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PARENTAL CONTROL OF CHILDREN'S TELEVISION: AN EXPLORATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONTROL AND FAMILY HOME EVENING

A Thesis

Presented to the

Department of Communication

Brigham Young University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

© Marion Wixom McCardell

by

Marion Wixom McCardell

August 1978

This thesis by Marion Wixom McCardell is accepted in its present form by the Department of Communications of Brigham Young University as satisfying the thesis requirement for the degree of Master of Arts.

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Date 7/20/78

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Chapter 1

Introduction

From its inception, there has been concern about the way television affects children. Studies have been done and articles have been written on everything from television and violence to what the very act of watching television does to a child's brain. Suggestions have been made about how to ameliorate the negative effects of television, ranging from throw out the set to incorporate TV into the normal school curriculum. Usually the suggestions for how to best tap television's potential for good and minimize its capacity for bad boil down to parents—their attitudes toward television, their own viewing habits, and their methods of controlling their children's television watching.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has always been a family oriented Church. As far back as 1831 the Lord told the Prophet Joseph Smith that parents have a duty to "teach their children to pray, and to walk uprightly before the Lord."[1] In 1965 the correlated Family Home Evening was begun and since that time the Church has been sponsoring and promoting the program as a way to help family members become closer, understand each other better, and make their families stronger. This program is one of the Church's ways of teaching mothers and fathers to be better parents.

Theoretically, if the Family Home Evening program is having positive effects on parents that the Church hopes it has, those

parents who hold Family Home Evening, as outlined by Church authorities, should also be doing more positiva things in relation to their children's television than parents who do not.

The purpose of this study is to determine the attitudes of Mormons toward television, and the types of control they use for their children's television, and to examine the relationships of those attitudes and practices to the attitudes they have toward Family Home Evening and the types of Family Home Evenings they hold.

Review of the Literature

Problem areas in televison viewing

Violence

A lot of time and money have been devoted to studying the possible negative effects watching television has on children. By far the most thoroughly researched area is violence. Literally hundreds of studies have been done investigating the link between violence on television and aggressive behavior in children.

While researchers are not actually able to say televison violence definitely causes aggressive behavior, the consensus is that children prone to aggressive behavior are even more aggressive after watching television violence, and the way children respond

to violence is affected by the context in which it is presented. "Such elements as parental explanations, the favorable or unfavorable outcome of the violence, and whether it is seen as fantasy or reality make a difference."[2]

There are, of course, those who feel that television violence is not, or at least does not have to be, bad for children. According to Hyman, if it is regarded as natural that observing violent encounters in the media increases children's aggressive tendencies, it is equally natural to assume that it should also increase their sympathies.

> Sympathy for those in distress has always been recognized as a fundamental sentiment. To be sure (we might not) feel unbearable pity for bobo doll, or a flower choked by a weed, perhaps not for a character who is too far from human in representation—these being some of the victims that children observe in experimental simulations and real media presentations whose effects are being traced. That after all, might be too sentimental a response. Logic tells us that such victims feel no pain. Aggressions of that type meet only weak opposition from us because there is no real victim to arouse our sympathy.
>
> But when the child observes a real victim he should be taking away from the experience at least a grain of sympathy as well as a quantum of aggression.[3]

Murphy's 1973 study gives some support to that idea. He found that children's sympathetic behavior scores correlated positively with their aggression behavior scores under all conditions.[4]

Hyman concludes that most researchers do not observe the children long enough to see if their aggressive behaviors are really counter-balanced by their sympathetic behaviors after watching television.[5]

Another study that says television violence does not have to be bad for children was done by Feshbach and Singer in 1971. Their research indicates that TV violence may actually have a cathartic effect on children and make them less aggressive.[6] However, as Bogart points out in his review of the Surgeon General's report, when Feshbach tried to repeat his findings, there was less support for the cathartic hypothesis. In that repeat study he also found that "children showed more aggressive response to aggressive television content when they thought it was real than when it was described as fantasy."[7]

Thus even though the bulk of the research, not to mention common sense, indicate that seeing more than 13,000 people killed on television between his fifth and fifteenth birthday[8] will have some kind of effect on the aggressiveness of the average child, the matter is still open to controversy. Perhaps researchers should forget about more studies "proving" that TV violence makes children behave more aggressively, and should concentrate on finding out what watching violence does to children's attitude toward aggression.

There is a concern, which needs further study, that watching television violence day after day causes children to become callcused to real violence,[9] or to think violance is acceptable and profitable because their TV heroes use violent means to get the bad guy, and are rewarded for it.[10]

And even if all the links between TV violence and aggression could be proved and the state of mind created by watching violance could be clearly defined, as Bogart points out,

> Violence can never be eliminated from TV because violence is part of life and part of art. As long as television news reporting stays free, the violence and brutality of our real world should and will be reflected in it. And as long as TV gives time to plays and films of artistic integrity, it will show violence as a dramatic aspect of human affairs.[11]

He then asks the question

> Is violence more degrading an influence than the portrayal of human beings and their problems in insipid, sordid, vulgar, or pointless terms? Are not such portrayals taken for granted as part of our cultural mold, into which every infant newcomer is dipped as he begins to explore the world around him? The examination of these broader influences [may] represent a more rewarding subject for research than TV violence.[12]

Sex

Another area of television often disparaged, if not well researched, is the emphasis on sex. Child psychologists, educators, and parents are becoming concerned at the number of sexually educating shows that are easily accessible to children. A recent study by Greenberg and Collado found that children see implied or explicit sexual acts 30 to 40 times in a typical week, and seven times as many are between unmarrieds than are between married people.[13]

During the peak afternoon hours after school, children are choosing soap operas like <u>One Life to Live</u> and <u>General Hospital</u> over <u>Sesame Street</u>.[14] Other popular shows are <u>Love American Style</u>, in which "the youngsters are treated to a carefully constructed lesson on the art and science of sexual seduction,"[15] and the <u>Merv Griffin Show</u>, on which groups of so-called experts discuss sex and reveal sexual tidbits about

the guest celebrities.[16] At night there are situation comedies like M.A.S.H., The Love Boat, and police shows like Starsky and Hutch, and Baretta, which, in an attempt to have less violence, fill the time by having their heroes go to bed with a different girl nearly every week.

Rutstein sums up the general attitude toward these shows,

> I am not advocating the elimination of programs like M.A.S.H., Love American Style or the Merv Griffin Show, only that their availability to the child viewer should be eliminated. Considerable pressure should be placed on TV-network management and TV-station operators to reorganize their programming scheduling so that children don't have an opportunity to see programs like Love American Style or talk shows like Mike Douglas, Johnny Carson, or Merv Griffin. As for soap operas, they should be aired when children are asleep. There are entirely too many preschoolers who get a daily dose of young ladies combating nymphomania, wives and husbands committing adultery, and teenagers giving birth out of wedlock—all from watching soap operas. These messages emanating from sex-oriented daytime shows do not bounce off little skulls of three, four, five-year-olds and the elementary school children who watch television after school. They are absorbed.[17]

Programs are not the only area of television that is criticized as an unauthorized source of sex education. Commercials are frowned upon as well. Ben Bagdikian, in The Information Machines, voices one of the typical arguments of those concerned about this aspect of commercials: "commercials use sexuality in ways that are forbidden on the stage, in schools, and in the non-advertising parts of television, but that are accepted because they are commercial, all as part of the attempt to penetrate buyer resistance.[18]

Commercials and Children

Although some attention is given to commercials and their sexual impropriety, far more concern is expressed about the way commercials "use" children and make them materialistic.

Advertisers spend about $3 billion a year financing the production of forty-three thousand television commercials. Companies are willing to spend the $100,000 for one minute of advertising on television because commercials sell enough merchandise to more than pay for themselves. One of the reasons they can do so is because of children.

Children make great unpaid-for advertisers. They see something in the store that has been advertised on TV and pester their parents to buy it—and more often than not, the parents give in.[19] Children also go around the house acting out lively commercials or singing catchy jingles and, "they cannot be turned off as a set can."[20]

While there is nothing intrinsically wrong with singing jingles, there is some justifiable concern that

> Television promotes the belief that a person will be socially rejected unless he or she owns certain material things. This is especially worrisome when children are made to believe they must have a special toy to achieve happiness.[21]

There is also some concern that television commercials create disillusionment and cynicism when the product fails to perform as anticipated from the advertising.[22]

Problems Resulting From the Act of Watching

Although the children/television relationship has been studied since television entered the commercial market, the major emphasis has been placed in programming content—is the show too violent, is the commercial too sexy. Until recently, there has been little consideration of the idea that the very act of watching television may have detrimental effects.

One of the ways it is not being suggested that watching television damages children is that it distorts their perception of reality. Probably, as Marie Winn explains in her book The Plug In Drug, this theory has not received much attention because adults assume that a child's experience with television is the same as theirs.[23] However, there is an essential difference: an adult brings a vast back-log of real-life experiences to his viewing; a child does not.

> As the adult watches television, his own present and past relationships, experiences, dreams, and fantasies come into play, transforming the material he sees into something reflecting his own particular inner needs.[24]

But a child has a limited store of real-life experiences to bring to his watching. Not only that, but watching television is one of his primary real-life activities, according to Winn's theory.

> His subsequent real-life activities will stir memories of television experiences, not, as for the adult watcher, the other way around. To a certain extent the child's early television experiences will serve to dehumanize, to mechanize, to make less real the realities and relationships he encounters in life. For him, real events will always carry subtle echoes of the television world.[25]

According to Rutstein, an aspect of many children's behavior that reflects this possible distortion of reality is the way they want problems, no matter how complex, to be solved in a matter of minutes. They see program day after day where a crime is committed, and the villain is caught, all in thirty minutes or an hour.[26] They want their own real problems to be resolved as quickly and become frustrated or even hostile when they are not.[27] This distortion of reality could also be a factor in the TV violence problem. Gerbner and Gross asked light viewers and heavy viewers to guess their chances of being involved in some kind of violence during any given week. The possible answers were 50-50, 10-1, and 100-1. The heavy viewers consistently said their chances were 50-50 or 10-1. The light viewers consistently chose 100-1. The actual chances are 100-1.[28] In other words "reality" for heavy viewers is that the world is a more violent place than it actually is. Although this study was done with adults, it is not illogical to assume that children react in a similar manner.

Even more disturbing than children having a confused perception of how much violence there is in the world, however, is the possibility that actual child crime is a result of a confused perception of what human beings really are. Since 1952 a new breed of juvenile offender has developed—one who casually tortures, often for small gains, who breaks into apartments and stomps elderly men or drowns a woman in her bathtub , and who feels no remorse.[29] According to Charles King, director in charge of rehabilitation of New York State's Division for Youth, the common denominator for these kids seems to be

the complete detachment with which they carry out their crimes, as if they were dealing with inanimate objects. "Its almost as though they look at the person who got killed as a window they were going to jimmie, as an obstacle, something that got in their way."[30] It is Winn's contention that this may be the case because watching television, which projects human images and an illusion of human feelings while requiring no human response from the viewer, encourages delinquents to detach themselves from their crimes in a "new and horrible way."[31] If this is the case, she points out,

> the total banishment of violence from the television screen will not mitigate the dehumanizing effects of long periods of television viewing upon emotionally disturbed children. For the problem is not that they learn <u>how</u> to commit violence from watching violence on television (although perhaps they sometimes do), but that television conditions them to deal with real people as if they were on a television screen. Thus they are able to 'turn them off,' quite simply, with a knife or a gun or a chain, with as little remorse as if they were turning off a television set.[32]

Another way it is suggested that simply watching television, be it <u>Sesame Street</u> or <u>Police Woman</u>, has negative consequences is that it influences children's expectations for other people. For example, because children are used to being entertained by the TV, they want to be entertained by other activities, school for instance. According to a Denver teacher with twenty-nine years of teaching experience, the attitude of students is, "Is this going to be fun or is it going to be boring? And if its boring they feel, well, you just switch the channel."[33] Other teachers complain that they have to "sell" activities that they never had to sell in the past because "some kids won't stick around

long enough to find out if it's going to be fun if the first moment doesn't catch them."[34]

Concern is also being expressed about the way watching television seems to make children passive and stifle their creativity. This is another area that is more speculative than data based, but some authors and educators contend that watching television is a one-way experience demanding nothing from its participant beyond turning on the set, and that a child who spends hours entertained by the TV tends to reject activities that require mental or physical exertion.[35] It is their contention that children become passive participants, abandoning things which become difficult because it is easier to sit in front of the television set, and that passivity in games, sports, or other activities spills over into a child's mental activities, specifically his creativity. This means that children are required to spend a period of time in imaginative, solitary play those who are heavy viewers tend to act out the things they have seen on television or are unable to think of things to do without the help of the teacher.[36]

One other area in connection with the act of watching television, that should give parents some concern, is the way it may effect a child's learning abilities. Parents may get upset about how much violence their children see, but few worry about children's educational shows like Sesame Street and The Electric Company. People hold up shows like that as positive examples of how much information it is possible for children to acquire from television despite its shortcomings. According to Dorothy Cohen, there is a potential for learning from

television, but,

> the management of information for young children has been less than adequate. More typically children become verbal but not knowing. Their pseudosophisitication raises a nagging question of whether real learning occurs from much of what is presently offered."[37]

For young children, there is not only the question of nonlearning, but the more serious one of whether viewing television for many hours a day does not actually interfere with the learning process.[38] One evidence for such a possibility comes from a doctor in the Mental Health Center at Rochester, N.Y. He reports that in 1972 there was an upsurge of two to three year olds of all socio-economic classes entering the center. In looking for an explanation for the increase, he analyzed Sesame Street teaching techniques—its broadcast time had recently been increased—and hypothesized that sensory overload was the cause of the children's strange behavior. Specifically, he blamed the overload on Sesame Street's practice of

> applying shock to sense barriers by intrusive signaling of kinetic symbols; avoiding a time lag between messages to delay reflection; and capturing attention by using dominating visual and auditory patterns.[39]

Cohen concludes that

> it is not too far fetched to suggest that sensory overload may be a significant factor in the almost epidemic proportions of non-learning now prevalent in American schools among children of all ages and socioeconomic classes.[40]

Some scholars, researchers, and educators think television only influences children's learning. Others say that watching television actually changes a child's brain. A child is not born with a brain in which the hemispheres are specialized and until he acquires language he absorbs experience by means of a nonverbal form of thought.[41] Evidence suggests that the experiences of the early years, when a child is growing and developing the fastest, have a greater effect on brain development that experiences in later years.[42] In fact, as linguist Maurice Merleau-Ponty notes:

> There is a period during which a child is particularly sensitive to language and during which he can learn to talk. It has been shown that if a child...is not in an environment in which there are people who talk, then he will never be able to talk with the same ease as those tho have learned to speak during the period in question.[43]

This does not mean that watching television will keep a normal child from learning how to talk. However, it may affect his commitment to language as a means of expression, "a commitment that may have a physiological basis in the balance of right- and left-hemisphere development."[44]

For a child who is making the transition from nonverbal to verbal thought, opportunities to exercise his developing verbal skills are important. For an adult, nonverbal mental activities connotate relaxation. But for a child in his formative years, and extended nonverbal mental functioning such as watching television must be regarded as a potential setback.[45]

> As the child takes in television words and images hour after hour, day after day, with little of the mental effort that forming his own thoughts and feelings and molding them into words would require, as he relaxes year after year, a pattern of emphasizing nonverbal cognition becomes established.[46]

Although these ideas are mostly theoretical speculations they deserve some attention and testing. If they are even partially correct, they should be of concern to parents and have some affect on the way they handle their children's television viewing.

Television and the Family

Early commentaries expressed high hopes for the way television would help improve family life. It was to bring families together in one room,[47] make wonderful improvements in people's lives,[48] and be a real asset to any home with children.[49] Research soon indicated that these hopes were not necessarily well-founded. In 1954 Elanor Maccoby reported conclusions from a study, reconfirmed in 1970 by Walters and Stone, that in the presence of television, families tend to exhibit behavior that is more parallel than interactive.

> Communication tends to be one-way from the television to the individual rather than two-way between individuals. Family activity tends to center around the main television set, which for much of the time is such an insistent communicator that half the families talk little or none when the tube is aglow.[50]

Himmelweit also reported that while television does keep members of the family at home, "it is doubtful whether it binds the family

together in more than this physical sense."[51]

Recent publications show that not only may TV lack the hoped for positive effect on family life, it may actually have a detrimental effect. For example, Maccoby's "parallel viewing" families have turned into families who surrender most of their free time to television and may go for days without exchanging more than a few sentences. "In spirit, many of these households operate as a rooming house; everyone keeps to himself, rarely sharing any of his experiences, concerns, fears, or joys."[52]

Another way television can be detrimental to families is by damaging parent-child bonds through shows that ridicule parental knowledge and authority. "In more and more shows parents are being portrayed as fools, buffoons, and fumbling and bumbling boobs. Watching Saturday morning TV is like experiencing 'Ridicule Your Mom and Dad Day.'"[53] Other shows portray child characters as being able to solve all of their problems without adult help. Leading children to think they could survive alone at the age of four, five, six, or seven undermines the parent-child relationship. "Instead of bringing his problems to his parents, the child may first try to solve them himself, possibly hurting himself physically and psychologically in the process."[54] Television can also have negative effects on family relationships because the hours a child spends in a one-way relationship with television people, which allows for no communication or interaction, affects his relationships with real-life people.[55] As Bruno Bettelheim puts it:

> Children who have been taught or conditioned to listen passively most of the day to the warm verbal communications coming from the TV screen, to the deep emotional appeal of the so-called TV personality, are often unable to respond to real persons because they arouse so much less feeling than the skilled actor.[56]

Perhaps even more damaging to the relationships of a family which spends most of its time watching TV is the elimination of opportunities to do other things—talk over grievances, even argue. "Families frequently use television to avoid confronting their problems, problems that will not go away if they are ignored but will only faster and become less easily resolved as time goes on."[57]

Possible solutions to potential television problems

Throw out the television

It is obvious that while television may entertain and educate and is even regarded as a member of the family, it also has the potential to produce some undesirable results. For some the only way to eliminate these effects is simply to get rid of their television sets. There are magazine and newspaper articles in which people who threw out their televisions give pep talks about how they do more things as a family, communicate better, and have more time to get more things done.[58] However, television is far too ingrained in the American way of life, if only because people like to watch it so much, for such a solution to be practical. Barring some unforeseen disaster or technological advancement, television is a permanent

fixture in society. Advocating its absolute elimination is an exercise in futility.

Realize Television Does Have Potential

As this review indicates, the majority of television literature points out the negative aspects or possible detrimental effects of watching television. This may be because researchers do not think a population which watches 20 to 46 hours of television a week needs much convincing that television is a wonderful medium. Or it may be that they think the positive elements are so obvious they need no explanation. Or perhaps they just like to be pessimistic. At any rate it is important to note that television is not all bad.

For example, the concern about the connection between television violence and youth aggression is based on the assumption that children learn from, and imitate, the behavior they see on television. If that assumption is true, in spite of Cohen's fears to the contrary, television is at least a potential learning medium and if children can learn violence, sex, and greed from watching television, they ought to be able to learn problem solving, love, and unselfishness as well. Various studies show that children can learn sharing,[59] self-control,[60] honesty,[61] and courage.[62] Television can also increase a child's knowledge of the world around him[63] and help facilitate his socialization into society.[64] The problem, then, is to maximize the possibilities of television while eliminating, or at least reducing, the negative ones.

Capitalization on its potential as an educational device

Regardless of whether it is good or bad for them, most children watch television. Most watch more than just "children's education" shows. Rosemary Lee Potter has found a way to capitalize on children's television interests in the classroom, to help them learn to think, read, and develop their interests. For example, she teaches children to alphabetize by having them name their favorite television shows. When the list gets fairly long she asks how they can organize the names so they will be able to find them easily. She lets them make suggestions and guides them to the idea of putting them into catagories according the the program's first letter. (They learn to alphabetize the rest of the name later.)[65] Then they list the occupations of the people on the shows and spend several days discussing each occupation. The children choose one or two that interest them, read articles and books on them, and write papers about them. She also teaches phonetics by using examples like B is for Batman, C is for cartoon instead of B is for Bat, C is for Cat.

According to Potter, teachers probably have not made use of commercial television's potential because of the generally negative view held about it.

> Citizens' concerns about advertising exploitations and governmental studies about violence have probably established unconscious avoidance of commercial television among learning alternatives.[66]

Groups like ACT (Action For Children's Television) are trying

to get networks to improve their programing. But real changes come slowly and in the meantime if teachers can, they should use television the way it is now to help them teach instead of merely letting it compete with them.[67]

Parents

In any detailed discussion of the merits or problems of television, the responsibility of parents in the area of children's viewing comes up. It is not too likely that those of us who grew up watching television are going to be convinced that the very act of watching television causes severe and irrevocable damage to children. We turned out all right, didn't we? However, if children of the first television generation are going to provide the best supervision for children of the second television generation, they may ought to keep in mind the possibility that extensive television viewing may have at least some kind of detrimental effect. There is virtually universal agreement that parents can be more effective in making the television experience positive for children than the government, the broadcasters, or educators. Unfortunately, too many parents are unaware of this responsibility, do not accept, or exercise it in ways that may be harmful to their children.

Parents need to be aware that inherently television is a neutral medium,

> It teaches law-breaking and law enforcement equally well. It teaches the evil and the brutal as easily

> and completely as the good or the kind, what it teaches depends on the hands that control it, however wisely or ignorantly or innocently. It will teach what it shows no matter whether it intends to teach this or not.[68]

In its unique way television

> (1) provides information, fun, enjoyment, and pleasure; (2) brings parents and children a broader view of life than exists in or around the family context; (3) makes the unspeakable discussable by providing opportunities for expressing emotions which have never had occasion to surface; and (4) makes possible vicarious learning experiences for experimentation and self growth.[69]

If they will, parents can have an effect on what television teaches and build upon the positive things television can do. However, too many parents do not do so. Musgrave (1969) found that 53 percent of the parents of the 600 eleven-year-olds he studied did not prohibit their children from watching any programe and 40 percent did not encourage them to watch any specific shows. Steiner (1963) reported that even parents who oppose television have an only lassez-fair attitude toward control, and parents who are only somewhat concerned about television have practically no restrictions. And while Rarick (1973) found a significant degree of consensus between spouses as to which shows are desirable for their children, he found that only half of the families studied discussed those programs with their children. One third of his subjects said they attempted to control the kinds of shows their children watched, but only two people actually prevented their children from viewing undesirable shows.[70]

Some of the reasons given for parents not adequately controlling their children's television are: they hold a generally positive attitude about television; they think the negative effects of shows are outweighed by the overall positive effects; they lack the time for continuous supervision or discussion; and they are inexperienced.[71] In short, some parents simply are uncertain about what they should do because

> television helps to educate the child, but watching it interferes with his education. It helps keep him busy and out of mischief, but it also keeps him too busy to do his chores. It keeps the kids in when you want them in—which is good, except for some of the bad things they see. And it keeps them in when you want them out—which is bad even if they see good things. Ideally then, TV should provide interesting, educational programs that intrigue children when parents don't want to be bothered with them—but not when they ought to be outside or doing something else.[72]

There are those, however, who say that the biggest reason parents do not control their children's television is because they simply do not want to. For example, if a parent likes television, watches it a lot, and watches unselectively, he has a vested interest in defending television and in seeing no need to control what his children see.[73]

Another reason parents might not want to control their children's viewing is because television makes such a terrific baby-sitter. Parents have always needed a break from coping with active, noisy, normal children. As recently as a hundred years ago it was regarded as acceptable to beat, starve, or drug a child into being good — a "good" child being one who is untroublesome.[74] Today such practices are not only frowned upon, they have criminal sanctions. However,

parent's need for children who are easy to manage, at least part of the time, has not diminished. It is little wonder that

> when television appeared, it was seized upon as a way out of the dilemma: a flick of the switch transformed the child completely, albeit temporarily, from an energetic, noisy, intrusive creature craving activity and experience and requiring constant supervision and attention into a docile, quiet, undemanding presence. And this marvelous transformation was achieved with the child's cooperation! The child wanted to watch television, loved to watch, couldn't seem to get enough of it.[75]

As Steiner points out, using the television as a baby-sitter is hardly something very many parents are going to be especially proud of or particularly inclined to admit.[76] Therefore, it is not impossible that the widespread parental acceptance of television's educational benefits, perhaps even their clamor for more educational shows, stems from their "relegation of the young to the television set in the service of their own freedom. There would naturally be less reluctance about the peaceful, quiet hours that the youngsters spend in front of the set if the children are 'getting something out of it'."[77]

Too many parents do not realize that the reason they do not control their children's television is because to do so would curtail their own freedom. Even fewer have considered the possibility that, as Jack Gould put it as early as 1948, "Children's hours on television admittedly are an insidious narcotic for the parent. With the tots fanned out on the floor in front of the receiver, a strange if wonderful quiet seems at hand."[78] Perhaps non-controlling parents should examine that idea, keeping in mind that "There can be no more insidious a

drug than one that you must administer to others in order to achieve an effect for yourself.[79]

The parents who do exercise some kind of control over their children's viewing usually do so for two general reasons: (1) fear that their child may be adversely affected by premature exposure to the adult world and (2) a general belief that television viewing is less important for a child than other activities.[80] But if a parent handles his child's television experiences negatively, he can actually do more harm than good.[81] For example, some parents do not actually control their children's television, they control their children with television by using it as a means of punishment and reward. Doing so only serves to add to the value children place on watching TV.[82]

In the first really comprehensive study of parental control, Barcus outlines some of the negative behaviors parents have:

I. Negative or Restrictive Forms of Control

- A. Formal
  - 1. Control prior to viewing
    - a. Restrictions on
      - 1. content, programs
      - 2. time
        - a) number of hours permitted
        - b) certain hours
      - 3. until completion of other activities
  - 2. Control during viewing
    - a. shutting off set
    - b. switching channels
  - 3. Control after viewing
    - a. forbiding future viewing
- B. Informal
  - 1. Control prior to viewing
    - a. adult selection and viewing
  - 2. Control during viewing
    - a. scolding child while viewing
  - 3. Control after viewing
    - a. scolding child for things learned[83]

Some of these behaviors may not seem negative; after all, parents should forbid future viewing of programs that are not good for their children and should decide how long and what shows their children can watch, should they not? On the surface that may be true, but Barcus also outlines some positive controls which show that there are better alternatives:

II. Positive Forms of Control

A. Formal
1. Control prior to viewing
a. screening
b. selecting
c. suggesting programs for child
2. Control during viewing
a. discussion
b. interpretations
c. changing channel to another program
3. Control after viewing
a. answering questions
b. discussion of things viewed

B. Informal
1. Control prior to viewing
a. adult selection and viewing
2. Control during viewing
a. viewing with children, explaining
3. Control after viewing
a. praising things learned[84]

Some of the physical actions—changing the station and adult selection and viewing—may be the same in both types of control, but the attitude shown toward children is very different. Negative parents decide what and when their children will watch and forbid those shows if other things—homework, chores, etc.—are not finished first. They turn off the television or change the station if they find their children watching something they do not like and forbid them to watch

that show again. They scold their children for watching some shows and for exhibiting some behaviors learned from television. This method of control is short, to the point, easy.

Positive parents on the other hand view, screen, select, and suggest programs for their children. They watch with their children explaining, interpreting, and discussing the things they see. With such discussion, the children at least know what their parents think is objectionable, whether they agree with the objection or not, when their mother or father changes the station. And after viewing, the positive parents answer their children's questions, discuss what they have seen, and praise them for what they have learned. This method is time consuming, involved, hard work.

Positive behavior on the part of the parents may take extra effort, but it can help mitigate some of the harmful effects television may have. For example, when parents are willing to take the time to watch television with their children—and discuss what is seen—they can point out the educational aspects, assuage any fears the show may cause the child, explain any negative things in the program, and put the experience into perspective so it does not distort the child's sense of reality.

Corder-Bolz and O'Bryant found that adult comments while children are watching television can cause a "significant increase in the amount of information learned," from the show.[85] So if parents are concerned that no "real learning" is taking place when their children watch television, all they have to do is watch and discuss shows with them, and at least some real learning will occur. Prasad, Rao, and Sheikh found that parents should discuss commercials and products with their

children instead of arbitrarily refusing their demands. By doing so parents can reason their children out of insisting on something they don't really need or want, unless that product is extremely attractive to them.

Rutstein points out that when parents are willing to discuss with their children which shows they should watch, the parents are not only able to find out why their children like certain shows, they also have less trouble enforcing the viewing of the shows they want them to see than when they arbitrarily select the shows themselves.[86]

There is general consensus that parents need to remember there is no perfect number of hours a day their children should watch television. If there is nothing on worth seeing, a half hour is too much. If several good shows are on one night, three hours may not be too many. Parents need to be flexible. The age, maturity, and overall viewing habits should be a factor in how much television a child should watch on any given day.

A parent who exercises positive control also has to be aware that his children are entitled to certain rights in connection with their television viewing.

> Children become readily absorbed in what they view and to interrupt their viewing, even with the best intentions (be it for bed, homework, or running errands) it is likely to provoke unnecessary conflict; children in this respect should be given the same consideration as adults expect to receive.[87]

If parents do not put any restrictions on how much television their children can see, it is nearly impossible for them to let their children watch everything they want to without interruption. But if

parents do exercise such control, when they have come to an agreement with their children about which specific shows they can see, they ought to let them watch undisturbed. For example, if dinner always has to be at 6:15, a parent should not agree to a 6:00 show. If a program has been agreed upon which lasts until 9:00 and the child's bedtime is 8:30, curfew should be extended so that the child will not have to miss the last half hour.

Parents also need to realize that if their children are watching something and they want to see something else, simply being the parent does not give them the right to change the channel to whatever they want to see. Ideally, household programing is scheduled so that such a conflict does not occur—if a child's and a parent's favorite shows come on at the same time every week, they could take turns watching—but even in families where there is no advance planning, parents should extend the common courtesy they would expect or demand for themselves.

One of the biggest ways a parent can excerise positive control over his children's television is through his own example. If a parent views indiscriminately, his children are almost certain to do so as well. "Parents' best policy lies in establishing rules for viewing which, though flexible, are no less binding on themselves than on the child."[88] By setting standards for themselves, parents communicate to their children that they really believe what they say about television, but more importantly, that they feel so strongly about the need to control television use in their home that they are willing to restrict their own television watching.[89]

Because positive kinds of television control demand time and effort from parents, in order for them to be effective, parents must

first accept the fact that there is a need to control their children's viewing, and second, care about their relationship with their children. Studies indicate that no child is likely to be "much harmed by television if he has warm, secure social relationships and if he has no serious psychological troubles."[90] Even cases where television viewing seems related to violent behavior, or in cases of apparent addiction, it has often been found that there is also something wrong with the child's social relationships, usually his relationships with his family.[91] Parents must care enough about their children to be willing to take the time to plan their watching with them, answer their questions, and watch for symptoms indicating negative effects from television viewing which need to be corrected and positive effects which need to be praised and encouraged.

Summary of television

Television has become part of the American way of life. It is unlikely that parents are ever going to be convinced that the mere act of watching television will have devastating effects on either them or their children. However, television use has become so wide-spread, especially among children, that parents need to become aware of some of its potential hazards. The areas of television most frequently criticized are violence, sex, commercials, and the way television viewing may distort a child's perception of reality and hamper his learning ability.

Parents also need to know what they can do to counteract any negative effects television might have on their children. If parents

will decide in advance, with their children, what shows are to be watched, unselective, continual viewing can be greatly reduced. If parents will watch some shows with their children and discuss what is seen with them, they can help put the experiences into perspective for their children so that their perception of reality will not be so distorted. They can also increase the amount of material their children actually learn and reduce the amount of un-needed products for which they tease.

Family Home Evening

In the LDS view, parents have always been counselad to teach their children. The Lord told Adam and Eve shortly after they left the Garden of Eden

> And it is given unto them (your children) to know good from evil, wherefore they are agents unto themselves. Wherefore teach it unto your children, that all men, everywhere, must repent or they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God, for no unclean thing can dwell there, or dwell in his presence; ...Therefore I give unto you a commandment, to teach these things freely unto your children.[92]

The admonition for parents to teach their children has been repeated in all dispensations. After the organization of the Church, Joseph Smith received the revelation that

> Again, inasmuch as parents have children in Zion, or in any of her stakes which are organized, that teach them not to understand the doctrine of repentance, faith in Christ the Son of the living God, and of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, when eight years old, the sin be upon the heads of the parents. For this shall be a law unto the inhabitants of

> Zion, or in any of her stakes which are organized... And they shall also teach their children to pray, and to walk uprightly before the Lord.[93]

This revelation started the modern interest in some kind of program for families, but the first documented attempt to actually organize a home evening did not occur until 1909. In that year President Frank Y. Taylor, of the Granite Stake, outlined and organized a plan for a weekly family home evening.[94]

Although President Taylor's program received praise, the family home evening program remained a local effort for the next six years. Then, in 1915, President Joseph F. Smith gave Church-wide emphasis to the family and the need to teach children in the home.[95] The first Presidency issued a statement saying that they advised the inauguration of a 'Home Evening' throughout the Church. This evening was to be a time when parents gathered their children together to teach them the word of the Lord. The time was to be devoted to

> prayer, singing hymns, songs, instrumental music, scripture reading, family topics, and specific instructions in the principles of the gospel, and on the ethical problems of life, as well as the duties and obligations of children to parents, the home, the Church, society, and the nation.[96]

They promised that

> If the Saints obey this counsel, ...great blessings will result. Love at home, and obedience to parents will increase. Faith will be developed in the hearts of the youth of Israel, and they will gain power to combat the evil influences and temptations which beset them.[97]

On January 2, 1946, the General Authorities sent a letter to all the ward and stake authorities outlining why a home evening program should be adopted in LDS homes. They also asked the Relief Society General Board to plan and supervise "The Family Hour."[98] The major objectives of the Family Hour were

1) To unify the family and enhance ennobling family relationships
2) To stimulate the teaching of the gospel, thereby strengthening testimonies of the individual members
3) To strengthen the moral and cultural influence in the home, and give the children an opportunity for self-expression
4) To encourage family participation in wholesome recreation
5) To give an opportunity for any desired discussion of family business affairs, and to point out the responsibilities of each member in the family organization as a whole
6) To increase the joy of living with each other.[99]

This version of the program lasted until 1964 when it was announced in October General Conference that The Family Hour was going to be part of the priesthood correlation program. The new family night was entitled "Teaching and Living the Gospel in the Home" and was inaugurated throughout the Church in January 1965.[100] Some of the objectives of this program were

1) To assist and encourage parents to take the initiative in teaching their children
2) To increase the spirituality and conformity to Christian principles
3) To improve the quality of interaction within the home
4) To strengthen the solidarity of the family[101]
5) To not only discuss the great gospel principles but to live and apply these principles in daily activities[102]

The lessons were designed "to be used in every home in the Church,"[103] with each lesson containing, "a basic gospel truth that is understandable and applicable to adults, youth, and children."[104] Parents were encouraged to study the lesson together a few days before the next Family Home Evening. " The Spirit of the Lord cannot bless the parents in presenting these lessons unless the parents do their part through careful preparation."[105] Parents were also instructed that "if for some reason a member of the family has to be away, the lesson should not be postponed, and if company should drop in at lesson time, the family should welcome the guests and invite them to join them in their Family Home Evening."[106]

Several blessings or satisfactions parents could expect from carrying out this program were outlined.

> 1) They will be partners with our Heavenly Father in teaching the gospel to their family.
> 2) They will find a beautiful spirit in the home—a spirit of kindness, patience, understanding, growth, and love. This will be manifested in the sensitive and considerate ways in which each member of the family treats every other member.
> 3) They will feel a strength in the family unit, because each member will complement the lives of every other member. The total resources of the family—that is, the knowledge, wisdom, skills, patience, understanding, and love—will be available to everyone.
> 4) As a result of the above kinds of blessings, each member will feel more confident in his group relationships in and outside the home.[107]

A few years later, Elder Boyd K. Packer of the Council of the Twelve added:

> The family home evening, held once a week, can be a focal point for all families' activities and relationships. It

can be the beginning and end of many exciting and important things, many casual things, and many sacred things that fill the weeks between them. The father will improve family home evening once he decides what he wants to give his family. Most fathers concentrate on material security for their children. Securities stored up for this lifetime, with the world situation as it is, could, and possibly will, vanish. To really secure one's own children, give them a memory of a happy home life. There is a pattern, a blueprint for them to follow, an image for them to create, an ideal for them to realize.[103]

For a program that is stressed so often in so many meetings, conferences, and Church magazine articles, remarkably little research has been done on Family Home Evening. One study was done in 1977 by Roland Turnbow concerning the effect of Family Home Evening on Latter-day Saint youth. He found that those who were regular attenders of FHE: had a closer relationship with their parents and were more inclined to call on them for assistance; were more specific in their goals; felt more comfortable in discussing personal problems which they face in their lives; perceived their mothers and fathers to be more accepting and showing more affecting to their children; attended Church more often; and had fewer arguments about religion and church activity than their non-attender peers.

Another study was commissioned by the Church in June of 1977. The findings of this study are not available to the public.

Summary of the Family Home Evening

The LDS Church has stressed the importance of families and the teaching of children since its organization. In 1909 the Church developed a specific program designed to help men and women be

better parents and to bring families closer together. This program has undergone various changes over the years, but its main function is still to provide a structured way to help parents teach their children.

Justification of the Study and Definition of the Problem

There are various aspects of watching television that are at least potentially harmful for children and there are various positive and negative ways that parents can cope with these potential hazards. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has a program designed to help parents better fulfill their role of teaching and setting examples for their children—The Family Home Evening program. The relationship between television viewing and religion has received almost no attention from social and behavioral scientists.[109] This study will examine those two elements and attempt to discern whether there is a relationship between parenting behavior in a religious area and parenting behavior in the secular area of television.

Questions to be answered

This study will attempt to answer three main questions in connection with a religiously based parenting improvement device and types of television control.

Question 1: Are parents who are most conscientious about holding Church outlined Family Home Evenings also most prone to positive television control?

If parents are actually achieving the goals of the FHE program in relation to their becoming better parents, the principles they learn in FHE should spill over into some of their other parenting behaviors, i.e. television control. And thus those who hold the best FHE's should also have the best television control.

Question 2: If the above relationship does not exist, what relationship does exist?

This question is based on the assumption that not only are there two types of television control, but that there are four types of families holding Family Home Evening. The first type is the family that follows the Church outline for FHE completely. The second type is the one which does not follow the Church outline so strictly. They usually hold some kind of Family Home Evening, but it is often in the form of a family problem solving session, a family activity, or a lesson derived from some source other than the FHE manual. The third type family does not hold a structured lesson regularly but has some kind of family activity nearly every week. The fourth type family does not like Family Home Evening, rarely has it, and may or may not have family activities. This study should show whether or not these types of families exist.

If all of these types of families exist, it is not impossible for any of them to be related to either form of television control. For example, type one family—positive control, types two, three, and four—negative control, type two—positive control types three, four, and one—negative control, etc. etc. etc.

Question 3: If some other relationship exists besides the one described in question one, what are the possible reasons for that

relationship?

Although it is logical to assume that good parenting behavior in one area will help foster good parenting behavior in another, it is possible that by the time the strict FHE holders hold FHE and go to all of their Church meetings, they may simply be too tired to conscientiously supervise their children's television. It is also possible that strict FHE is not what fosters good parenting behavior and some other type FHE family will have positive television control.

This study will investigate those and similar possibilites.

Limitations of the Study

There are, of course, other factors affecting the way parents control their children's television, but this study will only examine that control in relationship to how it is affected by the types of Family Home Evenings the parents hold and by their attitude toward the program and the manual.

This study will be dependent on self-report measures and thus subject to the problems thereof. The respondents will be interviewed by student interviewers. The sample is made up of only 54 people. The ways in which these problems have been compensated for will be discussed in chapter two.

Chapter 2

Methodology

This chapter will discuss the sample, the instrument and its development, the circumstances of data collection, the coding, and the types of analyses used.

The Sample

The sample for this study consisted of 54 people—25 males and 29 females. They were drawn from the population of United States LDS Church members in three regions—west, intermountain, and midwest and east. Three wards were randomly selected from each region and fifteen names for each ward were randomly selected from an Ensign subscription list. The subscription list was used on the assumption that subscribers are at least nominally active in the Church. From the fifteen names the interviewers were to find five families that 1) were intact (had both parents) and 2) had at least one child living at home between the ages of three and seventeen. These controls were stipulated so that spouse and male/female comparisons could be made and because television control is not much of an issue before children are three or after they are seventeen. Ideally this would have yeilded interviews from 90 respondents. However, there were some wards in which the interviewer could not, or did not, locate five families.

There were also some families in which one spouse refused to participate. Thus, only 54 interviews were obtained.

The people who did respond came from the following wards: McLean, Virginia, three respondents; Grovetown, Virginia, two respondents; Baltimore, Maryland, one respondent; Tucson 6th, ten respondents; Manti 8th, eight respondents; Mountain Green, Utah, eight respondents; Portland 7th and 12th wards, eighteen respondents; and Grass Valley, California, four respondents. Originally the Tucson 12th and Portland 6th wards were selected, but there were not enough qualifying or cooperative families in those wards so alternates were selected.

It can be argued that 54 people, over half of who came from the same family, do not constitute a large enough or representative enough sample for a survey. However, the nature of the Q statistic makes a small sample of people adequate, even preferable, if the people in the sample are truly representative of the parent population. The nature of Q and the representativeness of the sample will be discussed in detail later.

Each respondent filled out a survey questionnaire and sorted two Q decks of 50 statements each, one deck about television and one about Family Home Evening.

The Instrument

The demographic questions were adapted from the demographic questions in the 1969 Church media study "Profiles of the Improvement Era Reader" developed by Dr. Dallas Burnett, chairman of the Department

of Communications, BYU, and George Barrus, BYU Communication professor. The questions dealing with television were developed by the author through literature research, telephone interviews, and personal interviews. The questions dealing with Family Home Evening were developed through telephone and personal interviews. Originally the survey included additional problem types of open-ended vignette questions and three other demographic questions. After a pre-test was conducted these questions were eliminated because they were vague, gave no further real information, or were objected to by the respondents because of content or time required to answer them. The survey was intended to provide demographic information and give some self-report statements which could be compared to the way each individual sorted his or her Q statements. The survey questionnaire in its final form is appendix A.

Some of the statements in the Q sort decks came directly from the literature. Some came as a result of random phone calls or personal interviews with people from the Provo/Orem telephone directory. Others came from discussions with professors.

Sixty statements were developed for both the television and the Family Home Evening decks. After giving a pre-test to 12 people, the decks were reduced to 50 statements each. This was done by coding the respondents' answers and eliminating the ten statements that people had no opinion about. Only statements that fell into each respondent's "no opinion" pile were eliminated. If a statement ranked either high or low by even one person, it was included in case that person represented the feelings of a group of people toward television or Family Home Evening. The remaining 50 statements were read by Professors Gordon

Whiting and Gordon Mills, who marked the ones they thought were unclear or inappropriate and suggested ways of improving them. The Q sort decks in their final form are in appendix B and appendix C.

The statements in the television Q sort deck were designed to indicate parents' attitudes toward television: Do they think it is a positive factor in their children's overall education and creativity, or do they see it as something potentially dangerous that needs to be controlled. It also checked parental behavior in regard to children's television: Do they use it as a babysitter, as a means of punishment and reward, or do they watch and discuss shows with their children and plan in advance what shows will be seen—all of which should indicate whether their control is positive or negative.

The statements in the Family Home Evening deck were designed to show the respondents' attitudes toward Family Home Evening —the program, the manual, and family activities—and their actual behavior—how often they hold Family Home Evening, what kinds of materials they use in their lessons, what kinds of things prevent them from holding Family Home Evening, and the ways in which they deviate from the outlined program.

Circumstances of Data Collection

The interviews were conducted during the Christmas vacation by eight hired student interviewers who were selected from a group of interviewers hired to participate in the 1977 Church study, "The Church Magazines: Readers and Non-subscribers," authored by Dr.

Burnett and Dr. Ralph Barney, BYU Communications professor. In connection with that study each interviewer attended two two-hour periods of instruction conducted by Dr. Barney and me. During this instruction they learned how to make appointments with their interviewees, how to administer questionnaires, and how to supervise the sorting of Q statements. The procedure they learned for the Church study was the same as they were to follow in this study.

Any researcher who has someone else do the interviews for him runs the risk that some mistakes will be made and the data he gets will not be 100 percent accurate. If all the respondents had come from Utah Valley, they could have been interviewed personally, and probably a larger percentage of accuracy assured. However, in this case it was decided that a regionally representative national study would justify some loss of accuracy.

Several things were done in an attempt to keep mistakes to a minimum. First, the Q sort decks were color coded. The television statements were all on yellow paper, and the Family Home Evening statements were all on green paper. This insured that the interviewer and the respondent could keep the decks separate. Second, the instrument materials came as a set—one survey, one deck of television statements, and one deck of Family Home Evening statements. Each element of the set had a previously assigned number so that even if the cards and survey became separated in transit, the right decks of cards could be assigned to the right questionnaires. Third, the interviewers were given written instructions detailing the controls on the families (intact with at least one child at home between the age of three and seventeen), how many Q statements belonged in each pile, and how to

gather and secure the cards once they had been sorted. Fourth, the interviewers did not do the coding. They returned the materials and I coded them. This made it possible to personally check for any gross errors. If it was obvious that a deck of cards had not been sorted or had been sorted improperly, if the Q deck numbers and the survey numbers did not match up, or if a Q deck or survey were missing from a set, that respondent's entire set was discarded. Through this procedure it was discovered that the Grass Valley, California ward intergot mixed up and gave the women the yellow cards and the men the green ones. He was able to go back and complete the interviews. However, the man assigned to Mountain Green got so mixed up that a new sample had to be drawn and interviewed.

Coding

As previously mentioned, the coding was done personally. The responses were coded into standard computer answer sheets which were later converted to computer cards by the BYU Testing Center. The questionnaire and the two Q sort decks were coded on separate computer sheets for all of the respondents. Approximately one out of five sheets for the Q sorts were recoded to hold clerical errors to a minimum. An error rate of .1% was detected.

Analysis

SPSS. The survey and Q sort responses were analyzed by the computer program Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), which

produces descriptive statistics—frequencies, modes, means, medians, ranges, standard deviations, standard errors, variances, and correlations. The program also indicates whether any cases are missing which allowed for further correction and reduction of error. For example, eight people had a Q statement missing. Those statements were recoded with the mean score of the sample for that statement. To give a general feel for the sample's characteristics and representativeness, some of the survey data will be reported here.

Age. The sample had a fairly wide range of parental ages represented. The ages ranged from 23 to 61. The most frequently reported age was 31. These ages are about what one could expect for parents who have a child at home between three and seventeen. No region or ward had a dominance of one age and all ages were fairly represented in each region.

Number and Ages of Children. Small, medium, and large size families were represented. The number of children ranged from two to fourteen. The median number was 5. Each region and ward had a variety of family sizes. No one place had a dominance of one size family.

The sample tended to have families with small children. The average family had one pre-schooler and one child in grade school. However, there was a mixture of children's ages representing families with pre-schoolers, and children in grade school, junior high, and high school, or a combination of the four. Ten families had at least one child living away from home. Each region and ward had a mixture of children's ages.

Sexes of children were fairly well represented. Families with both boys and girls constitute 75% of the cases. Of those reporting a dominance of one sex, 9.3% had all or mostly boys and 13% had all or mostly girls. There was no preponderance of sex of child in any ward or area.

Media Habits. The typical family (70.4%) subscribed to one daily newspaper. No one subscribed to more than two. Only nine people did not subscribe to one at all.* The typical family (59.7%) subscribed to one weekly newspaper. No one subscribed to more than two. Nineteen people did not subscribe to one at all.* There was no area difference in how many newspapers were subscribed to. These data suggest that the members of the sample at least had some access to current events and were not cut off from world happenings.

For the purposes of this study it is interesting to note that no one subscribed to a "media" magazine such as TV Guide. This means that although they may have had listings of shows in their newspaper, no one had immediate access to commentaries about those shows to help him determine which ones were suitable for his children.

*Husbands and wives are counted separately in these instances because they did not agree on how many newspapers they had.

Other magazine subscription patterns are shown in table 1.

Table 1 Magazine Subscription Patterns

	Number of Magazines Subscribed to				
	0	1	2	3	4 or more
Types of Magazines					
Church	3.7%	14.8%	37.0%	44.0%	
Family	37.0%	18.5%	24.1%	11.1%	9.3%
News	38.9%	20.4%	24.1%	11.1%	5.6%
Other	59.3%	29.6%	9.3%	1.9%	

(Percentages indicate percentage of sample population subscribing to that many magazines.)

These figures indicate that the majority of the sample are probably somewhat active in the Church. Over 80% subscribe to at least two of the Church magazines. This does not prove that they read them, but at least they have access to them. The fact that over 60% of the people subscribe to at least one family and one news magazine, and that 40% subscribe to two or more, indicates that the sample is composed of people who seem to be fairly well exposed to mass media literature and who at the very least consider reading worth paying for. There were no area differences in how many magazines were subscribed to.

Income. A wide strata of income brackets were represented, ranging from $5,000 or below to $45,000 or above. The most frequently reported income was $15,000-19,999. The Manti and

Grass Valley wards represented the low income areas. The average income was $10,000-14,999 and no one had an income larger than that. The other wards had one or two families in that income bracket, but most of them were $15,000-19,999 or above.

Occupation. The occupations fell into the following categories:

Professional/Technical	24.1%
Manager, Official and Business Owner	20.4%
Clerical/Sales Worker	3.7%
Skilled Craftsman/Foreman	1.9%
Service Worker, Private Household and Laborer	9.3%
Housewife (not in labor force)	40.7%

(Percentages equal the percent of the total sample population having that occupation.)

Three other categories—Farm Owner/Laborer, Retired/Unemployed/Disabled, and Student were included as possible answers, but no one fit into these categories.

These figures indicate that the sample was composed primarily of people having white collar occupations. There is no way of telling from this data if the majority of the U.S. Church members hold white collar jobs or if white collar people happened to be the majority of those randomly selected. As might be expected from the reported incomes, the majority of the blue collar jobs came from the Manti and Grass Valley wards.

Education. The education levels fell into the following categories:

Less than high school	5.6%
High School Graduate	24.1%
Attended trade school	1.9%
Attended some college	22.2%
College Graduate	14.8%
Some post graduate work	14.8%
Advanced degree	16.7%

(Percentages equal the percentage of the population at that educational level.)

These figures indicate that the sample is well educated with 67% having attended college and 31% having done post graduate work or obtaining advanced degrees. Tucson had the greatest number of people holding advanced degrees or having done some post graduate work. The other areas had a fairly even mixture. Generally men had more education than women.

Q Methodology. Both methods of television control and Family Home Evening behaviors are issues highly dubject to social desirability factors which could affect an individual's responses. Q methodology is not a fool-proof way of eliminating this halo effect of course, but because the respondent is forced to comparatively rank a series of already constructed statements, he is more likely to answer honestly and informatively than if he is merely asked, "Do you use the television as a babysitter?" or "How well do you like Family Home Evening?"

In a Q sort, the respondent sorts the sample of statements according to a modified normal distribution on the basis of some criteria—agree/disagree, like me/not like me, etc. In this study the statements were sorted on a nine point scale. Graphically this sort would look like the figure below:

				x		x			
				x		x			
			x	x		x	x		
			x	x		x	x		
		x	x	x		x	x	x	
		x	x	x		x	x	x	
	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
Most Like Me	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Frequency	3	5	7	9	2	9	7	5	3
Numerical value of responses	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

It is this sorting of statements that makes a small N adequate for Q. As Stephenson explains in his book <u>The Play Theory of Mass Communication</u>, the statements in the Q sorts need to be representative of all the possible statements about the issue. If these statements are representative, a large N is not necessary since, in effect, the statements are the variables, not the people.[1]

The Q sorts in this study were coded separately but analyzed together as if there had been one sort of 100 items with frequencies of 6, 10, 14, 18, 4, 18, 14, 10, and 6. This was done so that individuals could be typed both according to their television and their FHE responses. The data was then subjected to Q analysis.

The principle steps in Q analysis after the actual sort has been done are:

1) A matrix of intercorrelations is formed by correlating every person's sort of items with every other person's sort of items.

2) This matrix of intercorrelations is submitted to factor analysis so that persons are variables and items are observations. A principal axis solution is obtained. This is submitted to a varimax rotation which produces orthogonal factors. On this basis, a factor represents a grouping of persons around a common pattern of sorting the items. Hence, a factor represents a type of person.

3) Each pattern of sorting the items associated with each factor or type of person is estimated. This is done by weighing each item response of each of the persons most highly associated with a given factor by the degree to which they are loaded on that factor. The higher a person's loading on the factor, the greater is the weight. These weighted responses are summed across each item separately. This produces an item array of weighted responses for each factor in the rotated factor analysis solution selected. The arrays of weighted responses are then converted to z-scores.

4) The arrays of item z-scores are ordered from most accepted to most rejected for each factor. This provides a hierarchy of item acceptance for each factor or type of persons.

5) The arrays of items z-scores for each factor are compared by subtraction for each pair of factors. This provides the basis for differentiating one factor or type of persons from another.[2]

Results of this analysis will be presented in chapter three.

Next the respondents were asked where they keep their family TV. The majority (75.9%) keep it in "the room where the family usually gathers." Another 11.1% keep it, "in a room where the family only gathers to watch TV." A final 11.1% keep it where their children can get at it only with parental permission. It is the consensus in the literature that those families who have only one television, which is kept where the family only gathers to watch TV or where the children can only get at it with parental permission, should exercise more control—positive or negative—over their children's television than families who have several sets, who let their children have their own set, or keep the family TV in a room where the family always gathers.

In order to see if this assumption held for this sample, a chi square goodness of fit test was done between the number of televisions a respondent had and the individual's Q sort type. There was a relationship significant at the .007 level, between the number of televisions a respondent had and his Q sort type.* However, not only was the number of multi-set owners excercising control over their children's TV about equal to the number of single set owners, the multi-set owners excercised more positive controls than the single set owners. The possibility of a relationship between an individual's Q type and the placement of his TV was checked, but none was detected.

*Q sort types will be described later in this chapter.

In another question, the respondents were asked to rank a group of shows according to how well they liked them (see appendix A). The shows represent types of family, situation comedy, police, and educational programs. The answers to this question give a general idea of what types of shows the parents like. They also give a feel for what parents may be encouraging or discouraging their children to watch. The programs were scored on a two through six scale—zero was reserved for no response and one for shows the respondant was not familiar with. The mean results are presented in Table 2:

Table 2 Mean Scores of Program Ranking

Program	Mean Scores
Little House on the Prairie	5.131
Masterpiece Theater	4.306
Happy Days	4.218
Family	3.381
Charlie's Angels	3.152
What's Happening	3.002
Kojak	2.947
Welcome Back Kotter	2.794
Starsky and Hutch	2.163
Maude	2.152

These figures indicate that, unless this sample is atypical from that described in the literature and the children do not tend

to watch what their parents do, they are more likely to view Little House on the Prairie, Masterpiece Theater, and Happy Days than Welcome Back Kotter, Starsky and Hutch and Maude. Thus, whether it is intentional or not, the majority of these parents are encouraging their children to watch a family show dealing with the problems of growing up, an educational show sometimes dealing with themes rather mature for young children, and a situation comedy dealing with experiances of adolescents. They are also discouraging their children from watching a situation comdy dealing with adolescent problems, a police show dealing with violent themes, and a situation comedy dealing with mature themes, i.e., abortion, homosexuality, and adultery.

Another question in the instrument was intended to get at typas and methods of dealing with a child when he watches a show of which the parent disapproves. The answers provide a chance to compare this specific behavior with the general Q sort responses. The question was framed as follows:

> Mrs. Jones came home from a PTA meeting at 8:30 p.m. and found her 12-year-old daughter watching Police Woman, a show she had forbidden her to watch. She turned off the television set and sent her daughter to bed in spite of her complaints that it wasn't her bedtime yet.
>
> Do you agree with her course of action? _____Why? ____
>
> _____
>
> _____

According to Barcus' criteria outlined in Chapter One, turning

off the set and sending a child to bed is a negative form of television control. The responses show whether or not the respondents agree with a negative form of control and whether their reasons for agreeing or disagreeing are positive or negative.

Of the 52 people who responded to the question, 22 disagreed with the action, and 30 people agreed with it. The reasons given by those who disagreed with Mrs. Jones are presented in Table 3. Most of the people who disagreed with this negative method of control had positive reasons for doing so, i.e., they mentioned in some way that instead of arbitrarily turning off the television, they would have some kind of a discussion with the child.

Table 3 Reasons Given for Disagreeing with Mrs. Jones' Behavior

Positive Reasons for Disagreeing	Number of People
She should discuss it with her daughter and come to a decision about it together.	4
I would have turned off the TV but would have discussed with her why I didn't want her to watch that show.	3
I would let her know I was disappointed in her behavior, but would have found something else for her to do until bedtime.	2
She should watch the show with her and explain questionable parts and then decide what to do together	2
Neutral Reasons Tending Toward Positive	**Number of People**
Sending her to bed isn't dealing directly with the problem.	3

Table 3 Reasons Given for Disagreeing with Mrs. Jones' Behavior (continued)

Neutral Reasons Tending Toward Positive	Number of People
It would create negative feelings and a strained relationship to do what Mrs. Jones did.	3
She should have left someone to supervise her daughter if she felt that strongly about her watching that show.	1
Negative Reasons For Disagreeing	**Number of People**
She should have given her a related consequence—take away her viewing privileges.	3
Neutral Reasons Tending Toward Negative	**Number of People**
I watch it, why shouldn't my kids?	1

The reasons given for agreeing with Mrs. Jones' behavior are outlined in Table 4. The biggest concern for these parents was obedience, not television.

Table 4 Reasons Given for Agreeing with Mrs. Jones' Behavior

Positive Reasons for Agreeing	Number of People
If the punishment was agreed on and the reasons she shouldn't watch were explained beforehand, the punishment should be carried out.	1
Neutral Reasons Tending Toward Positive	**Number of People**
8:30 is too late for a 12-year-old to be up.	1

Table 4 Reasons Given for Agreeing with Mrs. Jones' Behavior (continued)

Negative Reasons for Agreeing	Number of People
The daughter disobayed and rules must be maintained.	14
She should also restrict her viewing privileges.	1

Neutral Reasons Tending Toward Negative	Number of People
Every parent has the right to raise his family tha way he wants to.	2

(One person did not say why he agreed)

Chi square tests show that the way people answered this question was not related to age, number of children, number or placement of televisions, or the area of the country the respondent was from. And although one might assume that the answers to this question would point to a Q type, there was, in fact, no significant relationship between the preferred answer and the Q type. However, the way a person answered was related to sex at the .06 level of significance, with females being inclined to disagree and males inclined to agree with Mrs. Jones' behavior. This suggests a possible relationship between tendencies to positive TV controls and sex. It appears that males use negative control more than females.

The respondents were also asked a question designed to describe how they handle situations when a TV scene they find questionable comes on.

Mr. Smith and his son Tom were watching a television show they watched together every week. Tom was also doing his homework. There was a scene Mr. Smith strongly disapproved of. He looked at Tom. He seemed caught up in a math problem. "This show is usually good and he doesn't seem to have noticed that scene, so unless he says something about it, I won't bring it up," Mr. Smith said to himself.

What would you have done in this situation? _____

_____

_____

The consensus of the literature is that the effects of television on children can be modified by adult comment on specific scenes. For example, Singer and Singer[1] found that children can actually be more creative than normal after watching TV if an adult makes the proper comments about the incident. There is also a concensus that a parent cannot assume his child has not absorbed something going on on television simply bacause he does not seem to be paying attention. In this instance the positive form of behavior would be for the father to talk to his son about whatever it was he found questionable. If the respondents consistently use positive behavior in similar situations, their responses should mention the importance of discussing the scene with their children. However, only 26% said they would talk about the scene, while 67% said they would do the same as Mr. Smith, turn off the TV, or change the station. There were three people who did not answer the question. The responses are detailed in Table 5.

Another series of questions was asked about the respondents' Family Home Evening behavior. These questions were designed to give an idea of how many times they held FHE, how they used the manual, and how many activities they participated in as a family. This kind of specific information allows for comparison with the general attitudes they express about FHE in the Q sorts.

The parents were asked how many times they had held Family Home Evening in the past two months (a nine week period). Answers ranged from zero to nine and the mean number of times was 5.093. There was no relationship between the number of times a person held FHE and the Q sort type he fit into.

The people were also asked questions about the Family Home Evening manual. About 60% of them kept the manual with the Church books or on a coffee or end table with all other locations totaling about another third of the responses. Only three people did not own a manual. The number of times the manual was used for the FHE lesson ranged from zero to eight and the median number of times it was used was 3. The respondents were also asked how many times they used a Priesthood manual, Relief Society manual, or other Church publication for the lesson. Answers ranged from zero to four and the median number of times was .271.

Thus the people in this study held Family Home Evening about half the time, used the manual about half of the times they held FHE, and rarely used some other Church magazine. These responses were not related to sex, area, or Q type of the respondent.

Next the respondents were asked to indicate how many times they participated in various activities either as a family outing or as a Family Home Evening. The mean results are detailed in Table 6.

Table 6 Mean Number of Times Respondents Participate in Family Activities in a Nine Week Period

Activity	Mean Number of Family Outings	Mean number of FHE's
Sports	1.167	.389
Movie	.444	.148
Shopping Trip	2.352	.222
Home Project	2.130	.685
Service Project	.778	.241
Other	.574	.352

The families surveyed did not do a lot of things together—either family outings or Family Home Evenings. The most frequently held activities were shopping trips, home projects and sports. However, although the overall figures point to a minimum of family activity, there were some people in each category who often held both Family Home Evening activities, and family outings. The number of times a person said he participated in these activities did not seem to have any bearing on the Q type he fit into.

Finally, the last question in the survey was an open ended question asking people what their three most important challenges were. The responses are indicated in Table 7.

Table 7 Respondents' Three Most Important Challenges

Challenge	Percentage of People Who Who listed that Challenge		
	First	Second	Third
Raise children	29.6	9.3	5.6
Teach children—the gospel good habits, self reliance	18.5	9.3	1.9
Finances	9.3	22.2	5.6
Success in business	5.6	3.7	—
Retirement	3.7	5.6	5.6
Keep Commandments	1.9	3.7	14.8
Get or keep active in Church	1.9	3.7	7.4
Be a good spouse and keep family close	—	14.8	5.6
Health	—	3.7	7.4

The most frequently mentioned challenges were raising and teaching children. Others mentioned ware: keep up with the times, organize life, cope with step children, get more education, and being and older parent. The challenges people gave were not related to their age, sex, number of children, number and placement of TV's area of the country, Q type, or the way they answered the questions about Mrs. Jones and Mr. Smith.

Q Sort Findings

The data from the Q sorts were subjected to the Q analysis described in Chapter Two. In the first analysis a solution with eigenvalues of no less than 2.7 was asked for. The result was a one factor solution into which most of the sample fit, at least generally. This analysis also indicated that the average reliability of the individual sorts was .75 and that the range of reliability in sorting behavior was rather substantial—from .50 to .91.

The single factor solution accounts for 35% of the total variance and some factorists would select this solution on the grounds that extracting additional factors from the correlation matrix does not account for an additional five percent of the total variance. This single factor seems to be the general factor underlying much of the behavior of the people doing the sort. This factor becomes an estimate of the average Mormon parent, when we consider TV and Family Home Evening activities alone.

The type of parson described in the single factor solution appears to be very pro-Family Home Evening. He thinks it benefits him personally by helping him learn to teach and live the gospel. He thinks it helps him with his family by enabling him to bear his testimony without sounding preachy, by bringing unity to his family, and by helping him and his spouse communicate with their children better. He thinks it helps his children get along with each other, learn to recognize the Spirit, give lessons, read the scriptures, and deal with problems.

This type parent says he almost always had FHE on Monday night and almost always uses the manual. He says that both he and his children like the manual and they do not think that any of the lessons are dull or irrelevant to their problems.

This type parent strongly disagrees with anti-Family Home Evening statements. He does not think, "there are so many other Church meetings that FHE is unnecessary," or that, "the Church should put more emphasis on gospel principles and less on FHE." He says he does not think Family Home Evening has any kind of negative effect on his family, and that he would never put things like children's chores or homework before having FHE.

With regard to television, the single factor parent says he controls his children's TV more than most parents. For example, he always makes his children stop watching at a specific time on school nights, his family does not watch what the fussiest child wants to see, he does not encourage his children to watch mature shows to "help prepare them for adulthood," and he does not think his children are old enough to decide what and when they should watch. He does not think TV is criticized too much.

This type parent also says that he uses positive forms of television control. He tells his children which behaviors he does not like when they appear on TV and discusses the problems they see and how they relate to their lives. He says he does not use TV as a babysitter or a means of punishment and reward.

He thinks other things are more important then TV. He reads more than he watches and thinks his children spend more time outside than watching TV.

The one factor solution is interesting in that it describes what the average Mormon says he does. However, it is not sufficient to describe, or make interpretations about, this group of specific people. For one thing, although Q sort method was chosen because it tends to reduce halo effect, social desirability contributed to the responses individuals gave.

The consensus in this type about Family Home Evening is just about what the Church would like it to be—it is a beneficial program, usually held on Monday, and usually consisting of a lesson from the manual. However, when asked how many FHE's they actually held in the past two months, only one person said he held it every time and eight people did not hold it at all. It is true that 33 people said they held it five times or more, but 21 people said they held it four times or less. The responses of those 21 individuals indicate that while people may think FHE is a wonderful program, for some reason they do not hold it consistently.

The one factor person also says he and his family like the FHE manual, but only two people used the manual eight times and 14 people did not use it at all. Only 13 people used the manual five or more times while 41 people used it four times or less. They may like the manual, but they do not use it.

Social desirability is also apparent in the television responses. For example, although the one factor type person says he discusses with his children things he sees on television that he does not approve of, 39% of the people said they would have done the same as Mr. Smith and not discussed the objectionable scene with their child. There were 28% who said they would have changed the station, turned off the TV or found something else for the child to do. Thus 76% would not have discussed the scene with Tom and only 26% would have.

Another reason the one factor solution is not sufficient to interpret the sample is because it leaves 38% of the explainable variance and nine of the people unexplained.

Because of these discrepancies and unexplained variance in the one factor solution, a two, four, and a five five factor solution were obtained. The four factor solution was settled on as the best solution for several major reasons. First, the two factor solution had the same basic problems as the one factor solution—it was difficult to interpret and left reliable variance unaccounted for. Second, no significant correlations remain in the residual matrix after four factors are extracted. Third, in the four factor solution the eigenvalues are still 2.084 or above, while in the five factor solution they go down to 1.595 with less than a 4% increase in explained variance. Fourth, the four factor solution explains 88% of the explainable variance. Before rotation the variance is explained as follows:

35% first factor

5% second factor

5% third factor

4% fourth factor

9% remaining reliable variance

43% error, unreliability

Fifth, according to the Keil-Wriggley criterion, a factor must be defined by at least three variables with their highest loadings in the rotated solution on that factor. The five factor solution has two of its five factors defined by two or fewer highest loadings. And sixth, the factors in the five factor solution become fuzzy and difficult to interpret.

Interpretation of the Four Factor Solution

The four factor solution explains 48 people and leaves six unexplained. Each of the six has a reliability score of less than .55—the rest of the sample has a reliability of less than .75. Thus, while the solution does not explain these people, one of the reasons why is because they were not conscientious or careful in their sorting behavior. They may simply have been poor respondents.

With regard to purity*, the breakdown of individuals in the four factor solution is as follows:

---

*Purity is the percent of the variance explained by the largest loading as compared to the total variance explained.

Factor	Number of People	
	Purity .7	Purity .5
Factor One	7 of 17	13 of 17
Factor Two	7 of 22	18 of 22
Factor Three	4 of 8	6 of 8
Factor Four	3 of 7	6 of 7

Thus the factors are fairly pure.

The four factor solution has 20 consensus items and 80 items that differentiate types of people.

Common Attitudes and Behaviors

Regardless of their actual behavior, all the respondents had high agree ratings on some of the pro-Family Home Evening statements. They think FHE helps parents communicate better with their children and that it helps their children learn to give lessons, read the scriptures, recognize the Spirit, and deal with their problems.

They say that they and their children like FHE and they think the lessons from the manual are interesting. And they disagree with critical statements like, "I still hold FHE even though there are some things I don't like about the program," and "I still hold FHE regularly even though I seldom see any good results."

No matter what they really do, they all say that they do not use the television as a means of punishment and reward, they do not watch what the fussiest child wants to watch, and they never let their children stay home from any Church meeting to watch TV. They

also said that they encourage their children to read as many hours as they watch TV and to watch shows such as the news, Masterpiece Theater, and Once Upon a Classic. They do not change the channel to what they want to see if their children are watching something else.

The people in this sample also agreed with some, at least potentially, negative forms of television control, i.e., they interrupt their children to help them do chores even if they are involved in a television show, and if their children are watching a show they disapprove of, they are more likely to change the channel than argue with them about it.

Description of Factor Types

I will now characterize the four factor types based first on the typical Q sort each type produced and secondly on the responses of those individuals most highly correlated with the type to the survey questions.

Type A Parsons: Anti-Television, Family Home Evening Conformists

The type A person is very much in favor of strong television control, and he thinks he controls his children's television more than most parents. He suspends his children's television privileges when they watch shows he has forbidden them to watch and if they display negative behaviors that he thinks they learned from a TV show, he forbids them to watch that show again. He decides in advance what

is appropriate for his children to see. And his family never watches TV on Sunday.

Type A does not think television has much to offer. He does not think it is an effective way to broaden his child's knowledge of the world or increase his vocabulary. He worries about the way certain shows seem to affect his children's behavior and he notices that his children fight more after watching Saturday morning cartoons. He does not think it is important to watch at least one television show with his children at night and he does not think they should be able to watch three hours of TV in one day, even if there are three good shows on that day and none the next.

Type A watches the news less than any other type.

A type A person is pro-FHE. He says he usually uses the manual, his children's homework and chores never come before holding Family Home Evening, his family is never too busy to hold FHE, and they rarely do not remember to hold it. He does not think his family benefits more from doing things together than from having a structured lesson.

However, type A also seems to say he likes FHE more out of conformity than from genuine affection. He admits that he holds Family Home Evening even though there are some things he does not like about the program because he thinks it will eventually have a good effect on his children and that he sometimes does not have FHE because he does not like the manual. He usually prepares his lessons on Monday night and he trys to hold FHE regularly even though it often results

in family disharmony and is difficult to fit into the family's busy schedule.

Type A does not do so often, but he has investigators come to his Family Home Evening more often than anyone else.

Of the people in this sample, the typical type A person is likely to come from Portland or Tucson, areas with enough Church stakes to be out of the 'mission field' category, but also out of the tight Utah-Southern Idaho area of Church influence. He is apt to be between the ages of 25 and 34 and is as likely to be male as female. His income ranges anywhere from $10,000 to $24,999 and his profession is Professional/Technical or housewife. He has been to at least some college and is apt to have some post graduate work. He takes at least two Church magazines, three other types of magazines and two newspapers.

A type A person has one TV which he is apt to keep in a place where his children can only get at it with his permission. He dislikes all of the shows listed on the survey except possibly Little House on the Prairie, Family and Kojak. His responses to Mrs. Jones/Mr. Smith situations are slightly more apt to be negative than positive.

Type A has about seven Family Home Evenings in a nine week period, half of which are with a manual. The only thing he is very likely to do with his family as a whole is a home project and he is not likely to have any kind of family activity as a Family Home Evening.

His most important challenge is teaching his children.

Summary of Type A

Type A says Family Home Evening is wonderful, but some of his statements suggest that he says so more out of conformity than from ganuine approval of the program. He does not like television and does not think it has much to offar his children and tends to be negative in his control. He is young, well educatad and fairly well paid. He comes from a large city out of the immediate Utah-Idaho circle of Church influence. There are 17 people, 12 of whom are couples, in Type A.

Type B Person: Holds Casual Family Home Evenings, Has Basically Positive Television Control

The type B person is much more casual about his Family Home Evening attitudes and behaviors than type A. He likes FHE, but mostly because it is the only time during the week when his family can be together. He usually prepares his lessons in advance, but he thinks his family's best FHE's are when they catch up on things like journal entries and letter writing or use it as a problem solving session. And although he goes through the manual from cover to cover, he usually supplements his lessons with articles in the Church magazines or prepares a lesson from the manual for the younger children and one with some other Church publication for the older ones.

The type B person does not think that, "there are so many Church meetings during the week another religious meeting is not

necessary," or that his children learn more from experiences they have as a family than from hearing about another family in a lesson. And they do not skip FHE even if one of the family members is not home on Monday night.

Type B does not do so often, but he has FHE with another family more often than any other type.

Type B is basically positive in his television control. He discusses the problems his children see on television and how they relate to their lives and if he sees behavior on TV that he disapproves of he usually tells his children what he does not like about it. He does not use the television as a babysitter by doing things like encouraging his children to watch a show when he needs time alone with his spouse and he says he does not think television is an effective way to keep his children occupied. He does not let his children watch television until their homework and chores are done and on school nights he usually makes them stop watching at a specific time.

Type B does have some negative television behaviors. When he finds his children watching a show he disapproves of, he usually turns off the set and if his children break a family rule, he sometimes punishes them by suspending their television privileges.

In this sample, the typical B person is most likely to come from Mountain Green—a small town well within the Church's immediate sphere of influence, but might come from Portland or Tucson. He is apt to be 35 or older and is as likely to be male as female. His

income is $15,000-19,999 or $20,000-24,999 and his profession is anything from sales clerk to professional/technical. He is a high school graduate or has some college training. He takes two or three of the Church magazines and at least two other types of magazines and two newspapers.

There is not noticeable overlap between how many television sets the people most like type B have or between where they keep their televisions. There is also not much in common in the way they rated the TV shows except that they are apt to like Little House On the Prairie and Happy Days and never have heard of Masterpiece Theater. A type B person's responses to Mrs. Jones' situation are likely to be positive but his responses to Mr. Smith's situation are likely to be negative.

Type B either has eight or four Family Home Evenings in a nine week period and uses the manual anywhere from zero to six times. He is likely to do home projects, service projects, shopping trips or sports with his family and is almost as apt to participate in them as a Family Home Evening as just a family outing.

His most important challenge is teaching or raising his children.

Summary of Type B

Type B appears to have a genuine affection for the kind of Family Home Evening he holds. He has FHE fairly regularly, but it is more apt to be a problem solving session or a family activity than a structured lesson. Although he has some negative behaviors, his television control is likely to be positive. He discusses with his children the things they see on TV and does not use the set as a

babysitter. He is 35 or older, moderately educated, and fairly well paid. He is likely to come from a small Utah town, but might come from a large city out of the immediate circle of Church influence. There are 22 people, 12 of whom are couples in Type B.

Type C Persons: Pro-Television, Inclined to Use it as a Babysitter, Unenthusiastic about Family Home Evening

The type C person likes television. He thinks it is a positive force in raising his children and that it helps do such things as increase their vocabulary.

His favorable attitude toward TV leads him to some negative behaviors. He often uses television as a babysitter by encouraging his children to watch a show when he needs to be left alone to work on something or when he and his spouse need time together. He thinks television is an effective way to keep his children occupied and has them watch TV if he is ill or if they are bored.

Some other negative behaviors type C has are that he lets his children watch TV even in there are no good shows on, and when there is no school the next day he lets them watch TV as late as they want to. He does not discuss with his children the problems they see on TV and no one decided in advance what shows should be viewed.

Type C does have some positive behaviors, however. When his children display negative behavior that he thinks they learned from a television show he does not automatically forbid them to watch

that show again. He does not simply turn off the set when he finds that his children are watching something he disapproves of. And he does not suspend his children's viewing privileges when they watch a show he has forbidden them to see.

Although a type C person thinks his children are adult enough to decide what and when they watch, there are some shows that he and his spouse watch that they do not let their children see.

The type C person is not wildly enthusiastic about Family Home Evening. He says his children learn more from experiences they have as a family than from hearing about some other family in a lesson, and that the Church should put more emphasis on the principles of the gospel and less on Family Home Evening.

Type C thinks it is difficult to hold FHE because he does not get the lessons prepared well enough in advance, his spouse and children do not like it, and because it interferes with such things as homework, chores, and preparing dinner. However, he says he still tries to hold it even though there are things about it that he does not like.

When type C does not have FHE he does not substitute some family activity and he does not think FHE is any good as a family problem solving session.

For the people in this sample, the area of immediate Church influence is not important. The typical C person is likely to come from Portland or Manti. He is as apt to be under 35 as over 35 and is as apt to be male as female. There is no noticeable overlap between the incomes of the people most like C, between their professions, or between their schooling—although they tend to be less than college

graduates. The type C person is apt to take all three Church magazines, two other types of magazines, and two newspapers.

There is no noticeable overlap between the people most like C and how many TV's they have, but they are likely to keep their main TV in the room where the family usually gathers. There was also no similarity in TV show preference, except that most liked Little House on the Prairie and Happy Days. The type C person's responses to Mrs. Jones/Mr. Smith situations are more apt to be negative than positive.

There is no similarity in what the people most like C consider to be their most important challenges.

Summary of Type C

Type C is not too enthusiastic about Family Home Evening. He thinks it is difficult to hold and that his family benefits more from doing other things. He loves television but uses negative TV controls. He lets the TV babysit his children and rarely discusses the things they see with them. He represents a mixture of young parents. His income ranges from very low to very high, as does his education, and he is as likely to come from a large city away from the Church's immediate influence as from a small town well within the Chruch's immediate sphere. There are eight people in Type C.

Type D Persons: Anti FHE, Basically Positive Television Control

The type D person is not convinced that there is a need for holding Family Home Evening. He says his family benefits more from doing things together than from having a structured lesson, and that they usually do not have a formal lesson but substitute some special

activity nearly every week.

Type D has a hard time having FHE. He does not hold it because one of them is not at home on Monday, he forgets to have it, his family is too busy, he thinks it's more important for his children to get their homework and chored done, and because he does not know how to get his family started in such a program.

Type D also does not use the manual very often. His children do not like the lessons and he thinks they are irrelevant to the problems his family faces.

Basically, type D is positive in his television control. In his household the whole family decided in advance the shows to be watched. On a school night he makes his children stop watching at a specific time. He does not usually interrupt his children to do chores when they are involved in a television show. And he usually watches at least one show a night while his children are watching. However, he is not likely to tell his children what he disapproves of if he sees behavior on television that he does not like.

If there is no school the next day, he does not make his children stop watching at a specific time and they usually end up watching what the fussiest child wants to watch.

There is to typical area for the people most like D to come from. D is apt to be 34 or less and female. Incomes are apt to be $10,000-14,999 or $20,000-24,999 and professions range from housewife to professional/technical. Type D is likely to only be a high school graduate. He subscribes to one Church magazine, one other type magazine and one newspaper.

There is no similarity between people most like D and how many TVs they have but the main TV is apt to be in the room where the family usually gathers. Except that they like Little House on the Prairie, there is no similarity in the shows that type D persons like. Type D's responses to a Mrs. Jones/Mr. Smith situation are more apt to be negative than positive.

There is no similarity in how many times the people most like D held Family Home Evening, but they all did not use the manual at all. Each person had about 10 activities with his family, but there was no similarity in the type of activity and it was not usually an activity as a Family Home Evening.

The biggest challenge was raising their children.

Summary of Type D

Type D is not convinced that a structured FHE is necessary. He usually does not have a formal lesson but has some kind of family activity nearly every week. He is basically positive in his television control. The whole family decides in advance what will be watched and he usually watches at least one show a night with his children. Type D is likely to be young and female. Type D's income ranges from high to low and education is modest. A type D person comes from no typical area. There are seven people, two of which are a couple in Type D.

Discussion of Q Types

Although, strictly speaking, the information gleaned from this study cannot be generalized to the whole United States Church population, since the sample was a random one, some possible trends can be pointed out. For example, the respondents were given an equal

number of TV and FHE statements so that both could have been equally important in differentiating types of people. However, the FHE statements were more significant in determining the category into which a person fit. This means that these people differ in patterned ways more in their behavior with regard to a program specifically outlined by the Church than they do in an area which the "proper" behavior has been left rather vague by Church authorities.

Another aspect that deserves some mention is the fact that the most prevalent type of LDS parent seems to be the one who has rather casual Family Home Evenings. This parent also has basically positive television control. The next most prevalent type is the one who has a conformist Family Home Evening. And he has basically negative television control. Therefore, for some reason having a Family Home Evening that follows the prescribed outline does not mean that a parent will also have positive control over his children's TV.

Those and other relationships will be discussed in greater detail in chapter four.

Characteristics of the Two Q-Sorts as Instruments

In order to further compare and relate the two Q-sorts, the television statements were intercorrelated and the FHE statements were intercorrelated. These intercorrelations produced matrices that were 50 variables square, i.e., 2,500 correlations each.

If the redundant correlations are removed as well as those in the diagonal (which are always 1.00 for square matrices), 1,200 meaningful, nonredundant correlations were calculated for each set of items.

The means and standard deviations produced for each item by these intercorrelations show that there was a greater divergence of responses for the TV items than for the FHE items. The means for the TV items range from 2.96 to 7.53, a difference of 4.57. The interquartile range is somewhat more restricted—from 4.05 to 5.85, a difference of 2.80. And the standard deviations for these items have a median value of 2.04, with only seven items producing a standard deviation less than 1.75.

In contrast, the means of the FHE items range from 2.94 to .83, a difference of 4.89. The interquartile range is 4.04 to 6.16, a difference of 2.12. The median standard deviation for these items is 1.74. This is less than the standard deviation of fully 43 of the 50 items. Further, only nine of the FHE items show a standard deviation larger than the median standard deviation for the TV items.

This indicates that while the 54 people who sorted these statements differ in their FHE attitudes and behaviors, they do not differ in as many ways as they do with regard to their TV attitudes and behaviors.

The pattern of correlations gives further support to this idea. The FHE statements produced 174 correlations larger than .30. A correlation this size reaches about the .02 level of

significance for this sample size in a two tailed test. Since 1,200 nonredundant correlations were calculated, it is possible that 24 of those obtained are simply random events. But the analysis generated 174, well beyond what might be expected by chance . This means that 14.4% of the correlations were significant at the .02 level.

The largest correlation in the FHE matrix was .74. It was between items 44 and 47, both of which amount to admission of seldom holding Family Home Evening. (See appendix C for details of wording). Four other corralations larger than .6 occurred. Although these statements basically amount to asking the same thing in slightly different terms, they do provide some information about the people. The .63 correlation between items 3 and 7—thinking FHE helps children recognize the spirit and thinking it is an effective way to teach the gospel—for example. Generally, these high correlations among similar items suggest that the sorting of the statements was reasonably reliable and done by most subjects with proper care. The total number of significant correlations affirms the relative similarity of the responses of the 54 subjects to the forced ranking procedure that Q technique entails.

The TV Q sort produced 100 correlations larger than .30, or an 8% significance where chance alone would yield 2% . The largest correlation among these items was .69. It occurred between items 48 and 49, both of which deal with using TV as a

babysitter. A smaller cluster of items—nos. 41, 47, 48, 49, and 50— all amount to different occasions for using the TV as a babysitter. These five generate the highest intercorrelations in this set of items. Once again there is evidence of conscientious and reliable sorting behavior on the part of the majority of subjects. The smaller number of significant correlations—smaller in contrast to the number found for the FHE items—reflects the greater heterogeneity among the 54 subjects in their television views.

Intercorrelations Between the Two Q sorts

The correlations between the television statements and the Family Home Evening Statements were also calculated. This analysis produced 1250 nonredundant and meaningful correlations, the additional fifty occurring because the correlation between item 1 of the TV statements and item 1 of the FHE statements is meaningful, and so on for items 2 and 2, 3 and 3, etc. This time 101 or 8% of the correlations were larger than .30.

While this set of correlations is a result of individual behaviors, it cannot be interpreted in terms of subsets of people. It must be interpreted in terms of subsets of items. Determining the proper subsets is difficult, however, since neither factor analysis nor any other procedure for handling matrices of correlations is appropriate. This is because the variables

on the rows are different than the variables on the columns, i.e., item 1 of the TV items is not the same as item 1 of the FHE items.*

Finding the subsets of traits that go together is a laborious task. Table 8 presents the 14 strongest relationships. As can be seen from a careful study of Table 8, the majority of the strong correlations indicate that good parenting behavior in relation to television control often goes with favorable attitudes toward Family Home Evenings. The strongest correlation (r= .51) indicates that those who read more than they watch TV, thereby setting their children a good example of selective viewing, are <u>not</u> the ones who find the Family Home Evening manual dull.** Parents who take the trouble to explain to their children their objections to certain scenes or shows

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*At this point it might occur to the reader that a factor analysis of the full 100 variables should have been carried out. This was not possible, nor would the results have been meaningful if it had been possible because the number of subjects (54) would have been less than the number of variables (100) and factor analysis cannot be meaningfully run under those conditions. It would not have been very meaningful even if additional subjects had been obtained to allow the running of the larger analysis, because the main factors which would have emerged would merely have reflected the fact that 50 of the items dealt with one topic and 50 with another. Only if it were possible to prevent this simple methodological finding from emerging would a factor analysis be useful. Finally, of course, a 100 variable factor analysis is not the cheapest to run nor the easiest to interpret.

**Often the easiest way to understand the negative correlations is to reverse the meanings of one of the two items and treat the correlation as positive. This has been done several times in the text. Table 8 gives the items and correlations as they occurred, however.

also tend to affirm that Family Home Evening helps unify the family (r= .45). Such parents also tend to feel that Family Home Evening gives them a chance to bear unpreachy testimonies (r= .42). Those who believe that FHE helps them live the gospel are also less prone to use the TV as a babysitter when they want to be alone than those who do not think so (r= .42). And those who have a TV deadline on school nights believe FHE helps their children get along better in other social situations (r= .42).

Table 8 Strongly Significant Correlations between TV items and FHE items.*

TV Item (paraphrased)**	FHE Item (paraphrased)***	r
25. I read more than I watch TV.	34. The manual is dull	-.51
31. I explain why I object to certain TV content.	11. FHE helps unify us	.45
31. I explain why I object to certain TV content.	9. FHE gives opportunity to bear an unpreachy testimony	.42
49. I use TV as a babysitter when I need time alone.	1. FHE helps us live the gospel	-.42
47. TV as babysitter when want time with spouse.	50. Kids learn more from family experiences than lessons.	.43
50. If kids bored, I encourage TV watching.	13. Family benefits more from doing things than a lesson.	.42
8. If 3 good shows on, kids can watch all 3.	35. Don't hold FHE because my lessons are dull.	.44
8. If 3 good shows on, kids can watch all 3.	24. We always hold FHE on Monday nights.	-.44
5. I only allow certain shows.	35. Don't hold FHE because my lessons are dull.	.45

Table 8 Strongly Significant Correlations between TV items and FHE items. (continued)

TV Item (paraphrased)**	FHE Item (paraphrased)***	r
6. I only allow watching at certain times.	37. I prepare the lessons on Monday.	.42
44. Watching TV increases kids vocabulary.	43. So much church, don't need a religious lesson.	-.43
3. School nights have a TV deadline.	8. FHE promotes children getting along.	.42
36. I encourage watching Sesame Street.	42. Hard to have FHE because kids won't cooperate.	.42
29. I encourage kids to watch adult shows to prepare than.	34. We follow the manual closely.	.42

*For this sample size, any correlation of .430 or larger is significant at the .001 level or more.

**See appendix B for the exact wording.

***See appendix C for the exact wording.

On the other hand, those who reject some aspects of a structured Family Home Evening also indulge in some poor, or at least questionable television control behaviors. For example, those who tend to feel that their children learn more from actual family experiences than from hearing about other families in the manual also use TV to babysit their children while they spend time with their spouses (r= .43). Likewise, those who suggest TV as a way to alleviate their children's boredom tend to reject a structured lesson in favor of a family activity (r= .42).

Some of the TV statements bespeak an issue of strictness or lack of it in setting family rules, and sometimes these go together with strictness in Family Home Evening. Those who let their children watch three good shows if three are on in a single evening* admit to not holding it on Monday nights (r= .44).

The picture of family TV habits and the use of Family Home Evening is not a completely clear one, however. Those who allow only certain shows excuse their failure to hold FHE on the basis of their dull lessons (r= .45). Those who only allow television viewing at certain times of the day tend to prepare their lessons on Monday (r= .42), a practice that the Church does not encourage. Those who affirm the somewhat dubious proposition that watching television increases vocabulary are not inclined to agree that the family gets so much church another religious lesson at home is not needed (r= .43). Encouraging the youngest children to watch Sesame Street, a program widely held to have principally prosocial consequences, correlates with the excuse that the children fail to cooperate in FHE, making it hard to hold successful ones (r= .42). (Does Sesame Street so heighten their expectations of entertaining instruction, or provide them with such uncooperative models that they learn to be difficult in Family Home Evening? The causal

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*This was originally intended as an indication of positive control because it shows that viewing time is not arbitrarily decided. However, it may also show that viewing time is not controlled at all.

relationship looks tenuous.)

Finally, and perhaps most strangely, a tendency to follow the manual closely goes with encouraging children to watch adult shows so as to prepare themselves for life (r= .42). While much would depend on how the parent interprets "adult shows," the conforming adherence to the manual seems an unlikely correlate of urging children to expose themselves to adult TV fare.

One, possibly two, of the above correlations may reflect merely chance results. The least interpretable correlations are the first ones suspected, of course, but there is no way of knowing for sure which they are.

One caution to keep in mind in considering these correlations and those that follow, is that the Q type with the most people has the greatest weight in determining the correlations among statements. Thus Type II, with 22 people has over three times the impact of Type IV with only seven people. However, to the extent the total sample of 54 people reflects the orientation of the active LDS church member in the U.S. on these issues, it is appropriate that the most populous type should have the most impact.

One final comment is in order regarding Table 8. The first TV item, statement 25 concerning reading more than watching TV, has no other significant correlations with any FHE item.* In the context

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*This is using a two tail .05 level of significance as a cut off point. This drives the size of the correlation considered down to .28 rather than the .30 utilized earlier in contrasting the results from the two sets of items separately.

of the other 11 TV items reported on in Table 8 this makes it unique. The median number of significant correlations for those 11 is three, with item 49 having nine significant correlations. The median number of the complete set of 50 items is .333, with every item having at least one significant correlation, and eight items (including item 25) having but one. The absence of any completely uncorrelated items speaks well for the reliability and quality of the measurement in this part of the study.

Table 9 outlines the other important correlations which are significant at the .01 level in a two tailed test. There are 33 of them.

Table 9 Significant Correlations Between TV Items and FHE Items*

TV Item (paraphrased)**	FHE Item (paraphrased)***	r_{xy}
18. Family decides in advance what shows to watch	17. Often use FHE as a problem solving session.	.41
50. If kids bored, I encourage TV watching.	4. FHE helps parents communicate with kids.	-.41
34. Watch National Geographic specials.	8. FHE promotes kids getting along.	.40
34. Watch National Geographic specials.	40. We hold FHE regularly but get no good results.	-.38
38. Encourage watching "Once Upon a Classic."	19. We try to be regular, but FHE interferes with homework, etc.	-.37
1. Don't let kids watch until their chores and homework are done.	10. Like FHE because it brings us together.	.37

Table 9 Significant Correlations Between TV Items and FHE Items* (continued)

TV Item (paraphrased)**	FHE Item (paraphrased)***	r_{xy}
13. Rule breaking punished by lifting TV privileges.	1. FHE helps us live the gospel.	.36
48. When ill I ask kids to watch TV so I can rest.	50. Kids learn more from family experiences than lessons.	.40
49. I use TV as a babysitter when I need time alone.	49. We don't know how to get FHE started in our family.	.36
49. I use TV as a babysitter when I need time alone.	34. The manual is dull.	.36
49. I use TV as a babysitter when I need time alone.	4. FHE helps parents communicate with kids.	-.36
2. On nonschool nights kids don't have to stop at a particular time.	26. Expect FHE will eventually have a good effect, but don't like some of it.	.36
2. On nonschool nights kids don't have to stop at a particular time.	25. Hold FHE regularly but don't like some of it.	.36
2. On nonschool nights kids don't have to stop at a particular time.	19. We try to be regular, but FHE interferes with homework, etc.	.36
26. Parents watch some shows kids not allowed to watch.	37. I prepare lessons on Monday.	.40
26. Parents watch some shows kids not allowed to watch.	38. FHE usually leads to bad feelings in the family.	.39
26. Parents watch some shows kids not allowed to watch.	20. Use priesthood manual for our FHE lessons.	-.35
8. If 3 good shows on, kids can watch all three.	47. Often forget to have FHE.	.39
36. Encourage watching Sesame St.	49. We don't know how to get FHE started in our family.	.36
31. I explain why I object to certain TV content.	49. We don't know how to get FHE started in our family.	.38

Table 9 Significant Correlations Between TV Items and FHE Items* (continued)

TV Item (Paraphrased)**	FHE Item (paraphrased)***	r_{xy}
20. We watch what the fussiest kid wants to watch.	5. FHE helps kids learn to give lessons.	.36
20. We watch what the fussiest kid wants to watch.	33. Lessons in the manual irrelevant to our family's problems.	.39
23. I usually watch the news.	30. My kids don't like lessons from the manual.	.41
23. I usually watch the news.	5. FHE helps kids learn to give lessons.	.37
40. My kids fight more after Sat. morning cartoons.	31. We don't have FHE; don't like this year's manual.	.39
40. My kids fight more after Sat. morning cartoons.	37. I prepare lessons on Monday.	.39
33. I'm concerned about TV effects on my kids behavior.	46. Family too busy to have regular FHE.	-.41
15. I speak sharply if kids neglect chores for TV.	29. We try to follow the manual closely.	-.41
13. Rule breaking punished by lifting TV privileges.	48. Church should emphasize FHE less and gospel principles more.	-.37
41. TV an effective occupier of kids.	22. Use manual with little kids and other church materials with older.	-.36
9. If kids do extra chores on their own they get to watch extra TV.	11. FHE helps unify us.	-.36
9. If kids do extra chores on their own they get to watch extra TV.	37. I prepare lessons on Monday.	-.40
37. I watch a show at night with my kids	26. Expect FHE will eventually have a good effect, but don't like some of it.	-.35

*For this sample size any correlation of .35 or larger is significant at the .01 level, two tails.
**See appendix B for the exact wording.
***See appendix C for the exact wording.

By in large these correlations add detail and strength to the principal interpretation given to Table 8. Good parenting in television control tends to go with favorable attitudes toward Family Home Evening. Some of the specifics are worth noticing, however.

Families who plan their TV watching also tend to utilize Family Home Evening for occasional family problem solving (r= .41). Parents who believe FHE promotes parent-child communication are not prone to send bored children to the television for amusement (r= .41). Parents who select National Geographic specials, Once Upon a Classic, and presumably other similar quality programs, also believe FHE helps children learn to get along, do not think FHE has no good results, and do not complain about it interfering with other important things (r= .40, -.38, and -.37 respectively).

Parents who provide structure and family rules for television viewing also seem to favor various aspects of Family Home Evening. Thus, insisting chores and homework are done first correlates with believing FHE is a good way to bring the family together. Punishing rule breaking in the family by removing children's television privileges correlates with believing FHE helps in living the gospel.

Parents who are lax or negative about TV also seem to be unfavorable to Family Home Evening. Not having a specific time for children to stop watching is related to not liking FHE but expecting it will eventually have a good affect (r= .36). Holding FHE regularly but not liking it (r= .36), and trying to be regular about holding it but finding that it interferes with homework, etc. (r= .36).

Parents watching shows that their children cannot watch is related to preparing FHE lessons on Monday (r= .40), thinking FHE leads to bad feelings in the family (r= .39), and not using Priesthood manuals for FHE lessons (r= .35). And letting children watch three hours of television if three good shows are on is related to forgetting to hold FHE (r= .39).

Some of the negative relationships are also interesting. Again, those who shove their children off on television tend to also reject aspects of the Family Home Evening program. For instance, using TV as a babysitter when ill correlates with believing in family experiences rather than lessons (r= .40). Similar babysitting items correlate with claiming not to know how to get the FHE program started (r= .36), thinking the manual is dull (r= .36), and with not believing that FHE helps promote parent child communication (r= -.36).

This table also does not give a completely clear picture of television habits and Family Home Evening attitudes. Once again encouraging small children to watch Sesame Street is related to a negative FHE attitude—"We don't know how to get such a program started." (r= .36) Parents explaining why they object to certain TV content is also related to not knowing how to get FHE started (r= .38). Watching what the fussiest child wants to watch is related both to thinking FHE helps children learn to give lessons (r= .36) and to thinking lessons in the manual are irrelevant to the family (r= .39). And watching the news is related both to

parents thinking their children do not like lessons from the manual (r= .41) and to thinking FHE helps children learn to give lessons (r= -.37).

It must also be noted that of the 26 statements that can be interpreted as favorable to FHE in tables 8 and 9, 20 are attitude statements, i.e. "FHE helps unify us," and "FHE helps us live the gospel," and do not shed any light on what the people actually do on Family Home Evening. Thus the favorable attitude toward FHE and positive TV relationships do not necessarily mean that the people have Family Home Evening as strictly outlined by the Church, but may have somewhat casual ones. This possibility is supported by the fact that the most populous group in terms of Q types has the greatest weight in determining the correlations among items and that group is the one which tends to have casual Family Home Evenings.

Chapter 4

Summary and Conclusions

Summary of the Study

The effect watching television has on children is an area of concern. The aspects most frequently pointed to as being potentially detrimental, which have at least some support in scientific studies, are violence, sex, and commercials. It is also speculated that watching TV may hamper a child's learning abilities.

There is virtually universal agreement among the scholars, social scientists, and educators involved with television that parents can do the most to eliminate, or minimize the potential hazards of TV viewing. Some of the things parents can do are: plan in advance, with their children, what shows are to be watched; set a good example by their own viewing habits; and be flexible about the number of hours and time of day their children can watch—if there are no good shows, a half hour can be too much, if there are several good ones, three hours may not be too many. Other things parents can do are: watch television regularly with their children discussing what they see with them, and talk about inappropriate scenes and explain what is wrong with them.

This study was intended to see if a sample of relatively active LDS Church members were aware of the need to control their children's television and if they used positive means to do so.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is concerned about families. It has an official program—Family Home Evening—which is designed to help mothers and fathers be better parents and

to bring families closer together.

This study was also intended to see what kind of attitudes and behavior these people express about FHE and to examine possible relationships between the kind of Family Home Evening parents hold and the type of television control they exercise.

Fifty-four people were randomly selected from three regions—west, intermountain, and midwest and east—and interviewed. They were each given a self-report packet of materials made up of a survey questionnaire and two fifty-statement Q sort decks. The data from these materials was subjected to SPSS and Q analysis.

Analysis of specific television situation vignettes in the survey showed that these parents generally used negative forms of television control to handle incidents of disobedience to TV rules and of inappropriate scenes appearing on TV. However, females were more likely to use positive forms than males.

Analysis also revealed that while these parents say FHE is a good, beneficial program, they only hold it about half the time and only use the manual about half of those times.

Analysis of the Q sort items produced four types of parents: those who are Family Home Evening conformists and anti-television; those who have casual Family Home Evenings but are basically positive in their television control; those who are pro-television and inclined to use it as a baby-sitter and are unenthusiastic about FHE; and those who are anti-FHE but basically positive in their television control. Couples did not necessarily fit into the same type. There were six couples in Type A, six in Type B, zero in Type C, and one in Type D.

Correlation of the Q sort statements indicated that people who have favorable attitudes toward FHE also tend to have postive television control.

Discussion of the Findings

The importance of the Family Home Evening program for the LDS Church is stressed in meetings from Sunday School to General Conference. Family Home Evening is supposed to make men and women better parents and bring families closer together. Although causality must be determined through further research, this study indicates that while FHE behaviors are related to television control, the relationship is caused by a third factor—the personality of the parents—and that Family Home Evening is only another manifestation of personalities, not an active force in changing them.

The first group described by the study findings represent structured, authoritarian people. These people tend to be 36 or younger and may be strict because they are still idealistic and enthusiastic. They do not particularly like Family Home Evening, but because the Church tells them to, they hold it. They hold it to the letter with a lesson from the manual and few, if any, activities. Family Home Evening may bring these people no more together in anything but a physical sense than Himmelueit says watching television does.

It is not too surprising that those parents are also strict and structured about their television control. They set arbitrary

time limits on viewing and do not discuss television—either what can be watched or what is seen—with their children.

These people provide the answers to the question posed in Chapter one: Are parents who are most conscientious about holding Church outlined Family Home Evenings also most prone to positive television control? The answer is, "No."

The second and most prevalent group of people described by these findings represent people who are concerned about interpersonal relationships but who go about developing and strengthening them in a rather casual, non-conformist manner. These people do not follow the outlined FHE program too strictly. They are as apt to have a lesson from some other source, or even an activity, as they are to have a lesson from the manual.

These people are the kind who talk to each other and to their children, so it is not too surprising that they tend to discuss television. The whole family decides what is going to be seen and the parents watch with their children and talk with them about what they see. It is also not overly surprising that some of the people in this group have some negative TV controls, eg. sometimes using the television as a means of punishment and reward. After all, if a person is somewhat non-conformist, it is as easy for him to be negatively so as positively so.

The third group of people described in this study represent people who have negative attitudes about things in general and who do not like responsibility. They are unenthusiastic about Family Home Evening, think it is difficult to hold, and think it interferes

with other things when they do hold it.

These people are some what negative about their children as well. If they want to be alone or think their children are bored, they send them off to watch television.

These people may have these behaviors simply because they do not like FHE or their children, but they may also exist because this group does not want the responsibility of planning FHE or taking care of their children.

The fourth group of people described in this study represent people who can be conscientious in one area of parenting behavior even if they are against another area. They are basically anti-FHE and do not have a structured lesson. However, they do participate in a lot of family activities and they have basically positive television control. They do not use the TV as a means of punishment and reward, they do not set arbitrary time limits on TV viewing, and their whole family decides what is to be watched.

The correlations of Q sort statements point to a group of people who have good attitudes about Family Home Evening who also have positive television control. However, there were not enough concrete behaviors having high correlations to tell what kind of Family Home Evening the people with these positive attitudes had.

These groups of people answer the second question posed in Chapter One: If conscientiousness in following the outlined FHE program is not related to positive television control, what relationship does exist? They also indicate that there are indeed four types of families with regard to FHE, although the groups are slightly

different from those suggested in Chapter One. Specifically, while the Type "C" people do not usually hold structured lessons, they do not have a lot of family activities either.

These groups of people also answer the third question in Chapter One: What are the possible explanations for the relationships between FHE and TV that do exist?, by indicating that they exist as a result of the parents' personalities. They show that within the Church there exist various types of parents with various personalities. They also indicate that the kinds of FHE's and television control are a result of these personalities. If that is true, it means that, at least in the area of TV control, the Family Home Evening program does not change parenting behaviors.

Knowing that favorable attitudes toward FHE are related to positive television controls and knowing that there are four groups of U.S. LDS people with regard to television and FHE has two main implications.

First it implies that while they may be caused by a third factor, i.e. parental personality, a religious behavior—FHE—and a secular behavior—TV control—are related. This leads one to the question, If one parenting behavior is changed, will the other be changed and/or will the parental personality be changed? or, If the parental personality is changed will either or both of the behaviors be changed?

Secondly, if it is assumed that the 'best' type parent is one who discusses things with his children rather than merely laying down rules, perhaps the Church should alter its approach to the Family

Home Evening program somewhat.

First, perhaps the Chruch should put less emphasis on Family Home Evening as a structured program and more on the importance of being a family. It is possible that the present FHE program is something like the Word of Wisdom, adapted to the weakest of those who can be called saints. But people who simply have FHE because the Church says to may be no better off than if they did not have it.

Secondly, perhaps the Church could capitalize on the general attitude toward FHE. Favorable attitudes toward Family Home Evening are related to positive television controls and although there are some parents who simply do not like the idea of FHE, most have at least a few favorable attitudes toward the general concept. If the Church shifted its emphasis from the structure of the program to its goal—making mothers and fathers better parents—it might be able to use attitudes like, "I think FHE helps my spouse and me communicate better with our children," and, "I think FHE helps bring unity to our family," to help parents become better through working on discussing , listening, and understanding instead of just lesson giving.

Thirdly, perhaps the Church should spend some of the energy it now spends on promoting Family Home Evening on making parents aware that not only is there a need to exercise some control over their children's television viewing, there are good and bad ways to do so. It would not be too difficult for the Church to give parents suggestions on ways they can positively control their children's TV.

Possible Criticisms of the Study

One of the first criticisms that can be made of this study is the sample size. It can be justifiably argued that one cannot make generalizations about the U.S. LDS Church population from 54 people. However, this was an exploratory study. It sought to answer certain questions and examine possible relationships, not to prove or disprove a theory. Therefore, it is not inappropriate to point to certain trends that seem evident, even with only 54 people, with the hope that someone else will study them in greater detail. The smallness of the sample size can also be at least partially justified because of the nature of Q. In Q it is desirable to have a small N because the people become the variables and the statements the sample.

Another thing that could be criticized, or at least questioned, is the fact that the two Q sorts were analyzed together. This was done because it was impossible to do them seperately without reducing the sample size even further. A factor analysis could not be done with 54 people and 50 statements, or variables, because the mathematics of the program instead of the sorting behavior would have determined the outcome.

The sample could have been reduced by dividing it according to sex. Then four factor analyses would have to have been done and even if they had produced significant types, it would have been difficult to compare the factors of one solution with the factors of the other. The comparisions would have been subjective and might not have been informative. Combining the 100 statements automatically

gave assurance that both FHE and TV attitudes and behaviors would be used to differentiate people, and that they would do so to the extent that they actually were different.

One other aspect that could be criticized is that the Q statements were not completely representative. It could be argued that since each statement had at least one significant correlation in the correlation matrix of TV and FHE items, the statements were at least reasonably representative. But the only real answer to this criticism is that it is difficult to come up with all of the elements that are involved in such complex areas as TV and FHE. Anyone who continues this line of research should choose the statements that are most important in determining types of people and in establishing trends, and then come up with others that will cover more of the attitudes people hold and behaviors they have. Specifically, a new researcher might look for more statements that give more concrete evidence of Family Home Evening behavior.

Suggestions for Further Research

The findings from this research could point other researchers in several directions. For one thing, knowing that there is a relationship between the religious parenting behavior, FHE, and the secular one, television control, a study could be done to see if religious parenting behavior in other denominations is related to parental control of children's television.

In this study it is suggested that the cause for the relationship

between FHE and television control is the personality of the parent. However, only further research can really determine the cause.

And a final group of things that could be studied in greater depth are; why females tended to have less negative control than males, why age was important in determining a person's Q type, and whether the heterogeneity of couples in their Q types was actually a factor in determining the type they fit into.

Concluding Comments

This study has not attempted to prove or disprove the negative claims about television with regard to violence, sex, and perception of reality. It discusses these potential hazards as a way of showing that parents need to be aware of the possible detrimental effects television viewing has on their children. But the purpose of the study was to see if parenting behavior in a religious area was related to parenting behavior in a secular area.

Finding that there is a relationship between the two certainly lacks the magnitude of developing the theory of relativity, but even sky scrapers cannot stand without foundations and foundations cannot be made without the gravel needed for the cement. This study may be no more than one of the pebbles going into the foundation of communication theory, but it may prove to be an important pebble.

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Appendix A

Survey Questionnaire

1. How many of the following types of publications come into your home regularly and are read by you or some member of your household?

_____Daily Newspaper(s)

_____Weekly Newspaper(s)

_____Magazines, please list: _____

_____

2. How many individuals live in your household? _____

Number Ages

_____Parents_____

_____Daughters_____

_____Sons_____

_____Grandparents_____

_____Other_____

3. Do you have any children not living at home?_____If you do, how many?_____

4. Which of the following categories best represents the total income for this year for your household?

_____Under $5,000

_____$5,000 to $9,999

_____$10,000 to $14,999

_____$15,000 to $19,999

_____$20,000 to 24,999

_____$25,000 to $34,999

_____$35,000 to $45,000

_____Over $45,000

5. Which of the following job titles is the most similar to your occupation?

_____Professional/Technical

_____Farm Owner/Manager

_____Manager, Official and Business Owner

_____Clerical/Sales Worker

_____Skilled Craftsman/Foreman

_____Service Worker, Private Household and ~~Laborer~~ Student

_____Farm Laborer/Foreman

_____Retired

_____Unemployed/Disabled

_____Housewife(not in labor force

6. What is your age? _____

7. Sex _____

8. Which of the following best describes your formal schooling?

_____less than high school graduate

_____high school graduate

_____attended some college

_____attended trade school

_____college graduate

_____some post-graduate work

_____advanced degree

_____other, please specify_____

9. How many operating television sets do you have in your household?_____

10. Do you have a television set in your bedroom? _____

11. Do any of your children have their own television?_____If yes, how many?_____

12. Which of the following best describes where your family television is kept?

_____Someplace where the children can only get at it with our permission

_____In a room where the family only gathers to watch TV

_____In the room where the family usually gathers

_____Other, please specify_____

13. Please number the following shows from 1 to 5 according to your preference. 5 for most preferred and 1 for least preferred. (Place an 0 by the shows you are not familiar with) i.e.

	0	1	2	3	4	5
Man From Atlantis				X		

	0	1	2	3	4	5
Maude						
Starsky and Hutch						
Family						
Happy Days						
Little House on the Prairie						
Masterpiece Theater						

	0	1	2	3	4	5
Welcome Back Kotter	____	____	____	____	____	____
Charlie's Angels	____	____	____	____	____	____
What's Happening	____	____	____	____	____	____
Kojak	____	____	____	____	____	____

14. Mrs. Jones came home from a PTA meeting at 8:30 p.m. and found her 12 year old daughter watching Police Woman, a show she had forbidden her to watch. She turned off the television set and sent her daughter to bed in spite of her complaints that it wasn't her bed time yet.

    Do you agree with her course of action?____Why?_____

    _____

    _____

15. Mr. Smith and his son Tom were watching a television show they watched together every week. Tom was also doing his homework. There was a scene Mr. Smith strongly disapproved of. He looked at Tom. He seemed caught up in a math problem. "This show is usually good and he doesn't seem to have noticed that scene, so unless he says something about it I won't bring it up," Mr. Smith said to himself.

    What would you have done in this situation? _____

    _____

    _____

16. Do you have a Family Home Evening manual? _____

17. If you have one, where do you usually keep your Family Home Evening Manual?

    _____with current magazines

    _____with Church books

    _____on the coffee table

    _____other, please explain_____

18. In the past two months, how many Family Home Evenings have you held? _____

19. Of those, in how many did you make specific use of the Family Home Evening Manual? _____

20. In how many did you use Priesthood or Relief Society manuals and/or Ensigns? _____

21. Circle the number of times your family participated in the following activities during the last two months.

As an Activity		As a Family Home Evening
0 1 2 3 4 or more	Sports	0 1 2 3 4 or more
0 1 2 3 4 or more	Going to a movie	0 1 2 3 4 or more
0 1 2 3 4 or more	Shopping trip	0 1 2 3 4 or more
0 1 2 3 4 or more	Picnic	0 1 2 3 4 or more
0 1 2 3 4 or more	Camping	0 1 2 3 4 or more
0 1 2 3 4 or more	Home project, i.e. clean out garage, make decorations	0 1 2 3 4 or more
0 1 2 3 4 or more	Service project, i.e. visit sick, clean widow's yard	0 1 2 3 4 or more
0 1 2 3 4 or more	Other, please specify _____ _____	0 1 2 3 4 or more

22. What are the most important problems and/or challenges facing you in your life during the next 15 years?

(1) _____

_____

(2) _____

_____

(3) _____

_____

Appendix B

Television Q Sort Statements

1. I usually don't let my children watch television until their homework and chores are done.

2. When there is no school the next day I don't make my children stop watching at a specific time.

3. On a school night I usually make my children stop watching at a specific time.

4. If there are no really good shows on one day, I don't let my children watch anything.

5. I allow my children to watch only certain shows.

6. I only let my children watch television during certain hours of the day.

7. We never let our children stay home from any Church meeting to watch television.

8. If there are three good shows in one evening, I let my children watch three hours of television.

9. If my children do extra chores without being asked, I let them watch an extra television show.

10. If my children display negative behaviors I think were learned from a television show, I forbid them to watch that show again.

11. If my children watch a television show I disapprove of, I am more likely to change the channel than argue with them about it.

12. I suspend my children's television privileges when they watch shows I have forbidden them to watch.

13. If my children break a family rule, I sometimes punish them by suspending their television privileges.

14. When I find my children watching a television show I disapprove of I usually turn off the set.

15. I speak sharply to my children when they wander from their chores to watch television.

16. We exercise more control over our children's television viewing than most parents.

17. We never watch TV on Sunday.

18. In our household the whole family decides in advance the shows to be watched.

19. In our household the parents decide in advance what is appropriate for the children to watch.

20. We usually end up watching what the fussiest child wants to watch.

21. Whoever is watching on a given night usually decides what looks good and watches that.

22. I think my children are adult enough to decide for themselves when and what television shows they watch.

23. I usually watch the news.

24. I think television programing is criticized more than is necessary.

25. I usually read more than I watch television.

26. There are some shows my spouse and I watch that we don't let our children watch.

27. If my children are watching a show on one station and I want to watch a show on another station, I usually change it to what I want to watch.

28. I usually don't interupt my children to help me do chores if they are involved in a television show.

29. I encourage my children to watch mature shows to help them prepare for adulthood.

30. I often discuss with my children the problems they see on television and how they relate to their lives.

31. If I see behavior on television I don't like, I usually tell my child what I don't like about it.

32. I encourage my children to watch shows such as Masterpiece Theater.

33. I am concerned about the way certain shows seem to affect my children's behavior.

34. We usually try to watch National Geographic specials.

35. I encourage my children to read as many hours as they watch television.

36. I usually encourage my small children to watch Sesame Street.

37. I usually watch at least one show a night while my children are watching.

38. I encourage my children to watch Once Upon A Classic.

39. My older children usually watch the news.

40. I notice my children fight more after watching Saturday morning cartoons.

41. I find television an effective way to keep my children occupied.

42. My children do things outside mmre than they watch television.

43. I think watching television increases my child's creativity.

44. I think watching television increases my child's vocabulary.

45. I think television is a positive force in raising my children.

46. Television is an effective way of broadening my children's knowledge of the world.

47. My spouse and I may encourage our children to watch television when we want time alone together.

48. If I am ill, I have my children watch television while I rest.

49. If I need to be left alone to work on something, I encourage my children to watch a television show.

50. When my children are bored I sometimes encourage them to watch a television show.

Appendix C

Family Home Evening Q Sort Statements

1. Holding Family Home Evening helps our family to live the gospel.

2. Holding Family Home Evening helps our children learn to deal with their problems.

3. I think Family Home Evening helps train my children to recognize the spirit.

4. I think holding Family Home Evening helps my spouse and me communicate better with our children.

5. Family Home Evening helps our children learn to give lessons.

6. I think Family Home Evening helps our children learn to read the scriptures.

7. Family Home Evening is an effective way to teach the gospel.

8. Being together in Family Home Evening helps our children get along better in other situations.

9. Family Home Evening gives me an opportunity to bear my testimony to my children without sounding preachy.

10. I like to have Family Home Evening because it is the only time during the week when we can all be together.

11. I think holding Family Home Evening helps bring unity to our family.

12. We usually don't have a formal Family Home Evening, but we substitute some special family activity almost every week.

13. I think our family benefits more from doing things together than by having a structured lesson.

14. We sometimes have Family Home Evening on other nights than Monday.

15. We usually have Family Home Evening with another family.

16. We sometimes have Family Home Evening with investigator families.

17. We often use Family Home Evening as a family problem solving session.

18. Our best Family Home Evenings are the ones in which we catch up on things like letter writing and journal entries.

19. Although we try to hold Family Home Evening regularly, it interferes with homework, preparing dinner, doing chores, etc.

20. We usually use the Priesthood manual for our Family Home Evening lessons.

21. We usually supplement the lessons in the manual with articles in Church magazines.

22. We use the manual for our small children and some other Church publication for the older ones.

23. We seldom use the Family Home Evening manual.

24. We almost always have Family Home Evening on Monday night.

25. We hold Family Home Evening regularly even though there are some things we don't like about the program.

26. Although there are some things I dislike about it, I still hold Family Home Evening because I think it will eventually have a good effect on my children.

27. We always go through the Family Home Evening Manual cover to cover.

28. We almost always use the Family Home Evening manual.

29. We try to follow the manual closely.

30. My children don't like lessons from the manual.

31. We don't have Family Home Evening because I don't like the manual this year.

32. I think the Family Home Evening manual is geared too much for families who have only small children.

33. I think many of the lessons in the manual irrelevant to the problems we face as a family.

34. I think many of the lessons in the manual are dull.

35. I am reluctant to hold Family Home Evening because I am afraid my lessons are too boring.

36. It's difficult to hold Family Home Evening because I don't get the lessons prepared well enough in advance.

37. I usually prepare my lessons on Monday.

38. Family Home Evening usually leads to bad feelings of some kind in the family.

39. Trying to squeeze Family Home Evening into our family's busy schedule creates family disharmony.

40. Although we hold Family Home Evening regularly, we seldom see any good results.

41. I am reluctant to hold Family Home Evening because I think my spouse and children don't like it.

42. It is difficult to have Family Home Evening because my children won't cooperate in taking part.

43. We have so many Church meetings during the week that we don't think another religious lesson is necessary.

44. We seldom have Family Home Evening because one of us isn't at home on Monday night.

45. Sometimes we don't get around to Family Home Evenings because we think it is more important for our children to get their homework and chores done.

46. Our family is so busy that it is hard to have Family Home Evening on a regular basis.

47. We often don't remember to have Family Home Evening.

48. The Church should put more emphasis on the principles of the gospel and less on Family Home Evening.

49. We really don't know how to get a program like Family Home Evening started in our family.

50. Our children learn more from the experiences we have as a family than from hearing about some other family in a lesson.

PARENTAL CONTROL OF CHILDREN'S TELEVISION: AN EXPLORATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONTROL AND FAMILY HOME EVENING

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ABSTRACT

This study was designed to examine the relationship between a secular behavior—television control—and a religious one—Family Home Evening. The findings show that there is a relationship, with those having favorable attitudes toward Family Home Evening and those who hold casual FHE's being the most inclined to exercise positive control over their children's television viewing.

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