around him.
Author:	Did he get away?
Paul:	Yes he got away and went after the Ark.
Author:	And what did you like about that?
Paul:	The adventure. I like adventures.
Author:	Now the football.
Paul:	That was Mexico v England in a practice game.
Author:	Have you seen many of the World Cup games?
Paul:	Some.... England's going to play Argentina next. I want Argentina to win.
Author:	Do you, why?
Paul:	'Cos they're the best team in the world, but they play rough and one of them, they're always fouling him so he can't score.
Author:	Now Spitting Image. I know you like that!
Paul:	Yeah. I like Prince Charles, with his big nose, talking to this man, this reporter, and he was kissing Diane. It's funny.
Author:	Now Convoy.
Paul:	All these trucks ganged up and the police cars were chasing them and this man was reporting them and he was in the coach and pulled his trousers down!
Author:	And did that make you laugh?
Paul:	Yes, it was funny.
Author:	Now The Dukes Of Hazzard.
Paul:	When they jumped over this massive hill.
Author:	In the car?
Paul:	Yeah, and went over this bridge with no top.
Author:	You liked that?
Paul:	Yeah. I like the car chases.
Author:	And lastly you said Top Of The Pops. What did you like?
Paul:	The Spitting Image song.
Author:	Of course!
Paul:	Yeah, it's funny.
Author:	Do you think you like films or television best?
Paul:	Films, 'cos they have more adventure in. They do things, like blowing things up and fighting.
Author:	Thank you Paul, you can go out for the rest of playtime now.

3. Neil, interviewed on 24/6/86, in the classroom while the rest of the class were at their music lesson.

Author:	I'd just like to look at these pictures you drew. These were things that you remembered from television?
Neil:	Yes.
Author:	Now the first one, Salem's Lot, what did you especially like about that one?
Neil:	It was about monsters and ghosts and they kept getting ordinary people and killing them.
Author:	Did they?
Neil:	Yes, they had crosses and were showing them.... and they killed lots,

	and then all the other ghosts died and that was the end.
Author:	Was it frightening?
Neil:	Not really.
Author:	Now **The Little Vampire.**
Neil:	It's got these people in and chasing them and all that.
Author:	Is it a cartoon?
Neil:	No it's real people and this fellow wanted to kill them.
Author:	Was it frightening?
Neil:	No it's funny. **Salem's Lot** was more frightening. It's on every Monday and Thursday.
Author:	Now **Champ.**
Neil:	It's about this boxer who had a fight and won then he died. It's skill.
Author:	Nothing else.....? Right **Jaws.**
Neil:	I liked that bit where the woman fell off and Jaws went to get her and it blew up and this feller got bitten.
Author:	Badly?
Neil:	Yeah, he just came apart 'cos he was bitten in half.
Author:	Was there lots of blood?
Neil:	Yeah.
Author:	Now **Thriller.**
Neil:	This man was dancing and his arm fell off.
Author:	Just fell off?
Neil:	Yeah, 'cos he was dead and he came to pieces. That was scary.
Author:	Who did you see it with?
Neil:	With me aunty and others, on her video.
Authro:	Would you watch alone if you had to?
Neil:	Sometimes, I might.
Author:	Now this one is different, **Tarka The Otter.** What made this one special?
Neil:	It was about this little otter, right, and this fella was going after him and shot his mum.
Author:	Oh dear. What happened?
Neil:	Then Tarka got him and bit his finger off and killed his best dog.
Author:	Now a frightening one again, **An American Werewolf In London.**
Neil:	There was this fella in the woods and he went into a cafe and his friend got killed and changed into a werewolf.
Author:	Wasn't there a scary bit in a cinema?
Neil:	Yeah, his face changed, it sort of melted and his jaws clacked and ghosts were with him. He looked awful.
Author:	Now, **God Of The Dead.**
Neil:	There were loads of kids and these hands and they pulled the kids down into the ground and killed them.
Author:	Oh.
Neil:	Now this kid, he had a spear through his head, and they chased them down alleys and killed them.
Author:	You seem to have chosen lots of films rather than ordinary television programmes, I wonder why? Do you know?
Neil:	.... 'Cos the others are boring.
Author:	But you see them on television?
Neil:	Yeah, I watch them.... but I'm bored.... and films last longer.
Author:	Your films all seem to have killing and blood in. Do you like

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	programmes or films like James Bond with fights?
Neil:	Yeah, I like exciting programmes and ones with lots of explosions, but the ones with blood in are better.
Author:	Thank you Neil, would you like to go over to music now?

APPENDIX III

GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION OF STATISTICS (FIGURES)
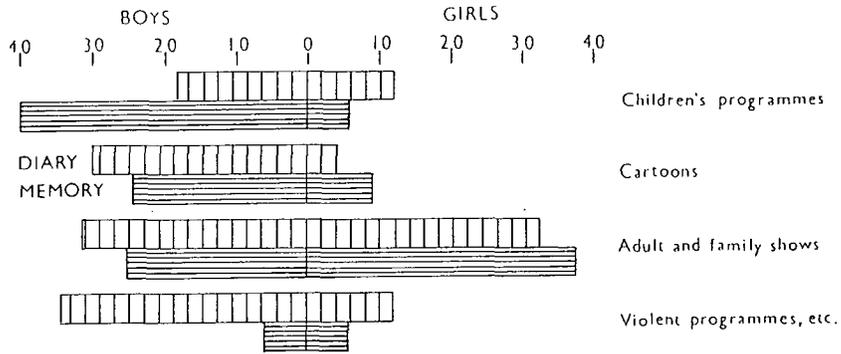
FIG. I   Favourite   programmes
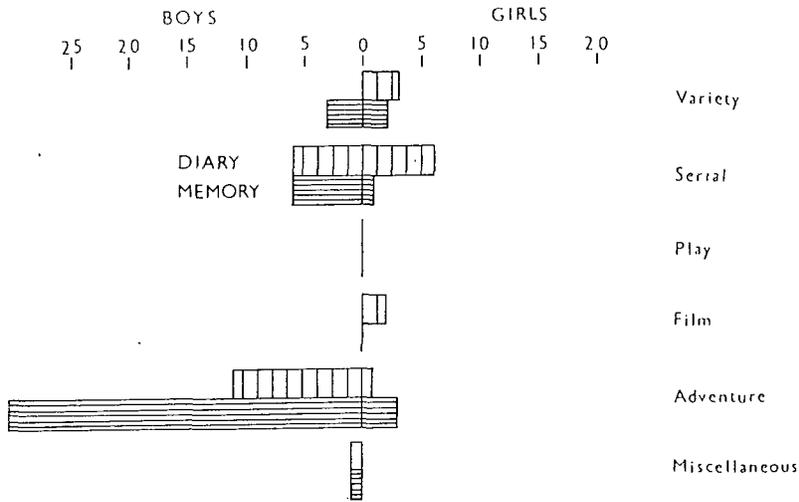
FIG. 2   Favourite   children's   programmes
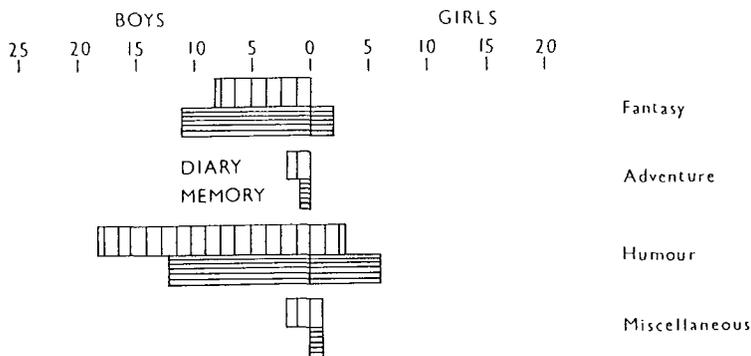
FIG. 3   Favourite   cartoons

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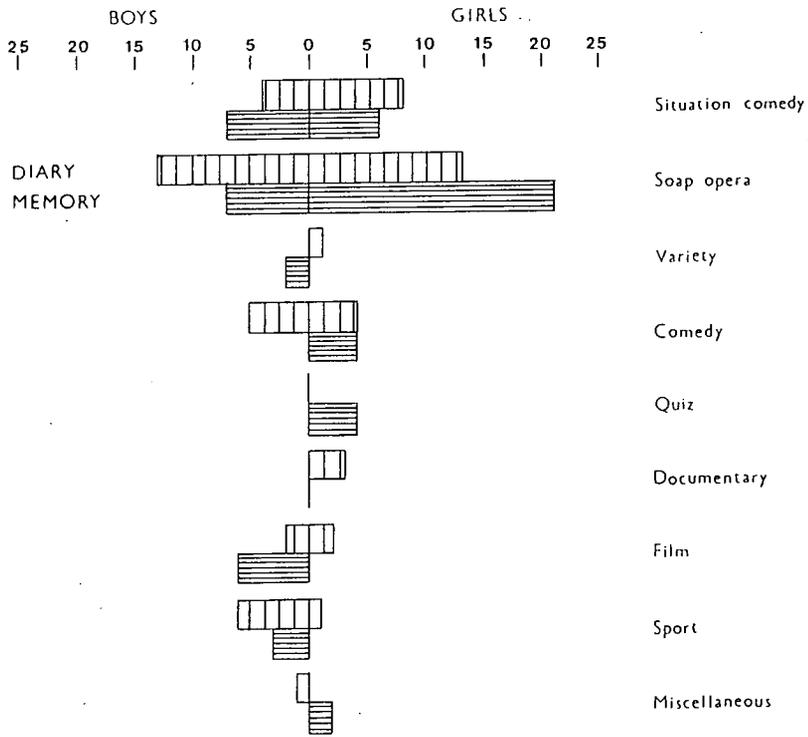
FIG. 4   Favourite adult and family shows
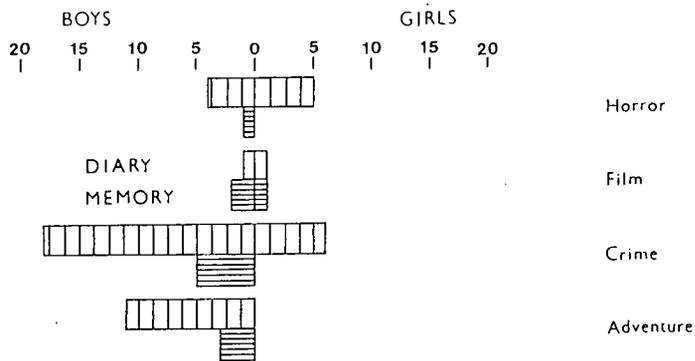
FIG. 5   Favourite violent programmes etc.
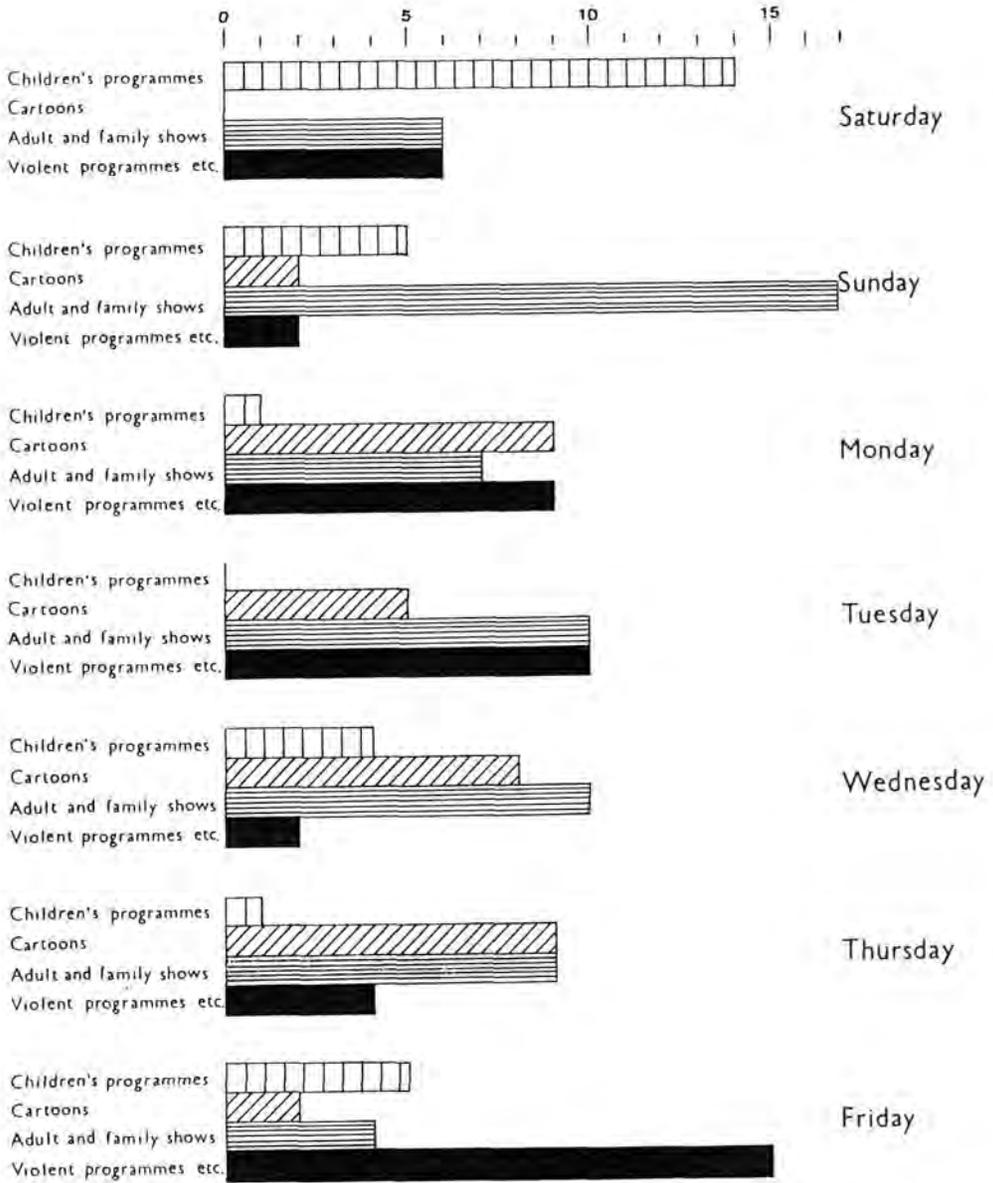
FIG. 6   Favourite programmes selected daily
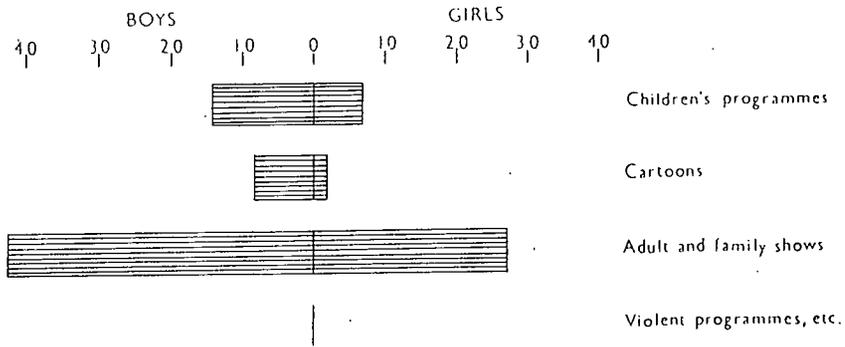
BOYS   GIRLS
40   30   20   10   0   10   20   30   40

Children's programmes

Cartoons

Adult and family shows

Violent programmes, etc.

FIG. 7   Disliked programmes (memory only)

BOYS   GIRLS
25   20   15   10   5   0   5   10   15   20

Variety

Serial

Play

Film

Adventure

Miscellaneous

FIG. 8   Disliked children's programmes (memory only)

BOYS   GIRLS
25   20   15   10   5   0   5   10   15   20

Fantasy

Adventure

Humour

Miscellaneous
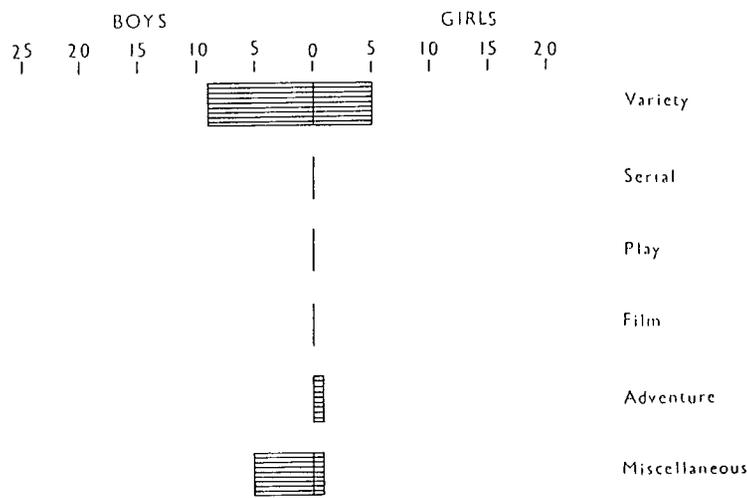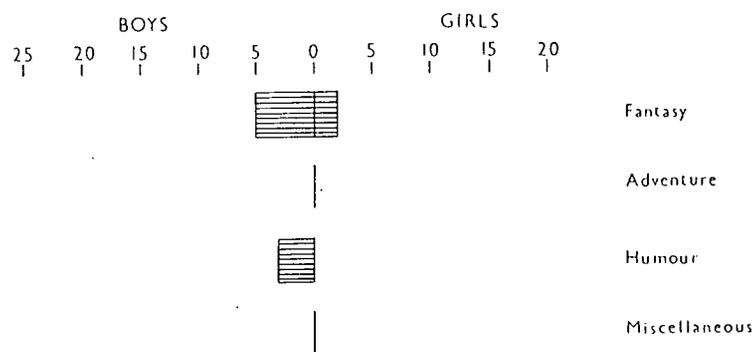
FIG. 9   Disliked cartoons (memory only)

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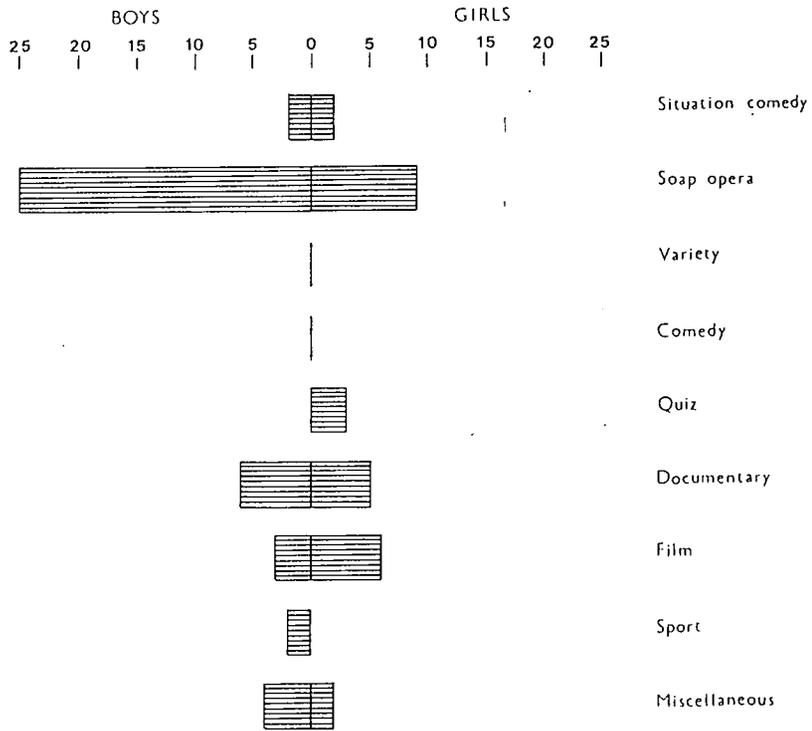
FIG. 10   Disliked adult and family shows (memory only)
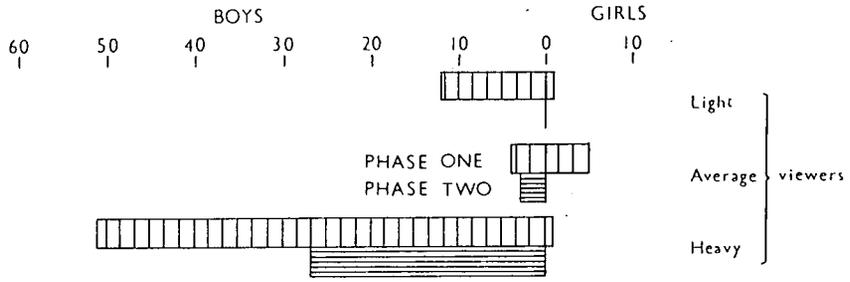
FIG. 11 Observed restless incidents
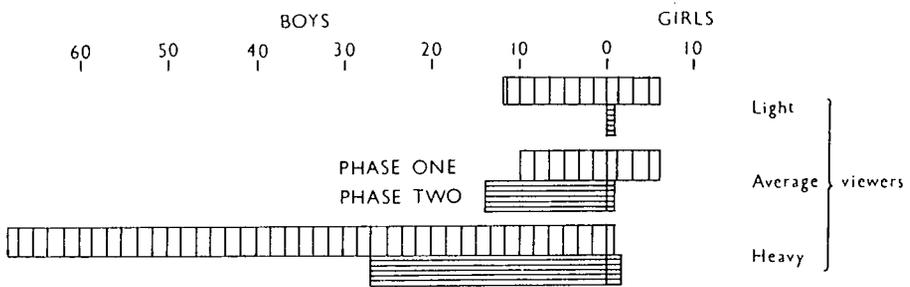
FIG. 12 Observed aggressive incidents
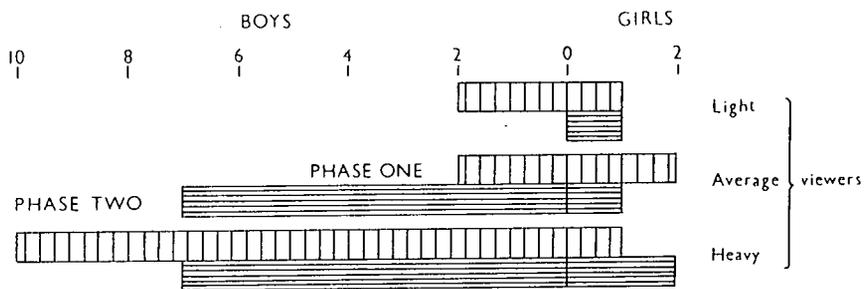
FIG. 13 Observed aggressive children

BOYS   GIRLS

40   30   20   10   0   10   20   30   40

Children's programmes

Cartoons

DIARY

MEMORY

Adult and family shows

Violent programmes, etc.

FIG. 14   Favourite   programmes

BOYS   GIRLS

25   20   15   10   5   0   5   10   15   20

Variety

DIARY
MEMORY

Serial

Play

Film

Adventure
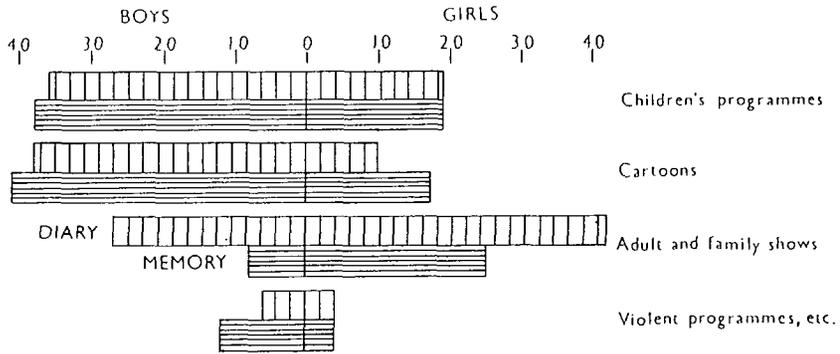
Miscellaneous

FIG. 15   Favourite   children's   programmes

BOYS   GIRLS

25   20   15   10   5   0   5   10   15   20

Fantasy

DIARY
MEMORY

Adventure

Humour
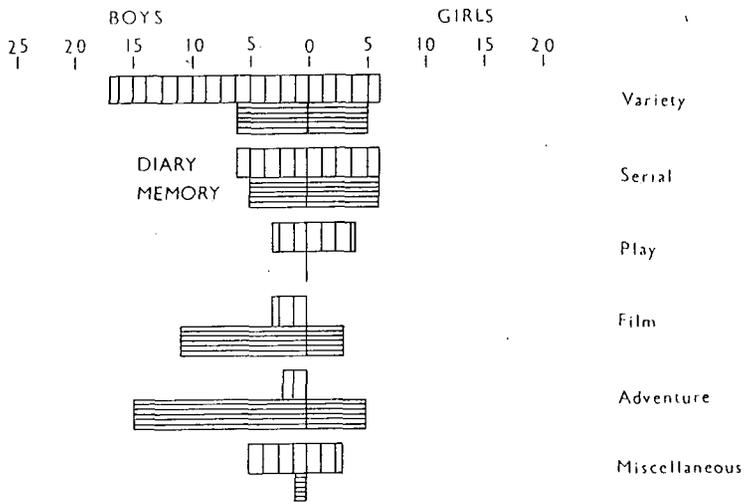
Miscellaneous
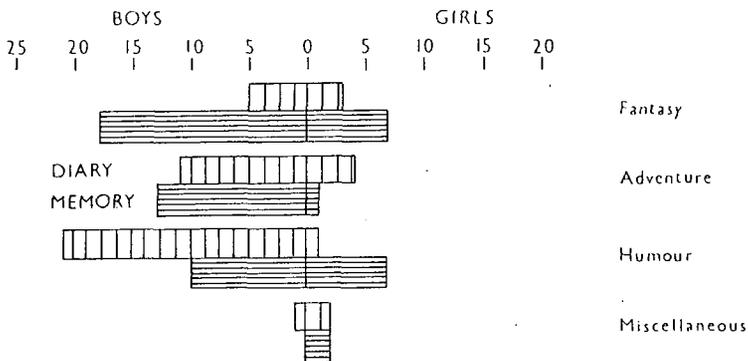
FIG. 16   Favourite   cartoons

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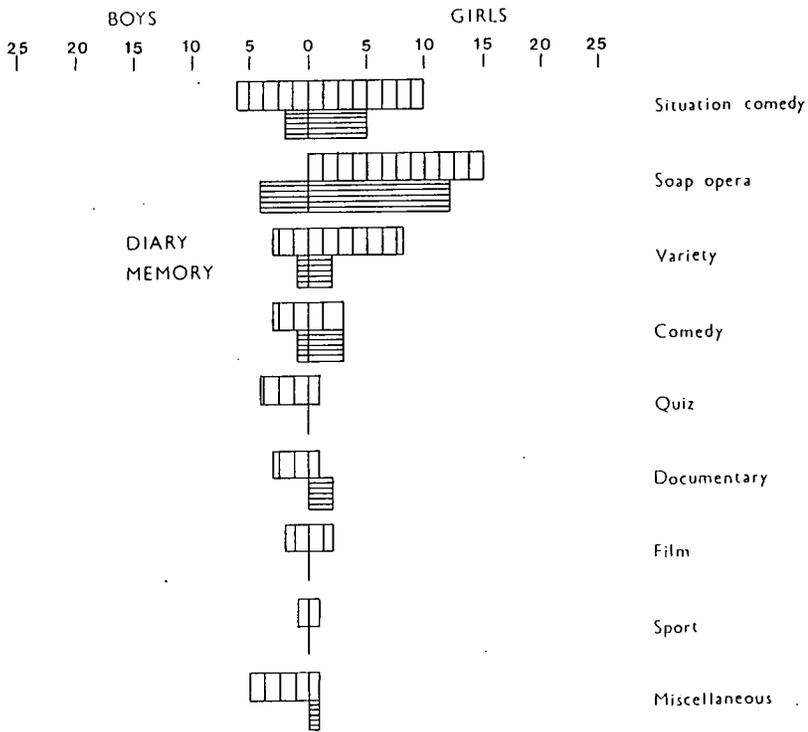
FIG.17 Favourite adult and family shows
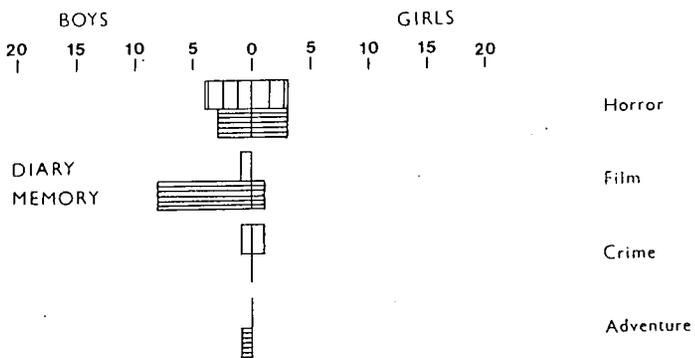
FIG.18 Favourite violent programmes etc.
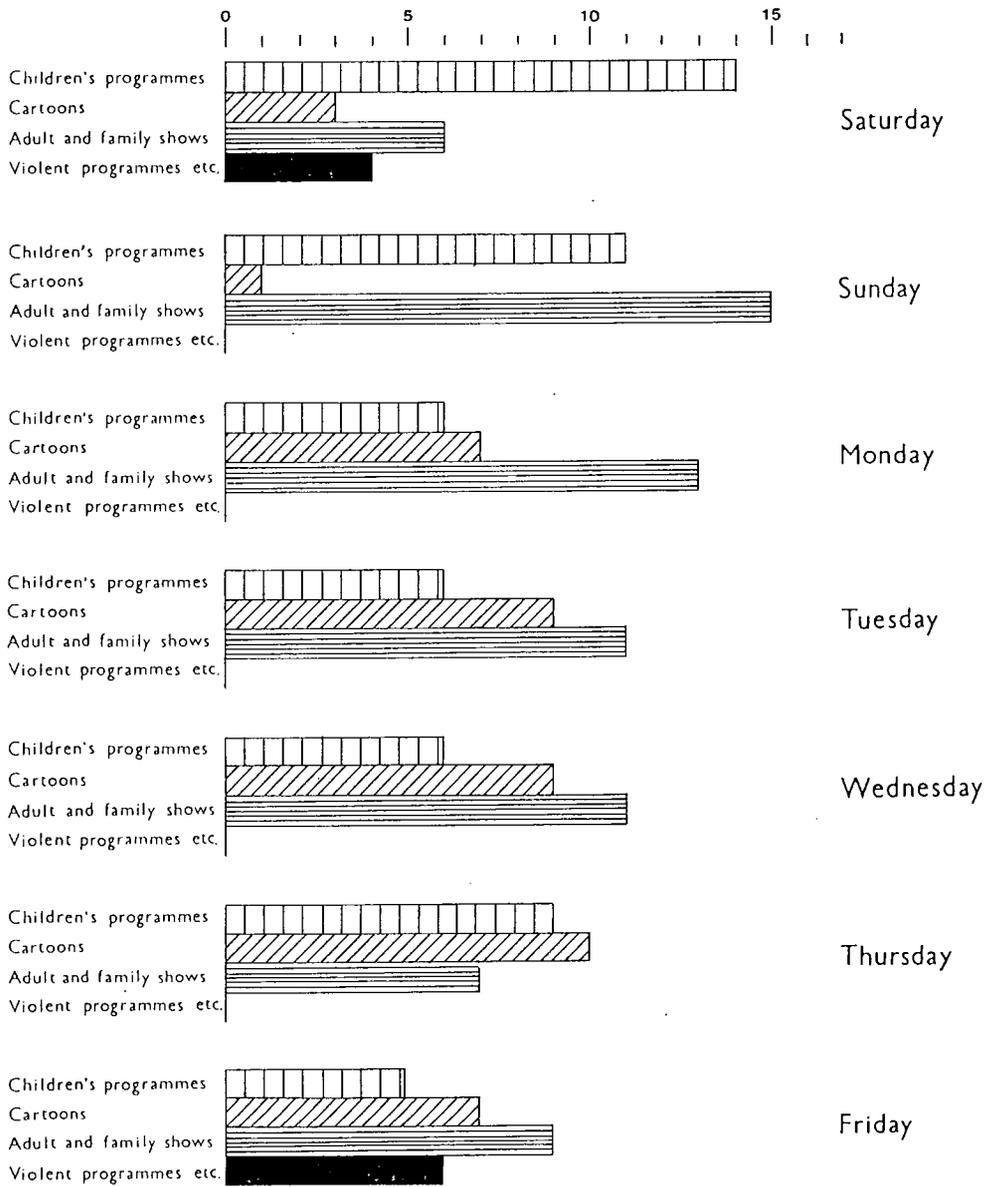
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FIG. 19   Favourite programmes selected daily
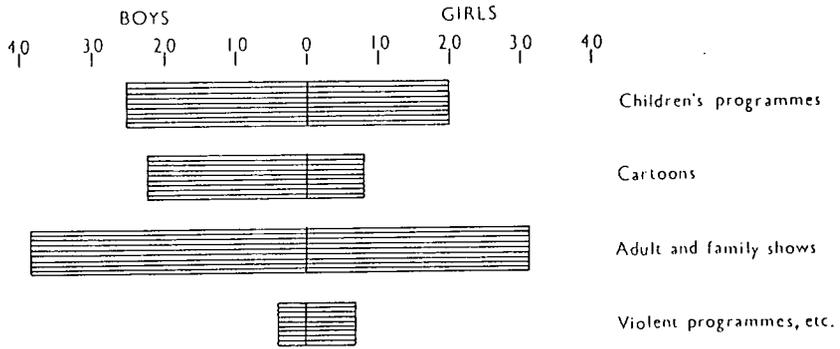
BOYS   GIRLS

40 30 20 10 0 10 20 30 40

Children's programmes

Cartoons

Adult and family shows

Violent programmes, etc.

FIG. 20 Disliked programmes (memory only)

BOYS   GIRLS

25 20 15 10 5 0 5 10 15 20

Variety

Serial

Play

Film

Adventure

Miscellaneous

FIG. 21 Disliked children's programmes (memory only)

BOYS   GIRLS

25 20 15 10 5 0 5 10 15 20

Fantasy

Adventure

Humour

Miscellaneous
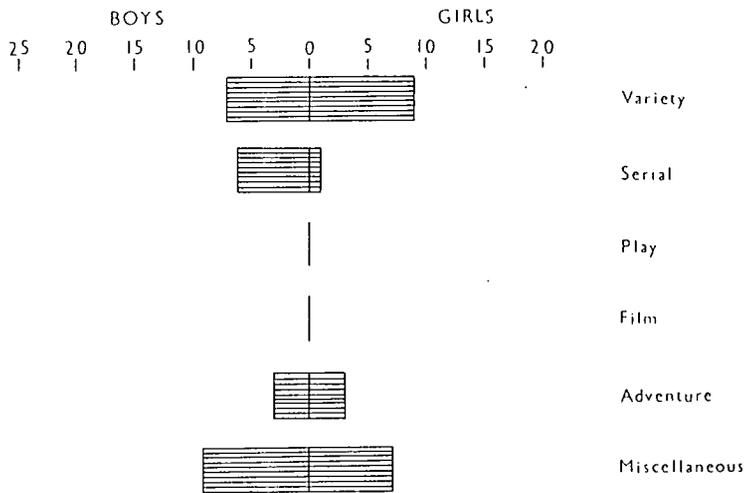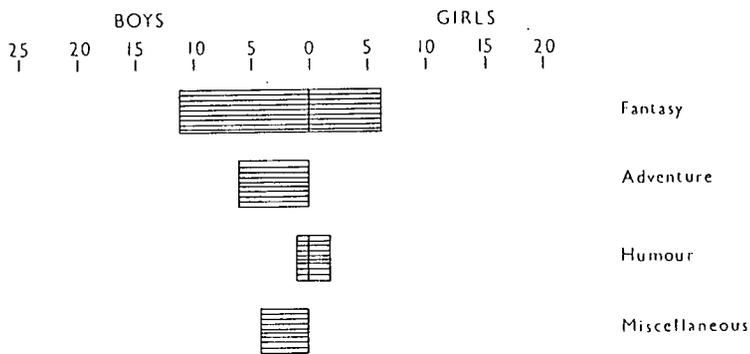
FIG. 22 Disliked cartoons (memory only)

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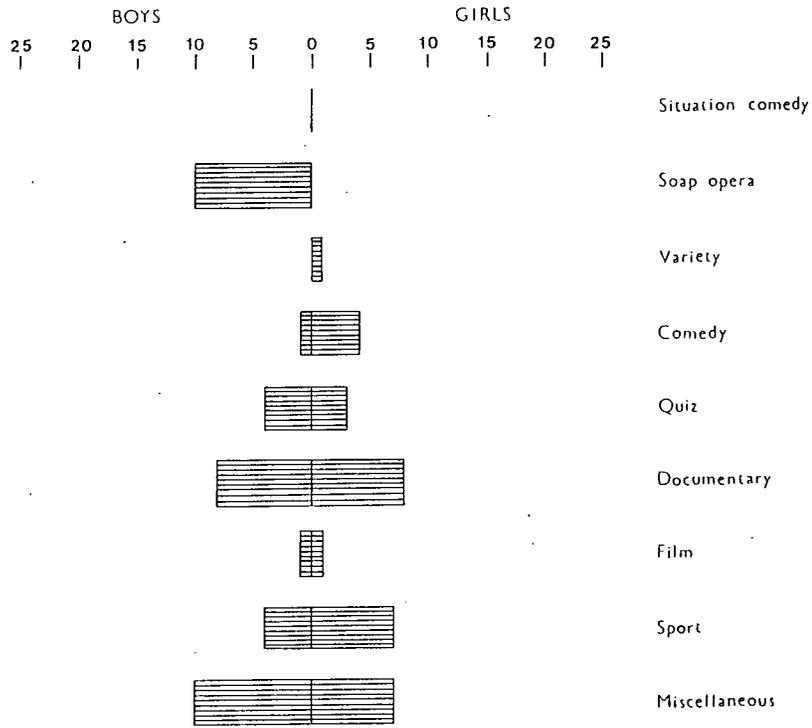
FIG.23   Disliked adult and family shows (memory only)
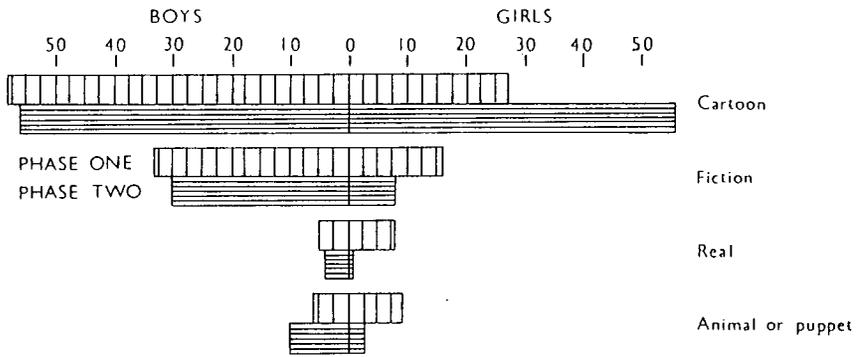
FIG. 24 Favourite television characters

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