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ABSTRACT

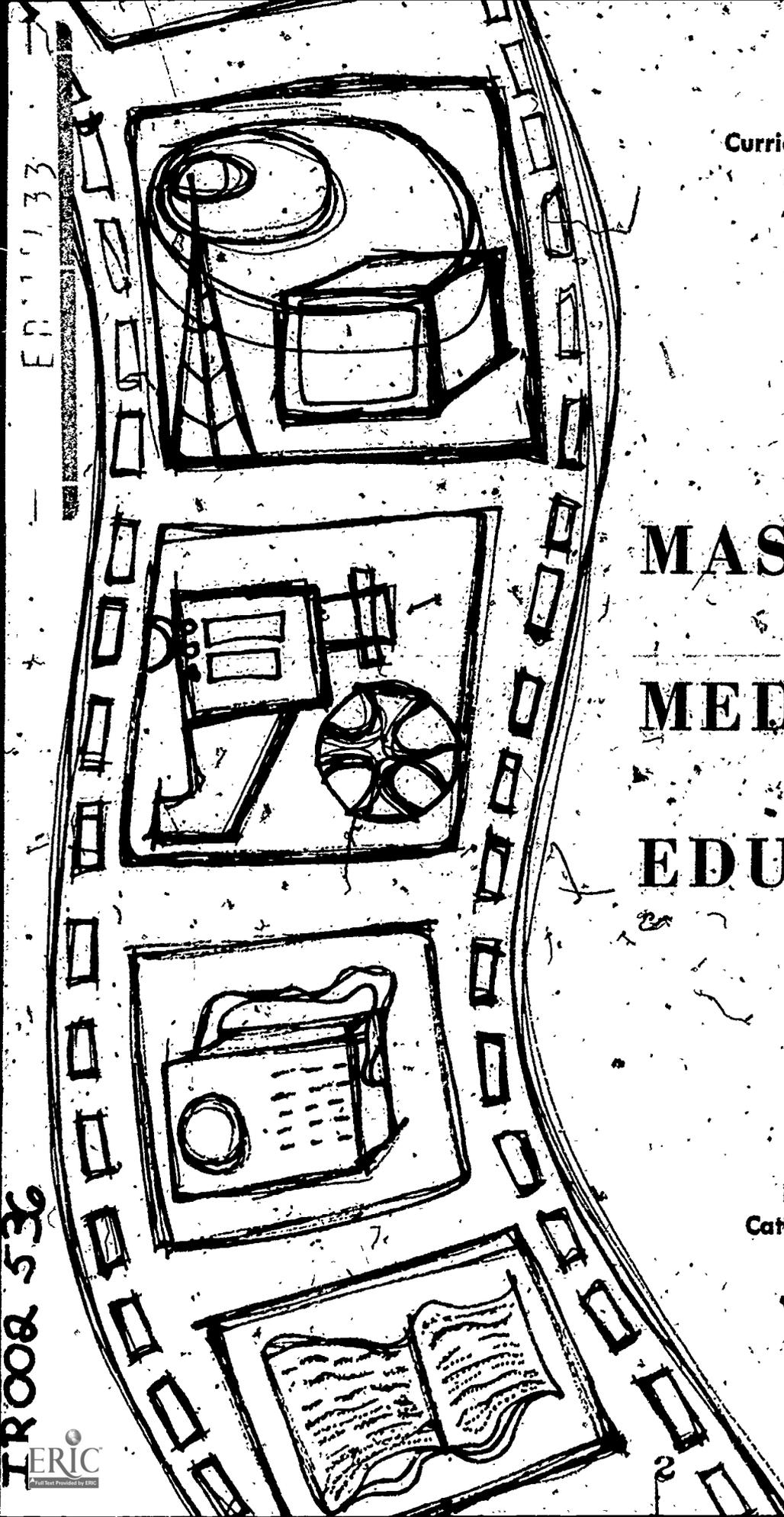
An analysis of media education in the primary schools is presented in this curriculum guide. The impact of mass media on Australian school children in the elementary school years is explored and the contents include: (1) major assumptions, (2) preamble to the course, (3) desired outcome of the course, (4) questions for class discussion for lower and upper primary grades, (5) guidelines for the evaluation of television, film, and radio. A 94-item bibliography plus a listing of primary and secondary students texts are included. (DS)

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Curriculum Guidelines for  
Primary Schools  
Years 1 - 6

# MASS MEDIA EDUCATION

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Catholic Education Office  
Sydney.



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**Curriculum Guidelines for  
Primary Schools**

**Years 1 - 6**

**MASS**

**MEDIA**

**EDUCATION**

**Kelvin B. Canavan  
Catholic Education Office  
Sydney.**

MAY, 1975

*Illustrations by Sister Susan Daily, I.B.Y.M.*

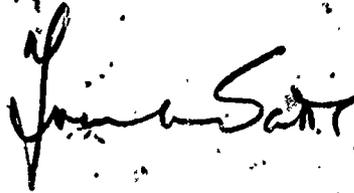
# FOREWORD

23/4/1975

To today's children there is nothing particularly wonderful about radio and television or, indeed, about any form of the mass media. Those of us who have observed the ever growing web of communications which envelops us will probably never cease to wonder at the ease with which we call in music for our enjoyment not only from all parts of our own country but even from other parts of the world. The sight of man on the moon is to us a never-to-be-forgotten experience. But young people do not look on it that way. They accept any form of the mass media as normality and would wonder if it were to be taken away from them. In particular, life without television they would reject as quite intolerable.

It follows, therefore, that those of us who are teachers are flying in the face of reason if we fail to appreciate the influence the mass media has upon young minds; if we perpetually disregard the messages which radio and television bring to the notice of those who are in our classes, if we think what we have to say has any more validity to our students than the messages from "the box", in the press or on the screen. Yet there are those who, fearing the power of the mass media, refuse to acknowledge its presence in their classrooms, believing or hoping that if they ignore it in their teaching it will some how or other go away or, at least, lose its grip upon the young minds with which they seek to communicate.

Some years ago in the context of the Australian College of Education, I met Brother Kelvin Canavan whose thoughts obviously ran along lines similar to mine and who was then engaged in writing a set of guidelines for teachers in primary schools to help them to bring the mass media into their classrooms in a positive way. Now, after further study overseas he has gone further and developed his thesis by extending his guidelines into the secondary school and those who read this current work will not only themselves gain a new insight into the influence of radio, television, film and the press but also find a strategy outlined to help them to link these forces into the everyday work of their students and bring a new relevance into their teaching.



FRANK WATTS  
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION  
AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING COMMISSION

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# 1.0 A Rationale for Media Education in the Primary School

The time has come to introduce into the primary and secondary schools of Australia a new subject that recognises the role of the mass media in our society and aims to help students in all years to be appreciative, discriminating and critical listeners, viewers and readers. This new subject may appropriately be called "Mass Media Education."\*

The mass media in recent years have emerged as powerful forces for the education and socialization of young Australians. Few people remain outside the orbit of media influence while most spend considerable time reading the press, viewing film and television and listening to the radio. Yet, the majority of people are not receiving adequate help to develop an appreciation of the media, and educational agencies show only scattered interest in the problem. Today, the literacy skills, taught in schools, should be extended to include the visual and audio areas made so crucial by the advent of the electronic media. If schools are to maintain the claim that they prepare students to take their place in society, they must begin to equip them with skills essential to the intelligent handling of the mass media.

The idea of introducing Mass Media Education into Australian schools has been occasioned by the growing realisation that the mass media are significant forces in the lives of most Australians. This awareness has been fostered by: (1) research findings on the exposure of Australians to television and other media; (2) the growing interest of teachers, parents and researchers in the impact of the media, especially on young people; (3) the continuing growth of a powerful media industry in Australia; (4) the knowledge that parents are generally not able to help their children become critical and discriminating in their use of the media; (5) the movement of Boards of Secondary Studies to encour-

age schools to make provision in their curriculum for a wider range of courses based on new areas of interest; (6) the Decree on Social Communications of the Second Vatican Council; and (7) the statement on media education made by the Australian Bishops' Conference in September, 1972, asking all Catholic schools to begin media education as soon as a curriculum was available.

## 1.1 Exposure to the Mass Media

All but a handful of Australians are exposed to television, film, press and radio from a very early age. The present population of approximately 13.27 million persons possesses 11.1 million radios and 4.4 million television sets. Approximately 96 per cent of Australians live in a dwelling with at least one television set. Radio penetration in the country is 99.7 per cent and in the cities it is almost 100 per cent. Sales of newspapers in Australia exceed 4.5 million daily.<sup>1</sup>

Television viewing by school students appears to reach a peak during the first years of secondary school. Thomas and Lang (1965) found that Form One students in Victoria viewed in excess of 1,200 hours in a single year while Powell (1971) found that Form Two students in the same state averaged slightly more than 1,300 viewing hours per year. In a comparative study in San Francisco, Schramm *et al.* (1961) found that students in Grade 8 viewed almost 1,200 hours per year. After Grade 8 these students tended to spend less time with the television. Thomas and Lang (1965) provide figures from Form One onward which tend to support the assertion that television viewing reaches a peak during the early years in secondary school and then steadily declines.

TABLE 1  
Mean Hours per week spent watching Television  
for Boys and Girls Forms 1 to 6\*

	Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 4	Form 5	Form 6
Day Students (Boys)	23.9	22.8	20.8	17.4	12.5	10.9
Day Students (Girls)	22.2	21.5	18.7	16.7	11.2	6.4

\* Taken from Thomas and Lang (1965)

\* In this study the term "Mass Media Education" will be used to denote a school curriculum concerned with the process of studying and understanding the mass media.

The decline in television viewing among adolescents appears to be accompanied by an increase in their use of the radio. The average teenager spends 2.75 hours each day listening to the radio.

While children's television viewing tends to peak in the first years of secondary school,

research findings indicate that from a very early age children are viewing a great deal of television. Results of a study conducted in five states by the author (Canavan, 1973) and involving 47,175 students in Grades 4-7 in Catholic primary schools indicated that upper primary school children were viewing an average of 2.33 hours of television on school days.

**TABLE 2**  
**Hours of Daily TV Viewing (Mon. - Thurs.) of Children**  
**in Australian Catholic Primary Schools (Grades 4-7):**  
**1971 - 1973**

Hours	0 - 1	1 - 2	2 - 3	3 - 4	4 - 5	5 - 6	Total
Number of Children	11,868	10,840	8,562	6,851	6,205	3,049	47,175*
%	24.7%	23.0%	18.1%	14.3%	13.2%	6.7%	100%

Average: 2.33 hours daily

\* This represented approximately 55.66% of the children enrolled in the upper primary grades in the 5 states surveyed.

In another study involving parents of upper primary pupils in Sydney Catholic schools the author (Canavan, 1974) found that parents estimated that the children averaged 2.48 hours of television on school days. As the time spent viewing on weekends and holidays is generally greater than on school days, it is estimated that these primary pupils average in excess of 1,000 hours of television in a year. In Australia, primary pupils spend less than 1,100 hours in school each year.

About half of these daily readers were reading news stories. The same survey revealed that 46 per cent of the students in the sample read comics on any given day.

**TABLE 4**  
**Survey of Reading Habits of Fifth and Sixth**  
**Grade Pupils\***

QUESTIONS	"YES" RESPONSES	
	BOYS	GIRLS
Did You read something in a newspaper in the previous 24 hours?	47%	38%
Did You read a news item in a newspaper in the previous 24 hours?	26%	20%
Did You read a sporting item in a newspaper in the previous 24 hours?	25%	8%
Did You read comics in the previous 24 hours?	50%	42%

\* 1,955 boys and 1,659 girls were included in this survey conducted in Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Sydney on 8th-9th February, 1972.

**TABLE 3**  
**Comparison of hours per year primary children**  
**spent in class with those spent watching television**  
**at home.**

In Classroom	1,040 hours is the maximum
Viewing T.V. at home	1,000 hours is the approximate average*

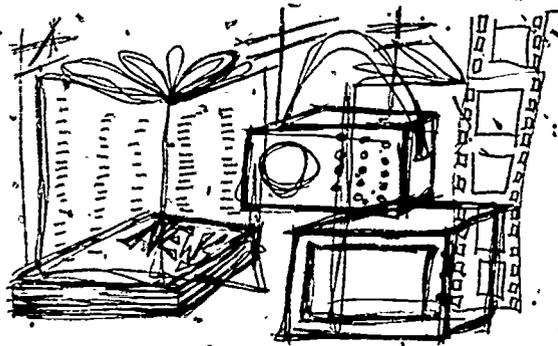
\* This figure is based on information contained in Table 2.

A major study of the television habits of very young children in Australia remains to be done, but it is the author's opinion that the present pattern in Australia is similar to that in the United States. In a study involving nearly 25,000 American parents, Barcus (1973) found that by the age of three American children were averaging 1,000 hours of television annually. Barcus found little variation in viewing hours among children between the ages of three and eleven.

Primary and secondary students also spend considerable time reading the press. In a study of 5th and 6th grade students attending Catholic schools in Sydney in 1972, the author (Canavan, 1972) found that 43 per cent were reading something in the daily newspaper on any given day.

Considering also the time spent reading magazines and visiting the cinema it is obvious that the average Australian child and young adolescent spends considerably more time with the mass media than he does attending class. It would appear safe to hypothesise that only sleep occupies a greater proportion of the average student's life — between kindergarten and middle secondary — than do the mass media.

This massive exposure to the mass media is certainly not limited to children. Adults in Australia also spend a large proportion of their time



with the media. Australian Broadcasting Control Board research in 1969 revealed that 41 per cent of adults in Sydney watch more than 3 hours of television each day. Figures published by the Australian Radio Advertising Bureau show that 87 per cent of all people over ten years of age listen to commercial radio, and these people average 3.28 hours per day.

All this exposure to mass media must have a significant impact on Australians, — young and old. What follows is an attempt to assess the significance of that impact and to examine the implications for education with particular reference to curriculum construction.

## 1.2 Impact of the Mass Media

Identification of the impact of the mass media on people is a complex task. There are extensive research studies on the subject and in an attempt to give some structure to the examination of the literature the studies have been loosely grouped into four broad categories: (1) studies taking a general systems perspective, (2) studies taking a stimulus-response perspective, (3) studies of television as an industry, and (4) studies which focus on the role of parents in children's television behaviour. These categories are not exclusive and some studies could be placed in a number of categories.

### A General Systems Perspective

When considering the impact of the mass media on people, one should not think simply in terms of hours viewed, particular programmes watched and newspapers read by individuals. This information may be of some use, but as television and the other media, to a lesser extent, permeate the culture, one needs to consider media effects from a sufficiently broad perspective that will provide an overview of the total impact on the people and their way of life. By adopting a general systems rationale such an overview may be obtained. Working within a general systems framework, one views culture as a network of interrelated sub-systems that are inherently linked, and that are in constant interaction with each other. Change in one sub-system

leads to change in other sub-systems and change at the individual level will lead to change at the societal level. In analysing media-effects studies in terms of general systems theory the focus is on the whole (culture) when considering a given part (television).

The popular concept of communication as process tells us that meaning is not inherent in the message but exists in the transaction between the sender and the receiver. Hence, communication does not occur until the receiver assigns some meaning to the context and content of the sender's message. This is not to say that information cannot have an objective existence apart from the communicator or the audience. But information is not communication; rather it is a stimulus or cause of communication. An appreciation of communication as process, together with a general systems perspective, will lead one to see television and the other mass media as systems within a larger system, namely culture. These mass media are in constant interaction with other systems — the viewers, their social behaviour, their cultural symbols, their economic and political systems — and should not be studied in isolation.

A systems and process approach to media effects study does not permit one to isolate particular variables in order to explain communication phenomena in terms of cause and effect. The treatment of messages by the media, interest level and audience disposition are examples of variables that are in constant interaction with each other as well as with a host of other variables. The whole process, which operates in space and time, is best viewed as non-linear, ongoing and circular.

A systems approach to media study has been preferred to an approach based on the stimulus-response paradigm which pursues communication study in linear terms. The bulk of media research available today is from a stimulus-response perspective and despite elaborate attempts to isolate and control variables, the studies do not provide us with an appreciation of the total function of the media in the culture. However, the better stimulus-response type studies, when taken collectively, can be used to support a general overview of media effects on the culture.

There is a growing body of communication scholars working within this general systems paradigm. The charismatic McLuhan, who has done a great deal to popularize this systems approach to media study, focuses attention on the impact of the media on the social system as a whole. Taking a distant perspective McLuhan believes that the mass media are doing a good deal more than transmitting messages. They are altering the very essence of our culture by creating "new languages with new and unique powers of expression."<sup>3</sup> Developing this idea McLuhan writes:

Historically, the resources of English have been shaped and expressed in constantly new and changing ways. The printing press changed, not only the quantity of writing, but the character of language and the relations between author and public. Radio, film, TV pushed written English towards the spontaneous shifts and freedom of the spoken idiom. They aided us in the recovery of intense awareness of facial language and bodily gesture.<sup>4</sup>

By drawing attention to the more global effects of the mass media in our culture McLuhan has succeeded in getting people to consider alternate ways of approaching media study. By adopting a sufficiently wide perspective that permits the whole, and not just the parts, to be seen McLuhan argues that the communications revolution is transforming our culture at an unprecedented rate.

This complex interrelationship between the media and the culture has also been explored by Goldsen at Cornell University. Television, Goldsen believes, exercises a powerful, formative influence on a country's culture. Possessing the power to legitimize, television is in a position to help define or create behavioural norms, to show what is acceptable for the culture at a particular point of time. For Goldsen, television content is both a product and producer of culture. As a producer of culture it has some effect on what people do, say and think. It affects the language and symbols the people use, the fashions they admire, the sports they follow. It also affects social relationships. More importantly, television affects the attitudes, values and beliefs of people, especially young people.

Goldsen rejects the view that television content is essentially determined by public demand. She believes that television organizes tastes rather than responds to them and the choices people make are limited by what is made available by the stations. If we accept this view of television we should remember — as did the March Hare in *Alice in Wonderland* — that if we do not actively try to get what we like, we shall end up liking what we get. The implications of this observation will be developed later in this chapter.

The television networks and their stations beam programmes and commercials into the total airspace of the country, and Goldsen believes that people are influenced whether they watch television or not. Developing this line of thought Goldsen explains:

... our children do not have to take drugs to be affected by the drug culture; they do not have to listen to rock music to be affected by rock-culture. Our black children do not have to experience a racial insult to be affected by racism. Well, it is my contention that neither do our children have to watch a given tele-

vision program to be affected by its mass transmission.<sup>5</sup>

The adolescent, in particular, will be influenced by what his peers have seen and read and heard.

The work of Goldsen complements that of McLuhan and adds considerably to our understanding of the function of the media in society. Working from a general systems perspective she has managed to study the media without disaggregating the social system. She has provided us with a conceptual framework that incorporates all the variables in the communication process.

This general systems approach to media effects study has also been followed by Gerbner (1972), Condry (1972) and Carpenter (1972). Gerbner (1972) studied the symbolic content of the environment and concluded that modern communications are transforming the environment at an unprecedented rate. The rate of change is now so rapid that successive generations are now being specialized in very different environments and in very different ways. Gerbner explains:

In only two decades of massive national existence television has transformed the political life of the nation, has changed the daily habits of our people, has moulded the style of the generation, made over-night global phenomena out of local happenings, redirected the flow of information and values from traditional channels into centralized networks reaching into every home. In other words it has profoundly affected what we call the process of socialization, the process by which members of our species become human.<sup>6</sup>

In developing this theme Gerbner makes the point, as do McLuhan and Goldsen, that the mass media today have the power to mass-produce messages that have the potential to create mass publics and thus alter the traditional process of socialization. He writes:

Never before have so many people in so many places shared so much of a common system of messages and images — and the assumptions about life, society, and the world that the system embodies — while having so little to do with creating the system. In sum, the fabric of popular culture that relates the elements of existence to one another and shapes the common consciousness of what is, what is important, what is right and what is related to what else is now largely a manufactured product.<sup>7</sup>

He is quick to point out, however, that one always communicates more things — or different things — than one is aware of. Thus a commercial featuring a pain reliever, to cite an example, communicates a whole range of different messages to different people. Some will probably get the intended message, others may get a mes-

sage contained in the underlying assumptions of the commercial and still others could be expected to get a distorted message.

Looking more specifically at children's television Condry (1972) has followed a similar line of research, addressing himself to the question of attitudes and values. Making the point that researchers have only recently begun to examine television in terms of cultural impact, he begins his study by looking at the needs of children and their intellectual development and concludes that the effects of television need to be considered in the light of the ecology of childhood. Today, Condry believes, this ecology is out of balance as a result of rapid social and cultural change and will need to be carefully considered when designing studies to determine the impact of television. Dismissing, for the most part, children's television as "an endless parade of mindless drivel," Condry points out that any distortion is harmful for young people if it is consistent and not counteracted by other more realistic influences.

Carpenter (1972), a disciple of McLuhan, also views the media according to general systems theory. Basing his observations on experiences in many countries he continually explains how a change in one element of a communication system will lead to changes in the whole system. Hence, to study the effects of television or radio one needs to look at their impact on the whole culture.

These five researchers have argued for the necessity of adopting a global or systems approach to media effects study. They emphasize the interrelationship among variables and describe how the mass media affect an entire culture. In a country saturated with mass media these effects are considerable and can be seen throughout the culture. The whole process of education and socialization is influenced by this powerful force. The educational implications of these effects will be considered in the final section of this chapter.

#### A Stimulus-Response Perspective

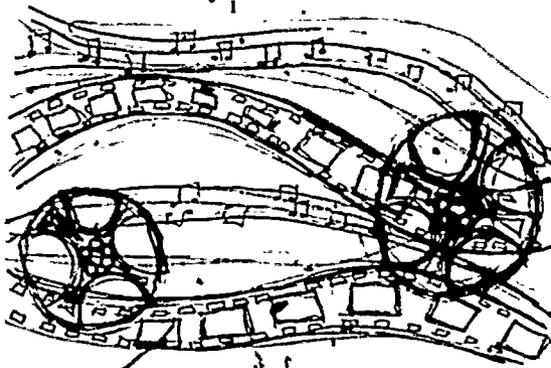
The bulk of media effects research in the last decade has been conducted from a stimulus-response perspective and has generally attempted to manipulate variables to establish causal relationships. The value of this approach to research is restricted by the fact that human behaviour and personality development are dependent on many interrelated variables and it is a near insuperable task to isolate the influences of television, film, press or radio. However, if we examine the findings of some of the more substantial stimulus-response oriented studies from our general systems perspective, we can build up a more complete picture of the function of the media in the culture.

In 1971 the annotated bibliography in the *Television and Social Behavior* series listed approximately 250 studies dealing with the im-

part of television on children in many countries. Since then research has continued in the United States and the impetus for substantial and expensive studies has come from the three television networks, pressure groups such as Action for Children's Television and the Council on Children, Media and Merchandising, and from the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). It is beyond the scope of this chapter to review all these studies, but an attempt will be made to pinpoint the highlights from a cross-section that appears to have particular relevance for Australian educators in the 1970s.

Television research in Australia has been limited to viewing patterns and in order to consider the effects of exposure to this medium it will be necessary to draw on research conducted in the United States. Australian and United States television are similar in many respects. Both countries have approximately 96 per cent of homes with at least one television set and children from these homes average in excess of 1,000 hours television each year. Both countries have three commercial networks and programming content is frequently similar. It appears safe to assume that, in general terms, many United States television studies would have implications for Australia and could be helpful in formulating an overview of the impact of television on viewers in this country.

Since television first appeared researchers have examined both its direct and indirect effects on child and adult behaviour. McDonagh (1950) found decreases in the amount of reading and conversing, as well as in radio listening and movie attendance after the purchase of a television set. Maccoby (1951) established that children were substituting television for use of other mass media, for some of their play time and for time previously spent on household tasks. Jenks (1955) found that television created many problems in the home. These included conflicts over programme choice, interference with children's bedtime, watching too many programmes, and interference with meals, family outings, living room activities, chores and homework. But Schramm and Roberts (1971), after reviewing two decades of studies, concluded that television



appeared to have had a very minor effect on the school work of children in the United States and England. They found that when intelligence is taken into account there is little relationship between amount of viewing and school results, and the child who watches television instead of completing his homework would probably be doing something else if television were not available.

The use of television as an escape mechanism has been studied at some length. Maccoby (1954) proposed that a child's interest in television may be symptomatic of a need for vicarious satisfaction when the child is frustrated in his attempts to achieve satisfaction in real life. Children, Maccoby concluded, may find it easier to obtain this satisfaction through fantasy in television than through normal social relationships. Pearlman (1959) continued this line of research with adults and concluded television offers relief to anxious individuals. It provides them with an opportunity to withdraw periodically from unpleasant situations. Forsey (1963) theorized that people watch television in an unconscious effort to resolve conflicts about personal development and social adjustment, rather than to be entertained. While supporting these findings Katz and Foulkes (1962) found that the media may also strengthen one's position in social relationships. Children, for example, who are attached to their parents may use television to draw themselves closer to the family. Wiebe (1969) examined the psychological factors in audience behaviour and found an inverse relationship between the numbers of viewers and the cultural merit of programmes. This led to the hypothesis that the medium, by offering immediate need gratification and minimizing intellectual effort, attracts viewers who do not want to become involved. Wiebe concluded that people prefer a medium where they are excused from acknowledging others and which presents them with symbols and images but never real persons.

Glynn (1956) suggested that television fosters traits of passivity and dependence and unconsciously shapes the viewer's character. He cited several cases of mentally ill individuals for whom television is a mother substitute, satisfying childish needs and promoting regression to infancy. Clark (1969) saw television as a cause of social conflict and a method of controlling it. Communications, he found, function to maintain the established social order and are therefore crucial to the understanding of social conflict.

To cite the findings of two more typical research studies may help to make the point that television has some positive influence on children. Stein, *et al.* (1972) established that television can play an important role in the social development of children. They write:

Our findings indicate that the themes of cooperation, persistence in difficult tasks, tolerance of frustration and delay, and verbaliz-

ation of feelings are understood by children and alter their behavior.

In another study Stevehson (1971) found that television programmes can lead to positive effects on the cognitive development of children. These two studies are representative and could be supported by hundreds of parents and school teachers who have constantly pointed out to the author that their children are very much influenced by the media. These findings certainly come as no surprise to advertisers who have long believed in the ability of the media to change the behaviour of adults and children.

Over the years a number of studies have reported some relationship between aggressive behaviour and viewing violence on television but methodological weakness, and general failure to control all the variables, did not permit the resolution of the question as to the nature of this relationship. The National Commission on The Causes and Prevention of Violence (1969) drew attention to the significance of the question when it concluded:

... that a constant diet of violent behaviour on television has an adverse effect on human character and attitudes. Violence on television encourages violent forms of behaviour, and fosters moral and social values about violence in daily life which are unacceptable in a civilized society.

Experimental support for this statement could be found in the research of Bandura and his associates. In their classic experiment Bandura *et al.* (1963a) observed young children at play after exposing them to different stimuli. They found that children who had experienced real-life or filmed instances of aggression did not differ in total aggressiveness, but did exhibit about twice as much imitative physical and verbal aggression as the children who saw no aggressive acts.

From these results the investigators concluded that television may serve as an influential model of social behaviour but caution that one must distinguish between the child's learning about aggression and his translating it into action. Bandura *et al.* (1963b) and Bandura (1965) produced some additional evidence to support this conclusion. A similar pattern of results is found in studies by Berkowitz *et al.* (1963) and Berkowitz (1965) who worked with college students. Once again subjects viewing aggressive film reacted with more aggression than control subjects viewing neutral or non-aggressive material. In addition Berkowitz (1965) demonstrated that the aggression provoked by film is more likely to be directed at persons toward whom the subjects already feel some hostility. But Berkowitz emphasises that the target person need not be someone who has been the immediate cause of injury or frustration.

Since the formation of the Surgeon General's Scientific Advisory Committee on Television and

Social Behavior in April, 1969, researchers in the United States have looked very closely at the effects of televised violence on young viewers. This committee, with a budget of one million dollars<sup>10</sup> commissioned 67 independent pieces of research in an attempt to resolve the question of whether there is a causal connection between televised crime and violence and antisocial behaviour. A report and five volumes of studies published in 1972 failed to completely resolve the question but the Committee did conclude that:

The experimental studies bearing on the effects of aggressive television entertainment content on children support certain conclusions. First, violence depicted on television, can immediately or shortly thereafter induce mimicking or copying by children. Second, under certain circumstances television violence can instigate an increase in aggressive acts. The accumulated evidence, however, does not warrant the conclusion that televised violence has a uniformly adverse effect nor the conclusion that it has an adverse effect on the majority of children. It cannot even be said that the majority of the children in the various studies we have reviewed showed an increase in aggressive behavior in response to the violent fare to which they were exposed. The evidence does indicate that televised violence may lead to increased aggressive behavior in certain subgroups of children, who might constitute a small portion or a substantial proportion of the total population of young television viewers. We cannot estimate the size of the fraction, however, since the available evidence does not come from cross-section samples of the entire American population of children.<sup>11</sup>

But poor methodology robs this substantial report of much of its value. The television industry alone was given the veto power by the Surgeon General over nominations for places on the committee and this was used to exclude Bandura and Berkowitz, whose research had consistently shown a link between exposure to violent stimuli and aggressive behaviour. Three of the twelve members of the committee were in the employ of the networks. Of the 67 studies commissioned only 5 seriously studied the television stimuli. The remainder focused on children, adolescents and adults and paid little attention to the stimuli. Despite the inconclusive nature of the report the three networks in the United States made efforts to reduce the violent content of programmes and at the same time commissioned more studies into the effects of violent television on viewers. The final results of this network sponsored research are not yet available.

To conclude this consideration of the effects of television violence on viewers, it must be said that while the definitive study remains to be done we need to conceptualize the problem from a general systems perspective. This approach recog-

nizes that television operates in a complex social setting and its effects are undoubtedly mitigated by other social influences. But it is of concern to the author that at a time when the values and the influence of traditional institutions such as family, church and school are in question, television is continuing to emphasise violent styles of life.

### Television as an Industry

During the past five years much of the study of television in the United States has focused on the broad issue of television as a powerful industry. Melody (1973), Choate (1971, 1973), Howard and Hulbert (1973), Pearce (1973) and Johnson (1970) have all examined the functions of television in American society today. From broad perspectives they attempt to explain the function of television in a capitalistic society which possesses the medium to the point of saturation. These five contributions to the understanding of television grew out of a frequently expressed concern by parents and others looking to the FTC and the FCC for some positive action on children's television. The author believes these writings have relevance for those interested in understanding the function of the media in Australia.

The television industry in Australia is run by corporations who are in the business to make a profit, and over the past twenty years these corporations have discovered that the medium can be an effective tool for commercial marketing. Television has become the dominant medium for advertising to both adults and children.

To appreciate the role of the television industry in Australian society it would be helpful to examine the basic functions of the industry and the relationship of these functions to the commercial component of the economy. According to Melody (1973) and Johnson (1970) the customer to whom the market responds is not the viewing audience but, rather, the advertiser. And the viewing audience is not the customer in the market, but rather, the product being sold. In other words, the networks sell the viewing audience to the advertisers. This is not to imply that the interests of audience and advertiser are necessarily opposed. In many respects their interests would be similar but it is important to recognize that the system is fundamentally responsive to the advertiser.

The magnitude of the television industry's role in many Western economies was underlined by J. K. Galbraith who wrote in *The New Industrial State*:

The industrial system is profoundly dependent upon commercial television and could not exist in its present form without it . . . [Radio and television are] the prime instruments for the management of consumer demand.<sup>12</sup>

Commercial television, according to Choate

(1971), introduces young viewers to the ground rules of the private enterprise system in a disappointing way. Choate does not totally object to selling to children but believes it should be done in a manner which will help them acquire prudent consumer habits. Hopefully, the young can learn to be cautious without having to distrust and hate their economic system. Choate (1973) reported to the FCC that the foods sold to children by American television are not meats, fruits, vegetables and dairy products. Rather, they are the contrived and processed foods, some with, but many without nutritional merit, that dominate the airwaves. In most food advertisements directed to children the emphasis is on sweetness, colour and shape and Choate (1973) concluded that this advertising practice left children with a preoccupation for processed foods.

Howard and Hulbert (1973) in a staff report to the FTC essentially supported Choate. They saw a need for children to learn how to consume but from the evidence submitted to the FTC they concluded that it does not follow that television is a necessary, or even desirable part of this learning experience. Their report stated:

It is conceivable that television advertising could frustrate, rather than aid, these goals. Consumer education *per se* would be a more effective (although more expensive) alternative. <sup>13</sup>

Both Howard and Hulbert (1973) and Choate (1971) expressed concern that, as a result of televised advertising, children frequently become surrogate salesmen urging parents to buy particular products and there is some evidence that this pressure could lead to tension within the family. The most frequent requests Ward (1972) found were for food products. These requests decreased with the age of the children, but mother's yieldings increased with the age of children. Ward also found that younger children were more inclined to attribute credibility to advertising, but even the youngest (five- to seven-year-old) viewers responded that advertising "sometimes" tells the truth but not "always".

The effects of television on the eating habits of children and adults have been studied by Clancy-Hepburn (1974) and Nevill (1973). But, as with the studies on violence, the researchers are unable to readily isolate the influence of the independent variable and hence statements about the effect of television on eating habits must remain tentative. The evidence expressed before the Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs of the United States Senate in 1973 revealed an increasing concern about the quality of the American diet. Studies revealed a decline in some very important parts of this diet. This decline is accompanied by a striking increase in the consumption of snack foods. In his opening statement as Committee Chairman, Senator

George McGovern stated:

In its investigation of this issue, the committee has become aware of the special importance that television now plays in influencing the nation's nutritional habits. The television advertising of food products now exerts an enormous new influence on the nation's children. . . . A heavy proportion of these commercials deal with food products and predominantly with breakfast and snack foods. <sup>14</sup>

The impact of television advertising on food buying and consumption patterns can only be estimated but it appears safe to conjecture that the industry is convinced that behaviour can be altered by advertising. New products are launched with expensive television commercials and contracts between food companies and advertising agencies are renewed regularly, indicating mutual satisfaction. Direct observation by Gift *et al.* (1971) led them to write:

The presence of television in the house causes certain changes in eating behavior in many families. Mealtimes are adjusted so that favorite programs can be watched, or meals eaten hurriedly with a minimum of attention and conversation so that programs will not be missed or else are eaten on trays in front of the set. Snacks are frequently consumed while watching. One can only guess about the extent and nutritional significance of the eating behavior that makes accommodation to the commanding presence of television. <sup>15</sup>

In response to pressure from those concerned about various aspects of children's television the Australian Broadcasting Control Board in 1973 issued all commercial television stations with a list of restrictions on television advertising directed at children. Included in the list are orders that advertisements must refrain from directly urging children to put pressure on parents to buy the products advertised. The stations were also directed not to place undue emphasis on the use of such words as "only" or "just" when mentioning the price of an advertised product. Restrictions on advertising in programmes directed at children are not unique to Australia. According to Howard and Hulbert (1973) eleven of the sixteen free-world countries they surveyed did not permit any advertising on children's programmes. The United States was the only country which permitted more advertising on children's programmes than on adult programmes.

While the basic question about food habits and their relationship to television must still remain unanswered one needs to continue to look at the effects of television in the context of the socialization of children. This point will be developed later in the chapter.

#### Role of Parents in Children's Television Behaviour

To what extent do parents attempt to control

the television their children want to watch? At least six United States research studies — Barcus (1969), Hess and Goldman (1962), Niven (1960), Witty (1967), Surgeon General's Scientific Advisory Committee on Television and Social Behavior (1972), and The National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence (1969) — have examined this question and the bulk of the evidence suggests that American parents do not exercise much control over the television programmes their children watch. The committee responsible for *Television and Growing Up: The Impact of Televised Violence* (1972) summarized much of the available evidence when they wrote:

Parents usually exert little influence over their children's viewing. Our data indicate that in an overwhelming majority of families, the children control the use of the television set through early evening. Indeed, one study reports that parents often ask advice from their children when they select early evening programs. 18

Children's control of the television in the early evening is certainly not absolute. Hess and Goldman (1962) reported that about half the American children in their study were free to turn on the television set whenever they wished, while in other homes the decision was made by a parent, usually the mother. However, it was the parents and not the children who decided when the set would be turned off.

Control by parents over the actual selection of early evening programmes also appears to be minimal, although Hess and Goldman (1962) found that American mothers were more concerned with content of the programmes than actual viewing time. Fathers, on the other hand, reported little concern with any aspects of children's television unless the children's choice of programmes interfered with theirs. Niven (1960) studied Columbus, Ohio families and observed that between 7.00 p.m. - 9.00 p.m. a family decision on what was to be viewed was the chief

method of programme selection.

Family choice differences were studied by Wand (1968) who found that among families in Ottawa the older children's choices tended to dominate those of the younger children, while the mother's programme choice was usually selected in preference to the father's. In differences with the children the choice of the parents was selected in about half the cases. Wand also found that in the absence of an agreement there was a tendency for the dissatisfied member to drift away.

Barcus (1969) has developed a comprehensive model for analyzing parental influence on children's viewing. There are four basic dimensions: the time that influence is exercised — before, during or after viewing; positive and negative controls, formal and informal controls; and time and content controls. The most frequent types of controls Barcus found to be negative; only a few of the mothers sampled said they forbade certain programmes prior to viewing, while most others exercised controls after the viewing had begun. Almost the entire sample of mothers in this study indicated that they suggest certain programmes for the children to view.

Chaffee *et al.* (1971) worked with 1,300 American families and concluded that parents frequently influence their children more by what they do not do than by what they do, a case of negative modelling. The Chaffee study gives little support to the notion that "parental example" in media use provides an important model for the children's viewing behaviour.

At least eight of the American studies appearing in the bibliography of this study indicate a very definite relationship between socioeconomic status (S.E.S.) and parental control of children's television — Blood (1961), Chaffee *et al.* (1971), Efron and Hickey (1969), Greenberg and Dominick (1969), Hess and Goldman (1962), Schramm and Roberts (1971), Surgeon General's Scientific Advisory Committee on Television and Social Behavior (1972) and The National Com-

TABLE 5  
Hourly Control of Television Dial

Television viewed by children (total daily hours)	Control of television dial — by hours		
	Children	Parents	Family*
Light viewers (N = 185 hours)	34%	34%	32%
Medium and Heavy viewers (N = 705 hours)	43%	29%	28%
All children (N = 890 hours)	41%	30%	29%

\* Family — when both child and parent select programs.

$\chi^2 = 5.45; df = 2; .05 < p < .10$

**TABLE 6**  
**Control of Television Dial (by homes)**

Children's daily television viewing (Monday-Thursday)	Predominant controllers of television in the home		
	Children	Parents	Family*
Light viewers (N = 54)	28%	28%	44%
Medium and Heavy viewers <sup>1</sup> (N = 125)	50%	26%	23%
All children (N = 179)	43%	27%	30%

\* Family — when both child and parent select programs. (In the remaining 79 homes there was no predominant controller of the television dial).

$\chi^2 = 10.20$ ;  $df = 2$ ;  $.001 p < .01$

mission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence (1969). In general, these studies have found that the higher the S.E.S. of parents the more they tend to control the television their children watch.

A study of 300 families in Sydney (Canavan, 1974), revealed the role of Australian parents to be similar to that of the American parents cited in the above studies. In the Sydney study the children emerged as the predominant controllers of the television dial during the hours they spend in front of the set. They control the dial for 41 per cent of the time they view television (see Table 5). In 43 per cent of the homes in the sample children exercised predominant control over the dial whereas parents exercised predominant control in just 27 per cent of the homes (see Table 6). There was some support in this study for the hypothesis that heavy viewers experience relatively less parental control over what they watch than light viewers. The study also indicated a possible negative correlation between S.E.S. and time spent viewing television. There was also some indication of a positive correlation between S.E.S. and degree of parental control. There was strong support — 86 per cent — from the parents in this study for media education courses in primary schools.

Judged by the surveys carried out by the Australian Broadcasting Control Board, *Attitudes to Television, 1968-1969*, most adults adopt the view that television is no worse for their children than comics were for themselves. Likewise, a permissive attitude to the programmes viewed by children and the time spent watching television was evident. Only 38 per cent had rules as to what their children could view, and only about one-half of the Sydney sample and one-third of the Melbourne sample placed restrictions on their amount of time spent by children watching television. Thus, it is inevitable that the majority of Australian children will be watching at least some programmes that are produced for adult audiences.

The reluctance of parents to influence the viewing habits of children is particularly significant when we consider the total impact of the medium on children. Television appears to be able to educate and socialize the young in their own homes with a minimum of intervention from parents. In the following section of this chapter this observation will be developed as the author attempts to synthesise the research findings presented above.

#### Some Generalizations Based on Foregoing Research

From the foregoing analysis of the four categories of impact studies — general systems perspective, stimulus-response perspective, television as an industry and parental role in children's television behaviour — one can induce a general statement on the role of the mass media in Australia today.

The twentieth century has witnessed a communications revolution that has put television, radio and the press into nearly every Australian home and men, women and children each year absorb thousands of hours of audio-visual experience. It is the author's opinion that much of this experience is enjoyed; frequently it is a source of information. Australians have grown to appreciate their television and other media.

It is widely believed that the mass media are intrinsically good and facilitate the communication of news, ideas and teaching to most Australians. Many use the media, particularly television, for the bulk of their entertainment. But available evidence would tend to suggest that the potential of the mass media in Australia is still to be realised.

Effects of media use vary from individual to individual. Human behaviour and personality development are dependent on so many inter-related variables in the environment that to isolate the effects of television, film, press or

radio appears to be an extremely difficult task. But the mass of evidence available allows one to induce a generalized overview of the effects of mass media on Australian culture.

Television is a tremendous source of knowledge for young people and is capable of providing a wide range of stimulating experiences. These experiences affect the language and symbols people use and frequently contribute to the education and socialization of the young. No contemporary literary form has a more massive audience than television and this medium can affect the acquisition of knowledge, concepts, attitudes and values. Much of this learning is incidental. The television industry is primarily concerned with informing and entertaining and makes little attempt to motivate learners or to provide opportunity for practice and studies of the relative effectiveness of instructional television reveal little evidence that it is significantly more effective than other forms of learning (Schramm and Roberts, 1971). The research by Krugman and Hartley (1970) indicated that television learning is typically passive and is characterised by an absence of resistance to what is presented.

Television viewing appears to take little time from structured activities such as homework and organized sport, but may lead to a postponement in children's bedtime. Most of the time given to television appears to come from those periods when no structured activities are scheduled. There is no evidence that television viewing has a detrimental effect on the study or homework patterns of normal, adjusted students, but there is evidence that some students use the media as an escape mechanism.

The behaviour of young people is influenced by television as hour after hour they see older people who communicate, who relate socially, who handle tensions, who resolve conflicts, who are kind, who are consumers, who play, who laugh, who listen to music and who eat particular kinds of foods. They see how some of their peers pressure parents to buy advertised products. The young are also exposed to much violence and witness a wide range of aggressive acts. The bulk of this exposure to television is frequently with the less pleasant side of life and there is a real possibility that young viewers could suffer from a loss of sensitivity and creativity. And as the whole culture is permeated by television, people are influenced whether they watch television or not.

Another possible danger of television lies not so much in the behaviour it produces as in the behaviour it prevents — the games, the talks, the family interaction. Turning on the television set can turn off communication among family members. It can also alter family living patterns. However, the extent of the influence of television on family life depends very much on the family itself. The weaker the family structure, the more

important television becomes.

Parents in Australia express little concern over television and make few efforts to control their children's viewing. As a result much of the thousands of hours children spend in front of television is spent viewing adult programmes. This is particularly significant in a country where the television industry expects parents to act as censors for the younger viewers.

The mass media are an essential part of the economic system in Australia. They form a powerful industry which is basically committed to making a profit. The industry has a very concentrated ownership which places substantial power in the hands of relatively few people who are in a unique position to influence the nation. The industry as a whole is primarily responsive to the advertisers and the consumer is of secondary importance. As a consequence of the present economic structure of the media industry the people have very little effective control over what is produced.

Our understanding of the impact of the mass media on students is still far from complete. More research remains to be done before we can establish in precisely what way what children are affected by what media and under what conditions. But if one believes that the massive exposure of impressionable children and adolescents to a constant diet of television has some impact then it might well be disastrous to procrastinate while waiting for the definitive research on how the media assists in the socialization and education of youth in Australia.

Television is transforming Australian culture at an unprecedented rate. Knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, customs and the habits of man are slowly being changed as television legitimizes what is acceptable in the culture. But while television is certainly a producer of culture it is also a product of culture.

The mass media have emerged as powerful forces in the socialization of young Australians. An appreciation of the principle of individual differences would suggest that it is not possible to say precisely how individuals may or may not be socialized by the media. But one can conjecture that from an early age the media show children how to play, how to consume, how to communicate, how to relate socially and how to be family members. They also introduce children to some of the realities of citizenship in our society and generally expose them to some of the richness of Australian culture.

Television, films and all forms of mass communication are constantly presenting values which either strengthen or dilute the teaching of the family, church, school and peer-group. This presentation of values by the media is more significant at a time when the influence of those institutions traditionally responsible for the pro-

cess of value transmission appears to be weakening or even breaking down. Bronfenbrenner (1972) explains:

As a result, by the time of junior high school, a discontinuity becomes apparent between values and behavior. In the preschool and primary years, when associations with adults are still frequent and intense, the child internalises parental and community values, but many of them only at a verbal level. For previous generations, such values were then translated into corresponding patterns of action in a community which permitted and invited the involvement of children and adults in each other's lives at school, in the neighbourhood and in the world of work. In recent decades, however, these institutions have become technologized, dehumanized, and, in effect, discharged from their child-rearing responsibilities. In consequence, the child has been deprived of experience precisely in those social contexts in which values learned within the family can be translated into concrete social actions outside the family.<sup>17</sup>

Today, some of this vacuum is filled by the media which ceaselessly present values to a young generation anxious to examine the values of society before accepting them. While value formation is in this state of flux people will tend to develop values on the basis of the widest possible range of experience as they attempt to formulate answers to the basic questions about their lives and future. In this situation the media could be expected to play a significant role.

From the data presented in this chapter one may conclude that in the last twenty years the mass media have become very effective agents of education for Australians and the screen, the radio and the press have joined the home, school and the church in the task of education. The time has now arrived when all interested in the education of young Australians must recognise the presence of these new, but powerful agents of education and take the necessary steps to ensure that the contribution of the mass media harmonizes with that of the home, school and church. No longer can Australians afford to ignore the educational role of the mass media.

### 1.3 Educational Implications of the Impact of Mass Media

On the basis of the previous discussion in this chapter, an attempt will now be made to deduce some implications for education.

Students in secondary school have generally had extensive audio-visual experience and could be expected to differ from students who were educated in the pre-television era. Many of these media-educated students will possess a more com-

plete knowledge of the world and in all probability their speech patterns, their attitudes and values, their consumption habits and their social behaviour will have been partly shaped by the television. They may have become very future oriented and may typically look to the media rather than the school for up-to-date knowledge. As a result of this constant input from the media there is a real possibility that the student will not see the school as possessing the key to the world of knowledge and progress but as an institution that is frequently preoccupied with the past. For the student, the books and courses in school are very easily compared unfavourably to television, radio and the press.

This new kind of student poses a challenge for educators. For some, the electronic media may loom as an unwelcome competitor that must be ignored in the hope that its influence will disappear. But others will recognise the educative role of the media and take the necessary steps to help the students master its codes and control its impact. Toward the end of this chapter the role of the school and the teacher will be discussed at some length.

Today the mass media expose the student to such an unrelenting stream of information that it may well be on the way to solving the problem of getting an ever increasing amount of knowledge to people. Though many still see the school's primary function in terms of dispensing knowledge, educators are becoming increasingly aware that as a result of the knowledge explosion they are no longer in a position to think of teaching primarily in terms of knowledge. This line of thinking was developed by Silberman, who cites Margaret Mead to make the point that the media are changing the nature of education. He writes:

When we look realistically at the world in which we are living today and become aware of what the actual problems of learning are, the anthropologist Margaret Mead wrote in 1958, "our conception of education changes radically. . . . We are no longer dealing primarily with the vertical transmission of the tried and true by the old, mature, and experienced teachers to the young, immature, and inexperienced pupil. This was the system of education developed in a stable, slowly changing culture. In a world of rapid change, vertical transmission of knowledge alone" is not enough. "What is needed," Dr. Mead argued, "and what we are already moving toward is the inclusion of another whole dimension of learning: the lateral transmission, to every sentient member of society, of what has just been discovered, invented, created, manufactured, or marketed." The need is acute: "the whole teaching-and-learning continuum, which was once tied in an orderly and productive way to the passing of generations and the growth of

the child into a man — this whole process has exploded in our faces. <sup>18</sup>

The nature of this changing role for schools was further explained by McLuhan (1967) who wrote:

Today in our cities, most learning occurs outside the classroom. The sheer quantity of information conveyed by press-mags-film-TV-radio far exceeds the quantity of information conveyed by school instruction and texts. This challenge has destroyed the monopoly of the book as a teaching aid and cracked the very walls of the classroom, so suddenly, we're confused, baffled.

In this violently upsetting social situation, many teachers naturally view the offerings of the new media as entertainment, rather than education. *But this view carries no conviction to the student.* <sup>19</sup>

The writings of McLuhan and Mead support the notion that the mass media are now firmly established educational institutions. The media teach and students learn, even though both content and methods of instruction differ from those of the schools. The teachers employed by the media bear such names as reporters, disc jockeys, announcers, commentators and entertainers. The courses of study offered by the media are more varied than the school's but are often very similar in subject matter. What the schools call social studies and civics, the mass media call news and documentaries. Unlike the school the media attract a voluntary audience which is free to accept or reject what is offered. Like a good teacher the media generally begin with the interests of their audience rather than that of the teacher and frequently employ sophisticated audio-visual aids to maintain interest. The commercial media do not normally attempt to teach the basic subjects but concentrate more on the social dimensions of education. They teach their audience such behaviours as how to consume, how to relate to others, how to relax and how to dissipate tension.

As an educational institution the media must always be considered in conjunction with the school. Both educate and it is not possible to readily isolate the influence of one or the other on students. In an attempt to provide some overview of their respective contributions to the education of the young Gañs wrote:

My hunch is that schools are best in teaching their students basic methods of formal communication, including the three R's, as well as an array of socially and occupationally relevant skills; that the media allow children to learn what is going on in the modern world, politically and culturally, and that in both, students learn many large lumps of often unimportant or irrelevant facts. . . . But children probably learn the most important aspects of

life neither in the classroom nor in front of the television set. The schools may lecture them on home economics and family living, and the media will provide highly romantic versions of marital life, but the most important lessons in the school of socialization are still being taught by the family and the peer group. <sup>20</sup>

But in considering television and the other media, as agents of education one must be careful to recognize their very definite limitations. The media certainly teach but they make no attempt to present anything resembling a whole or integrated education. While in some ways more current and realistic than schools the media generally only present a very fragmented view of society. The larger organisations and issues are frequently ignored by the media which are more geared to concentrate on the isolated, spectacular event that will hold the interest of the people for a short space of time.

The broad educative role of the media can also be understood in terms of cultural initiation. For centuries, schools transmitted culture from one generation to the next and the transmission of ideals and moral values was generally recognised as a responsibility of teachers, who were expected to support the values of parents. But, in the 1970's, culture and moral values are, whether we like it or not, very frequently presented by the mass media — directly or by implication. This brings a new dimension to the educative process and is particularly significant because of the cyclic nature of this presentation and transmission. Today's presentation of culture and values by the media can readily become tomorrow's norm and, in the long run, the media can at least support and help the forces for moral change in our society. This, of course, could be in a positive or a negative direction but what is important is that we recognise the potential of the media in the transmission of culture and values.

This educative role of the media in the modern world was clearly recognised by the Second Vatican Council. The Decree on the Media of Social Communication (December, 1963) holds the reader, listener and viewer as primarily responsible for the civilised and Christian use of the mass media. This in turn brings stress to bear on the roles of pastors, parents and teachers in guiding the young to acquire good reading, listening and viewing habits. The Decree recognises that the tastes and level of education of the public determine, in the last analysis, the quality of what is generally printed, filmed, recorded and broadcast. Publishers and producers are literally governed by prevailing tastes in society. Hence, they accept only an instrumental role in the overall process of social communication. It is not they but the public who are the principal agents.

In looking at the role of the educator rather

than that of the producer, the Decree has taken a direction already strongly indicated by Pius XII. But it does more than simply repeat his directives. It builds on them. It poses the general responsibility of educators as a foundation for its concept of the specific responsibility of the Church herself who, as *Mater* and *Magistra* is, above all, a teacher of mankind. In this Decree, the Church considers first and foremost her own responsibility and speaks of it with far more energy and vehemence than when she speaks of the responsibility of others.

The Decree of the Media of Social Communication is, in every sense of the word, a charter for the apostolate of the Church in a world that is being transformed by the communications revolution.

The Pastoral Instruction on the Means of Social Communication (1971) elaborated on the 1963 Decree and strongly urged educators to begin teaching media education courses. In response to this Pastoral, and conscious of the formative influence of the media on young Australians the Australian Bishops' Conference (September, 1972) declared:

Called to live as true Christians, witnesses to Christ, in this media-oriented world, we must be active, and even aggressive when the occasion demands. We must learn how the media function; who are the communicators; what is their background; how to judge the truth of the message; how to abstract the message from the particular medium which has its own characteristics; how to distinguish between fantasy and reality, between apparent fact and reality. We must learn how to distinguish good from evil, the truly beautiful from the pseudo-artistic presentation. In a word, we must become truth-seekers for it is only the truth that will set us free. We must never allow the powerful media to dull us or enchain us. We must be active in every field of the mass media.

The Bishops continued:

It is necessary for all to learn how to control these marvels of human invention, and not let them control us. We must be discerning, with the true spirit of discernment given to the Christian by the Holy Spirit — the gift of wisdom. All must learn self-discipline in the practice of personal freedom, otherwise we will not withstand the dehumanising, de-civilising potential of the misuse of the mass media, which is always a danger. By our personal and organised efforts, taking the initiative in commending what is good and condemning what is evil, we all have the duty of bringing the constructive influence of Christ our Lord to bear on the mass media so that they will enrich man in his human development and lead him

to revere the God of truth, of justice, and right. <sup>21</sup>

To respond to the Bishops' statement teachers will have to recognise that the education which flourished in the days of print-based learning must undergo a transformation. Education today must be relevant to an audio-visual civilisation, a civilisation that uses three systems of symbols — words, images and sounds. Schools must teach students to be literate in all three. This will require some reassessment of priorities, which, hopefully, will result in an integrated approach to modern language and modern communication. To permit media study to blossom in schools these curriculum guidelines are offered to teachers. In practice this would mean that the students would study and make use of television, film, press and radio with the objective of becoming more appreciative, discriminating and critical consumers of these agents of education and entertainment.



Mass Media Education needs to be conceptualised as a definite subject area to be included in the total curriculum. In the primary years some teachers prefer to programme media study separately, while others have moved towards an integration of Language and Media. In the secondary years teachers may wish to adopt a more inter-disciplinary approach.

Turning to the classroom, it appears obvious that if sleep alone occupies more of the average student's time than do the mass media, then steps must be taken to equip students to "read" or view television and the other media intelligently. Traditionally, schools have taught pupils to distinguish good literature from bad, good art from bad art and good music from poor and this, of course must continue in the years ahead. In no way is the author attempting to depreciate what is an accepted part of the school curriculum. Rather, he is suggesting that a changing situation be recognised and that the schools teach students to distinguish good television from bad, good radio from bad radio and good press from poor. In other words, schools should teach the language of the day.

Once the schools clearly recognise that the

mass media are agents of education and hence need to be taken seriously, they should begin to exercise some influence over the press, radio, television and film. In time, the schools should affect the whole pattern of communication since the structure of the mass media industry depends, to some extent, upon the support given it by the audience. When the schools succeed in making the consumers more appreciative, discriminating and critical in their use of the media — and thereby changing the demand — it follows that the media industry should respond with better quality press, radio, television and film.

The introduction of media study into all Australian schools could be expected to have implications beyond the classroom and the mass

media. Students who are being encouraged to develop a spirit of inquiry at school could be expected to carry the same attitudes into their homes and parents may be confronted with some unexpected behaviour.

Media Education, especially in the long term, is likely to also have other social, economic and political implications.

The establishment of Mass Media Education courses in Australian schools will be a clear indication that those responsible for the education of the boys and girls in the country have recognised that the mass media are agents of education which have taken their place alongside the traditional agents — the home, the school, the church, the state.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. Australian Radio Advertising Bureau, *Radio Facts and Figures* — 1973 (Milson's Point, N.S.W., 1973), pp. 2, 9, 21.
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## 2.0 Major Assumptions

This curriculum rests on the following major assumptions:

1. That the mass media will continue to have an impact on Australian culture and influence the students attending schools.
2. That the mass media are agents of education and exercise a socializing influence in Australian society.
3. That the mass media have definite implications for modifying the traditional roles of school teachers, administrators and curriculum builders.
4. That Christian schools are concerned with preparing students for life—life now, life in the future and life hereafter.
5. That children are capable of reacting critically to what they hear, read and view.
6. That mass media have implications for parent-child relationships.
7. That all people have a basic right to be fully and accurately informed.
8. That all people should be able to receive information, education and entertainment from the mass media.
9. That, due to economic considerations, publishers and producers are to some extent governed by the prevailing tastes in society, and therefore it is the reader, listener and viewer who is primarily responsible for the content presented by the mass media.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Assumptions 7, 8 and 9 are based on the Decree of Social Communication, issued by the Second Vatican Council, 1963.

### 3.0 Preamble to the Course

All people have a right to be fully and accurately informed, and, in these days of mass communication, people will only be well informed, and hence free from potential coercion, if they possess the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to understand the nature, techniques and purpose of radio, press, television and film.

The fundamental PURPOSE of mass media education is to produce persons who will be appreciative, critical and discriminating listeners, readers and viewers. Ideally, the youth of tomorrow will be equipped to seek the truth in the mass media they use.

In the early years of schooling media education will be limited to a study of television. Young children can be helped to begin to form sensitive viewing habits, which in the years to come can be further refined. It is not unlikely that the optimum age for the formation of deep rooted viewing habits is the 5 to 10 year age period. While research will need to be done to answer this question, it is the author's opinion that, if a person has spent a considerable amount of time viewing television without any attempt to be critical or discriminating, it will probably be more difficult to develop viewing skills that are sound. If young viewers become accustomed to exercising some judgement over the programmes they see, it is very possible that the habit will persist in the years ahead.

In the upper primary years of media education, pupils will continue the study of television begun in the early stages and will begin examining the press and radio. Children in these years appear capable of developing satisfactory media habits.

The media education begun in the infants' and primary years will be extended and brought to completion in the secondary school.

#### 3.1 Placement of Topics

This curriculum has been divided into infants' and primary sections but no attempt has been made to further sub-divide the content into year segments. This is not possible because of the different media habits and reading abilities of primary school pupils.

Year one teachers are encouraged to select a few of the objectives and learning experiences to begin this course. By year three most pupils will be able to benefit from all the learning experiences suggested in the first part of the curriculum.

In general, a few of the objectives and learning experiences in each of the three upper primary sections could be used with year four pupils. By year five a few more objectives and learning experiences could be used, and by year six teachers would be expected to cover a significant number of the objectives and learning experiences suggested in the second part of the curriculum.

The curriculum is of cyclic construction with each year building on the work covered in the previous year.

Staff co-operation will be important in the early years of the new curriculum.

YEARS	MEDIA
1	Television
2	
3	
4	Television and Film The Press Radio
5	
6	

#### 3.2 The Teachers' Task

Briefly, the Christian teacher must lead his pupils to be discriminating truth seekers in their use of the mass media. This is a most responsible task, requiring a firm grasp of the function of the mass media in our society and an appreciation of the techniques that could be used to make the pupils more appreciative, critical and discriminating viewers, listeners and readers.

In his exercise of this responsibility the teacher should keep three points clearly in mind:

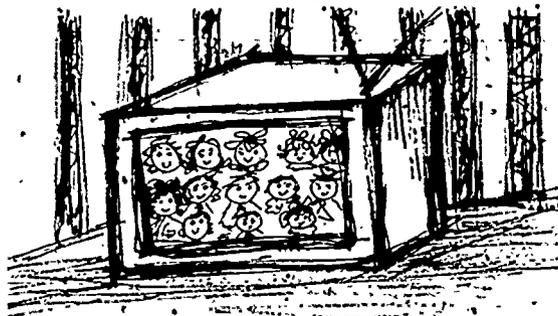
1. Preaching against the mass media and generally imposing his own tastes on the pupils will not produce the desired long term effect.
2. As a Christian educator he cannot stand aside and simply let the pupils decide what is good and bad in the mass media.
3. With great care and skill the primary school teacher can gradually raise the media tastes of the pupils in his class. This is not achieved overnight. It is a long term objective of every lesson in mass media education.

## 4.0 Desired Outcomes of the Course

Some desired OUTCOMES of this curriculum are:

- 4.1 An ability to be appreciative users of the mass media.
- 4.2 A general understanding of the nature and techniques of television, film, press and radio in our society.
- 4.3 Development of the skills necessary to use the media intelligently. This includes evaluating critically what is read in newspapers and magazines, what is viewed on television and film and what is heard on the radio.
- 4.4 Development of the skills necessary to exercise discrimination in the use of the mass media.
- 4.5 Development of truly human and Christian attitudes and value judgments regarding the media.
- 4.6 A foundation for the building of a sense of individual and social responsibility for the content presented by the media.
- 4.7 Making better use of television, film, radio and the press in the teaching of the secular subjects and Catechetics.

## TELEVISION



## 5.1 Aim

The AIM of media education in the early years is to have young children begin to respond and react to what they see on television in order to predispose them for the subsequent development of appreciative and critical attitudes to television.

The end of such media education is to develop persons who will be discriminating truth seekers in their use of the media.

## 5.2 Ten Objectives for Television Study

The ten behavioural objectives in this lower primary section have been included in order to identify the purpose and intended outcomes of media education in the early years. They are meant to be guidelines for determining what is to be learned, how it is to be taught, what materials are needed and how it is to be evaluated. The list is not exhaustive but it does appear to contain the essential elements of media education for children in the first years of school.

The ten objectives in the following list are primarily related to television skills. In the later years the list of objectives for media education contains knowledge and attitude objectives as well as more skill objectives.

1. The pupil will be able to comprehend what he or she views on TV.
2. The pupil will be able to verbally recall highlights of programmes viewed.
3. The pupil will be aware that TV presents different types of programmes.

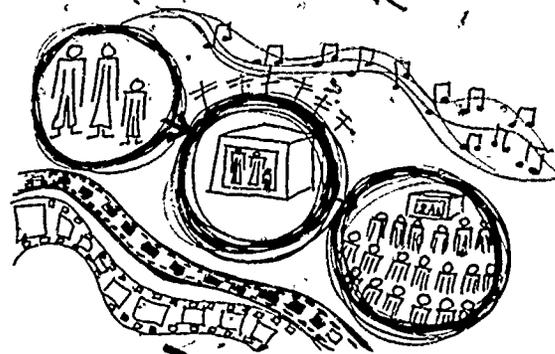
4. The pupil will be able to differentiate between:
  - a. programmes and commercials;
  - b. situations that are true and those that are false;
  - c. situations that are good and those that are bad;
  - d. situations that are real and those that are unreal;
  - e. situations that are important and those that are unimportant.
5. The pupil will be able to understand and interpret the principal themes in programmes he or she views.
6. The pupil will be able to form and express an opinion on the TV programmes viewed.
7. The pupil will be aware of the need to select TV programmes carefully.
8. The pupil will be able to discriminate between two programmes that are to be aired simultaneously.
9. The pupil will be able to make some evaluation at the conclusion of a TV programme.
10. The pupil will be able to state why he or she watched a particular programme.

## 5.3 Suggested Learning Experiences for Television Study

## YEAR ONE

1. Some questions to begin class discussion.
  - a. What did you watch on TV last evening?
  - b. Who saw \_\_\_\_\_? What happened in this show?
  - c. What programmes do you watch each week?
  - d. Can you tell me something interesting you have seen on TV?
  - e. What is your favourite programme? What do you like best about this programme?

- f. What is your favourite cartoon?
  - g. What did you like best in this week's ..... programme? What was the story about? Where did it take place?
  - h. What TV commercials do you enjoy watching?
  - i. What did you see and hear in the ..... programme?
  - j. Can you name the characters you saw in the ..... programme?
  - k. Do any TV characters frighten you?
  - l. Are TV characters real people?
  - m. Can you remember a TV show that had some "good" and "bad" characters?
  - n. Can you recall a TV show that had both "happy" and "sad" parts?
  - o. Think of a TV programme you have seen. Who were the people in the programme? How were they dressed? What did they do? Which person did you like best? Was this person good?
2. Conduct surveys of the viewing habits of pupils in class. Some suggested surveys are:  
Hours spent watching TV each week  
Most popular programmes watched by pupils in class  
Least popular programmes watched by pupils in class  
Favourite television characters.  
The results of these surveys could be graphed and displayed for pupils and parents.
  3. Have the pupils depict in mime some of their favourite TV characters. The rest of the class could be asked to guess the names of the various characters.
  4. Playschool can be very profitably used to begin media education in Kindergarten. The programme can be a rich source of questions about TV.
  5. Have the pupils identify sounds from the TV set.  
(a) while viewing the picture;  
(b) while not viewing the picture.
  6. More questions for class discussion:
    - a. What TV programmes do you watch?
    - b. Which TV shows do you like the most? Are there some programmes you do not like?
    - c. Why did you watch the programme? How did it begin? How did it end?
    - d. Who could act out a TV programme they recently viewed?
    - e. Who could retell the story in a TV programme they saw this week?
- (f) Think of a TV programme you saw recently. What was the story about? What was the most enjoyable part? Were any parts boring? Was it a true story?
  - g. Who are some real TV characters? Who are some fantasy characters? What is the difference?
  - h. Who are your favourite TV characters? Would you like to be as they are? Why?
  - i. What happened before and after the best part of the ..... programme you saw this week?
  - j. Did the ..... programme tell you something you did not know before?
  - k. How do TV programmes differ? What kinds of programmes do first grade children enjoy the most?
  - l. Can you think of the names of TV programmes that made you frightened? Happy? Angry?
  - m. If you were on TV who would you like to be? Why? Who would you not like to be? Why?
  - n. Why do you watch TV?
  - o. What things do you prefer doing instead of watching TV?



7. Provide an opportunity for pupils to re-tell the main themes from programmes viewed at home.
8. Have the pupils list the programmes they like and those they dislike in two separate columns. Ask them to circle their favourite programme.
9. Have pupils describe a funny incident from a TV cartoon.
10. Make a list on the blackboard of interesting things pupils saw on TV last evening. Use for oral expression lesson.

YEAR TWO

1. Some questions to begin class discussion:
  - a. What different kinds of TV programmes have you watched?
  - b. What do you like about the main characters in your favourite TV programme?
  - c. Who are the characters in the programme? Are they like you? In what ways? How are they different? How do they treat one another?
  - d. Comprehension exercise. How did the programme begin? What happened next? How did it end? What did the programme tell you? Did you learn anything new? How did you feel when you were viewing the programme?
  - e. Would you like to write or draw something about a TV programme to keep it in your mind?
  - f. What commercials do you see? What do they tell you? Why do we have commercials on TV?
  - g. What do TV commercials tell us about products? Do they tell us all we want to know?
  - h. Discuss a programme featuring children. What was the best part of the programme? How did the children behave? Was their behaviour correct?
  - i. Do you agree with all the actions of the characters in the programme? Did the programme teach you something?
  - j. Tell the class why you dislike a particular TV programme.
  - k. Which TV character would you like to be?
  - l. What new things have you learned from TV?
  - m. Why do you watch TV?
  - n. Would you prefer to watch TV or play?
  - o. For how long should second grade children watch TV each evening?

2. The educational programmes watched in class provide excellent material for basic comprehension exercises. Some sample questions are:

What were we told?

Did we fully understand the principal message?

What parts required further explanation?

What was the best part of the programme?

What was the weakest part of the programme?

3. Test the pupils to determine if they can distinguish between commercial and non-commercial channels. Discuss the differences with the pupils.
4. Have the class watch a segment of a TV programme with the sound off. Generate a discussion on what they saw. Consider, also, the role of sound in a television programme. For a variation turn on the sound and cover the screen.
5. Plan a discussion around TV commercials. The following questions may be useful:
  - Do we need all the things advertised?
  - Can parents afford all the products advertised?
6. Have the pupils make two lists of TV programmes they view. Head one list "Real" and the other "Fantasy" or "Unreal". Discuss the differences between the two lists.
7. Arrange a discussion around the differences the pupils have observed between the local area and other places shown on TV.
8. Have pupils draw the different types of houses they have seen in regular television programmes. Display these on the notice board.
9. Make use of the television set for creative writing/thinking. Listen to a short segment of a daytime television programme and then ask pupils the following questions:
  - What was happening?
  - What is likely to happen next?
10. Provide pupils with a duplicated sheet containing prepared "TV" frames. Have pupils create a sequence similar to those shown on TV.
11. Have the pupils write sentences about a cartoon they have seen on TV.
12. Have the pupils design an advertisement for a new variety of ice cream, soap, fruit drink, etc.
13. Telephone numbers that are flashed across the TV screen can be used to help pupils to remember sequences in number.

YEAR THREE

1. Some questions to begin class discussion:
  - a. What did you think about the way the characters behaved in the programme?
  - b. Programme discussion. Was this a true story? Was there anything in the programme you did not like? What did you think about the way the people

- behaved? How did you feel?
- Tell the class about a particular product you have seen advertised on TV.
  - Are the toys advertised on TV as good as you are led to believe?
  - Do you ever watch a programme that does not interest you? Why?
  - What TV channel do you prefer? Give some reasons.
  - Can you recall any new or interesting words/expressions you heard recently on TV?
  - What particular show would you like to see more episodes of? Give a reason.
  - What TV programmes do you not like? Give reasons.
  - What are some programmes that are factual (real)? What are some programmes that are fantasy (make believe)?
  - Were the actions of the characters in the programme always right? What were some of the results of these actions? Could you suggest other actions?
  - What is the best show you can ever remember seeing on TV?
  - From what programmes have you learned the most?
  - How can TV help us?
  - Why do you like a particular programme?
  - What do you enjoy most about the programmes you watch regularly? What do you enjoy least?



- How do you decide what to watch?
- Do you think TV is a good thing to have in your home?

- What new programmes would you like to see on Australian TV?
  - For how long should third grade children watch TV each evening?
- A general comprehension could be based on the following questions: Name of programme? Channel? Day and time? Advertisers?
  - Rating scales can be used to develop some critical skills. Provide the pupils with a simple scale (e.g., 0, 1, 2, 3, 4) and have each pupil rate the programmes watched at school and those seen at home. Discuss the results and help pupils develop criteria for their ratings.
  - Arrange a class discussion around the following questions:
    - Which is your favourite TV programme and why do you enjoy it?
    - Which is the weakest programme you watch regularly on TV? How could this programme be improved?
  - To make pupils more aware that they have a choice of TV programmes ask each pupil to bring to school a TV guide from the local newspaper. Plan a discussion on the merits of the programmes aired at a given hour.
  - Have pupils discuss solutions to the problem facing a character in a particular programme.
  - Have pupils discuss how a particular film made them feel. Focus on the parts of the film that provoked the strongest emotional reaction.
  - Discuss with the pupils the life styles of people in other countries. Compare and contrast these with Australian life styles.
  - Have pupils prepare some simple news items and weather reports for oral presentation to the class. Some pupils may be ready to read written reports. Puppets could be used for variation.
  - Help the pupils to draw simple cartoons. Some may be able to write a story under each drawing.
  - Have the pupils produce a segment of a TV programme. After the final presentation discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the presentation.
  - Direct pupils to "Childcraft" or other appropriate books to gather information on how television works.

## A Study of Television, Film, Press and Radio

### AIM

The AIM of media education in the upper primary years is to have the pupils respond and react to what they view on television and film, to what they read in the press, and to what they listen to on the radio. In doing this they will begin to come to some understanding of the nature, techniques and purpose of the media of social communication and thereby be predisposed to develop critical Christian attitudes to television, film, press and radio. The end of such media education is to develop persons who will be discriminating truth seekers in their use of the media.



### BEHAVIOURAL OBJECTIVES

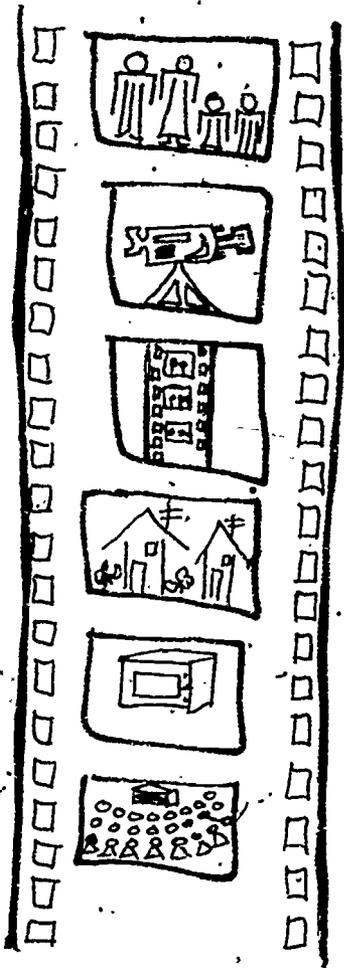
The objectives for the upper primary years have been spelt out in detail in order to identify the purpose and intended outcomes of media education. They are meant to be guidelines for determining what is to be learned, how it is to be taught, what teaching materials are needed and how it will be evaluated. The two principal objectives for each medium have been broken down into goals and goal components and stated in terms of behaviours and content. The list of objectives is extensive but it is not expected that any primary pupil would master them all. Rather, teachers are expected to select from the list those objectives which best suit the maturational level of their pupils.

### 6.1 Television and Film<sup>1</sup>

#### BEHAVIOURAL OBJECTIVES

- A. The pupil will have the *knowledge* to begin to be appreciative, discriminating and critical in his or her use of television and film.
1. The pupil will *know how television operates* in Australia.
    - a. Will know a little of the function of the camera, film, video-tape, tele-recording transmitter, and home receiver.
    - b. Will know that television is transmitted from a number of centrally located television channels.
    - c. Will know that Australian television channels carry both imported and indigenous programmes.
    - d. Will know that television news is frequently accompanied by interpretation and analysis.
    - e. Will know that television channels can report the same event in very different ways.
    - f. Will know that direct telecasts can bring instant news to the Australian people.
  2. The pupil will be *aware of the needs* which television does and does not satisfy.
- B. The pupil will have the *ability* to begin to be appreciative, discriminating and critical in his and her use of television and film.
1. The pupil will be able to *enjoy and appreciate* the film and television he or she views.
  2. The pupil will have *effective viewing skills*.
    - a. Will be able to comprehend what he or she views.
    - b. Will be able to verbally recall the more significant things viewed.
    - c. Will be able to use television and film as a source of information.

<sup>1</sup> For convenience this curriculum has combined the study of film and television. However, the unique characteristics of each medium should not be overlooked.



- d. Will be able to interpret what he or she views.
3. The pupil will be able to *compare* television programmes.
  4. The pupil will be able to *rate television programmes and film* on the basis of enjoyment and information.
  5. The pupil will be able to *analyse film and television programmes*.
    - a. Will form and express opinions on programmes viewed.
    - b. Will distinguish fact from opinion and fantasy.
    - c. Will recognise bias and emotional factors in a presentation.
    - d. Will recognise the general techniques used in persuasive materials such as advertising and propaganda.
    - e. Will be able to differentiate between:
      - 1) Situations that are important and those that are unimportant;
      - 2) Situations that are Christian and those that are unchristian.

6. The pupil will be able to *understand television commercials*.
  - a. Will recognise what he or she is told about advertised products.
  - b. Will recognise what he or she is not told about advertised products.
  - c. Will recognise the truth in advertisements.
  - d. Will recognise anything false or misleading in advertisements.
7. The pupil will be able to *recognise* what he or she considers to be the better quality programmes.
8. The pupil will be able to *use television* to become more aware of the world about him or her.
9. The pupil will be able to *make some evaluation* at the conclusion of programmes viewed.
10. The pupil will be able to *state why he or she watched* a particular programme.

## Using Television and Film

### 1. CRITICAL THINKING:

#### Approach:

The development of the critical thinking faculties of pupils is a major objective of primary school teachers. Teachers at this stage gradually stimulate the pupils to begin thinking for themselves yet at the same time teaching them to accept truth. The pupils must also be given sound reasons for adopting other, more accurate, views than their own. This will include an appropriate appreciation of the authority of teacher, state and church. The television is a useful tool for the teaching of critical analysis to the primary school pupils:

#### Learning Experiences:

- (i) Select a short segment of a suitable daytime television programme, and direct the pupils to list the identifiable sounds (e.g. male voice, car starting, background music, baby crying, door shutting, etc.) Discuss the pupils' list and build up a master list on the blackboard. Over a period of time this activity could be repeated with increasing demands by the teacher.
- (ii) Tune the television set to a short programme and direct the pupils to make a written list of the items mentioned. When this simple skill is mastered pupils could be told to delay writing until the programme is concluded.

- (iii) Select a suitable telecast (Health, Social Studies) and direct the pupils to make brief notes on the more important points in the programme. At the conclusion of the programme the class could be divided into pairs or small groups to compare notes. After discussion a final written summary could be prepared by each group.
- (iv) Tune the television set to a suitable midday movie and let the pupils watch for five or ten minutes. After the set is switched off ask the pupils "what do you believe happens next?" "Why?"
- (v) The "Studying Television and Film" section will provide additional activities for developing the critical thinking power of the pupils.

## 2. ENGLISH: The Skills of Communication:

### Approach:

The development of the skills of communication in primary school should be considered against the background of television. The constant exposure of children to this medium makes television a useful tool in the English programme in primary schools.

### Learning Experiences:

#### A. Listening:—

- (i) Identifying sounds from the television set
  - (a) while viewing the picture;
  - (b) while not viewing the picture.
- (ii) Listen to a short informative programme and then conduct a brief oral comprehension exercise.

#### B. Oral Expression:—

- (i) Discussion of television programmes viewed or partially viewed by the class.
- (ii) Re-telling the main themes from programmes viewed at home.
- (iii) Discussion of selected television commercials. (See Advertising Sections for further suggestions.)
- (iv) The most popular television programmes will stimulate discussion.
- (v) Discussion of television programmes the class would like to see produced in the months ahead.
- (vi) Debates on the merits of one programme as against another.

#### C. Written Expression:—

- (i) Write a paragraph about an enjoyable television programme.
- (ii) In a few lines describe a funny incident from a television cartoon.
- (iii) Briefly re write a story from a television movie giving it a different ending.
- (iv) In a single sentence write the main message contained in a television com-

mercial.

- (v) Write a television commercial to sell soft drink.
- (vi) Give your reasons for liking/disliking a particular programme.
- (vii) Write a five line summary of a programme watched by the class.
- (viii) Write a short account of a school event suitable for reading on television news.
- (ix) Write some interesting headlines for the main news items on yesterday's television.
- (x) Give an outline of a new programme you would like to see produced on television.

#### D. Reading:—

- (i) Seek additional information on people or places mentioned in a television programme.
- (ii) Use an encyclopaedia to check some facts and figures given in a newscast on television.
- (iii) The more advanced pupils could be directed to clip television reviews from the newspapers. These reviews could be read to the class and discussed.

## 3. SOCIAL STUDIES: Teaching About Society:

### Approach:

Social Studies is concerned with teaching about society and as the mass media have become an integral part of current Australian society, we cannot afford to ignore them.

Some television programmes bring the real world into the home and classroom and can be readily correlated with the Social Studies programme.

### Learning Experiences:

- (i) Make a list of places and significant people mentioned in recent television newscasts.
- (ii) Collect supplementary material from the newspaper for a topic under discussion.
- (iii) Look at the history of significant places mentioned on television news.
- (iv) Make a study of the types of houses people in television programmes live in.
- (v) Examine the clothing worn in different programmes and compare same with ours.
- (vi) Units of work on transport, poverty, pollution and recreation could be built round a study of programmes the pupils watch on television.
- (vii) Compare and contrast the local area with other places on television.
- (viii) Debate significant matters mentioned on television.

#### 4. CATECHETICS: Christianity in the World:

##### Approaches:

##### (a) Developing Sound Christian Consciences

Conscience is formed by our environment, by the behaviour of the people about us. Moral education has become more difficult in the television age. The children see their heroes, pop stars on television, admitting to what we would regard as real moral deviations. Because they are their heroes, they are affected by this. We have to let them see that a conscience is a personal and an individual thing. The heroes of the Church must be presented to these children in such a way that they will not appear 'inferior' to the television heroes, and so that the child will grow to see his own dignity and responsibility as a Baptised member of the Church.

##### (b) The Gang Stage

Some television programmes show gang activities which are not Christian. Children at this stage need to be led to see the need for Christian communities, that their gang is part of the Church and has responsibilities, and that "only the world was big enough for Jesus". Jesus had his own special friends. Comparisons could be made between the way these friends acted towards each other and other people, and the way television gangs act.

##### Learning Experiences:

- (i) Careful selection of programmes is one way in which teachers of children in deprived areas can lead the children to experience something of the grandeur of God's world. Discussion after certain programmes could be used to bring children to a realization of:
  - (a) how man works to obey God's command given in the Book of Genesis "to cultivate the earth and care for it."
  - (b) how man has despoiled the world.
- (ii) Prepare a discussion round one of the pupils' heroes. Lead the pupils to look closely at the actions of this character.
- (iii) Discuss the actions of the members of a television gang.



## Studying Television and Film

### 1. ANATOMY OF TELEVISION:

#### Approach:

Most primary school pupils will be very familiar with channels and programmes. The distinction between commercial and non-commercial television should be understood by the pupils.

#### Learning Experiences:

- (i) Oral quiz on commercial and non-commercial channels, entertainment programmes, news, documentary and serious programmes, services provided by the television, etc.
- (ii) Brief written exercise on the channels and the programmes the pupils watch.

### 2. SURVEYS OF PUPILS' VIEWING HABITS

#### Approach:

Early each year teachers do well to survey the television viewing habits of the pupils in their classes.

#### Learning Experiences:

Involve the pupils in surveys to determine:

- (i) the most popular programmes viewed by the class.
- (ii) the least popular programmes viewed by the class.
- (iii) the favourite television characters of the class.
- (iv) hours spent watching television — daily, weekly.

### 3. GENERAL COMPREHENSION OF PROGRAMMES:

#### Approach:

The next step in a study of television and film would be a series of straightforward exercises designed to strengthen and test the pupils' comprehension of various programmes. These exercises help to lay the foundation for a programme aimed at developing discrimination in the pupils.

#### Learning Experiences:

- (i) Oral comprehension exercises:  
e.g. \* Tell the name of the programme.  
\* Tell the names of the characters or performers.  
\* Tell what channel presented the programme.  
\* Tell what time the programme commenced and finished.  
\* Tell about the main happenings in the programme.  
\* Tell about the ending of the programme.

- (ii). Re-telling stories from television movies to the class.
- (iii) Written quizzes on programmes, perhaps with one word answers.

#### 4. DISCRIMINATION EXERCISES:

##### Approach:

Discrimination is one of the fundamental objectives of this curriculum and will be a consideration in most of the activities used in any mass media education programme. In this section of the curriculum teachers are directed to make use of a variety of exercises specifically designed to make the pupils more critical and discriminating viewers of television.

##### Learning Experiences:

- (i) Class discussions:
  - (a) Which is your favourite television programme and why do you enjoy it?
  - (b) Which is the weakest programme you watch regularly on television and how could it be improved?
- (ii) Ask the class to discuss, perhaps in groups, the "ideal" or "perfect" television programme they would like to see produced. Discussions like this can lead pupils to formulate more definite expectations for television programmes.
- (iii) The pupils could be given a simple rating scale, perhaps 0, 1, 2, 3 and 4, and asked to rate some of the programmes they watch regularly. The results of these ratings could be collated during the Mathematics period, and perhaps graphed. The results of these pupil ratings would provide worthwhile material for a teacher directed discussion. Discuss criteria used by pupils to rate programmes.
- (iv) The following questions are designed to stimulate discussions on people:
  - (a) How are the various characters in a particular programme depicted?
  - (b) In what ways are these characters like the ordinary people you know? In what ways are they different?
  - (c) Discuss a family programme and ask pupils to list the kinds of problems facing the family. Does the family act like a genuine Christian family?
- (v) Pupils' reactions to television programmes will be a constant consideration for teachers of this curriculum. The following questions will focus attention on this very important aspect of television.
  - (a) Did any person in the programme or film seem like you?
  - (b) Did the film make you feel happy, sad, frightened or safe? In what particular part of the story?
  - (c) What was your reaction to the violence on a particular programme?

#### 5. PROGRAMME STUDY:

##### Approach:

The previous sections on comprehension and discrimination used material from most of the programmes primary school pupils watch. In this section the same general approach will be followed but with specific reference to particular types of programmes.

##### Learning Experiences:

- (i) Cartoon Study: A two or three week study of the cartoons pupils are viewing could be a profitable exercise.
  - (a) Surveys to establish the most popular cartoons among the pupils in the class.
  - (b) Rating the five or six most popular cartoons for a few consecutive days. The class could make a "Cartoon of the Week" award.
- (ii) News and documentaries: Children are naturally interested in programmes that open new horizons. Many of these programmes are only profitable when the children have developed the art of intelligent listening and viewing.
  - (a) Were the facts presented clearly?
  - (b) What was the main point in the programme?
  - (c) Did you see enough to understand the main facts?
  - (d) Was the programme interesting? Why?
  - (e) Could you now explain the main facts to others?
  - (f) How could this programme be improved?
  - (g) Was it news or was it comment?
  - (h) Do you think television news ought to be all film stories?
  - (i) Did you change your mind about anything as a result of the programme?
- (iii) Drama: In 1970-71 over 57% of commercial television in Australia was devoted to drama programmes, including films. Suggested discussion questions:
  - (a) Was the story in the programme interesting?
  - (b) Was the story fictional or real?
  - (c) Did the programme have enough action?
  - (d) Did you like the leading characters?
  - (e) What qualities did you admire in the hero?
  - (f) Was the hero good in every way or did he have faults?
  - (g) What was the hero's attitude to other people? Was his behaviour worthy of a Christian?
  - (h) Did the villains have any good points?
  - (i) Was the programme like life in Australia today?

## 6. ADVERTISING ON TELEVISION:

### Approach:

Children are consumers and as such they are the target for much advertising on the media. Advertisers attempt to build up in children habits of consumption they will employ as adults and they strive to condition the children to believe one of the essentials of a good life is to be able to spend a lot of money.

### Learning Experiences:

- (i) Basic comprehension of a particular commercial viewed by a whole class.
  - (a) What is the product?
  - (b) What are you told about the product?
  - (c) What are you not told about the product?
  - (d) Was the commercial interesting?
  - (e) Did the words and music fit the film?
  - (f) Would this advertisement mean anything if you could not hear?
- (ii) The following questions and activities are designed to teach discrimination:
  - (a) What is the best advertisement currently on television? Why do you prefer this advertisement?
  - (b) What products advertise frequently on television?
  - (c) How often can a commercial be repeated before it becomes boring?
  - (d) Attempt to check the information in an advertisement with the actual product. Different pupils could be directed to check advertisements by:
    - simple experiments at home;
    - asking members of the family for their opinion of the product under discussion.
  - (e) Direct the pupils to count the shots (or scenes) in a number of thirty second television commercials. Compare the result with the number of shots in thirty seconds of an ordinary programme. What are some possible explanations for the difference?
  - (f) Further discussion questions:
    - (a) What is it that makes families in commercials so happy?
    - (b) What type of homes do families in commercials live in?
    - (c) Are ordinary people used in television commercials?
    - (d) Do the people advertising products on television ever remind us that many people in the world are poor and starving?
  - (g) By sixth grade some pupils could be led to discover the appeal in certain advertisements. Starting with the question: "What in me is this advertisement appealing to?" the teacher could build up categories of appeal e.g. youth, beauty, laziness, security, science, etc.

## 7. BASIC TECHNOLOGY OF TELEVISION:

### Approach:

An elementary understanding of the basic elements in the television process forms part of any media education programme. The emphasis here is on layman's or non-technical explanation of how television works.

### Learning Experiences:

- (i) Direct pupils to the library in search of a simple explanation of the television process.
- (ii) Consider the function of:
  - \* camera
  - \* film and video tape
  - \* transmitter
  - \* receiver.
- (iii) Ask the pupils to draw a simple diagram showing the connection between these four objects.
- (iv) Explain and discuss the satellite system that links countries for particular telecasts.

## 8. FILM MAKING WITH PRIMARY PUPILS:

### Approach:

Direct pupil experience is an accepted practice in primary education today. The recent research of Bruner and Piaget concluded that the great majority of primary school pupils can only learn efficiently from concrete situations. From these situations children acquire concepts.

Some film making activities are recommended in this curriculum to provide direct experiences, that will be both profitable and enjoyable. However, film making activities are not essential to the implementation of this curriculum.

### Learning Experiences:

Five film making activities are suggested for the upper primary grades:

- (i) Drawing a storyboard.
  - (ii) Making hand drawn 35mm slides.
  - (iii) Construction of a photo storyboard from still photographs.
  - (iv) Drawing a 'movie' on 16mm clear leader film with felt pens.
  - (v) Class participation in a Super 8 movie film.
- The following explanation of these activities may be helpful:
- (i) Drawing a storyboard. Have the pupils visualize a story with perhaps six or eight scenes. These scenes could be sketched on a prepared sheet with the necessary number of frames or squares.
  - (ii) Hand drawn 35mm slides. Felt pens can be used on any sort of translucent material. The finished slides could be mounted in inexpensive slide mounts and screened for

the class. After some initial experiences the pupils could be directed to create simple stories on hand drawn slides.

- (iii) Photo storyboard. Plan a suitable story for the class to act and direct the groups to determine the eight basic scenes. When these scenes are finally determined photographs of the scenes could be taken. When the photographs are developed they could be displayed and the following questions asked:

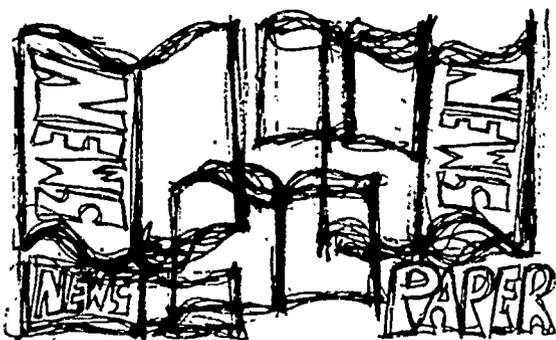
- (a) What is the correct sequence for the photographs?
- (b) Do the photographs tell a story?
- (c) Could the order of the photographs be changed to tell a different story?

- (iv) Drawing a Movie. With a minimum of instruction children can draw a movie on 16 millimetre clear leader film with felt pens. When the drawing is completed the film is projected in the usual way and the pupils can watch their creative efforts.

To be seen on the screen a single frame needs to be repeated about 20 times. If the film is too smooth for felt pens a little fine sandpaper should be used.

An interesting account of this exercise in a fifth class can be found in "Grade Teacher" (U.S.A.) February, 1969, pp. 110-113. (Supreme Films Pty. Ltd., 11 Young Street, Paddington, stock clear leader film.)

- (v) Film Making. Some teachers might wish to make a short super 8 movie film with their classes. At the middle and upper primary level it is suggested that the class build up a suitable theme for a film, plan the sequences and finally act the story while the teacher operates the camera. This correlates the drama and oral expression work and serves as a rich experience in film.



## 6.2 The Press

### BEHAVIOURAL OBJECTIVES

- A. The pupil will have the *knowledge* to begin to be appreciative, discriminating and critical in his or her use of the press.

1. The pupil will *know how* the press in Australia operates:

- a. Will know the names of the more popular newspapers and magazines.
- b. Will be familiar with the anatomy of a daily newspaper.
- c. Will know that only some stories are selected for publication.
- d. Will know a little about how stories are positioned in newspapers and magazines.
- e. Will know that the news is frequently interpreted before presentation to the public.
- f. Will know that the various publications can report the same event in very different ways.

- B. The pupil will have the *ability* to begin to be appreciative, discriminating and critical in his or her use of the press.

1. The pupil will *have effective reading skills*.

- a. Will be able to obtain maximum comprehension of the newspaper and magazine stories he chooses to read.
- b. Will be able to recall the more important things he or she reads in the press.
- c. Will be able to use the press to extend his or her range and depth of interests and to extend his or her vocabulary.
- d. Will be able to use the press as a source of information.

2. The pupil will be able to *appreciate and enjoy* the press he or she reads.

3. The pupil will be able to *analyse some newspaper and magazine articles*.

- a. Will identify the elements which constitute the anatomy of newspapers and magazines.
- b. Will identify some central issues presented by the press.
- c. Will distinguish between important and unimportant articles in the press.
- d. Will distinguish fact from opinion.
- e. Will recognise bias and emotional factors in reporting.

4. The pupil will be able to *understand* press advertisements.

- a. Will recognise what he or she is told about advertised products.
- b. Will recognise what he or she is not told about advertised products.
- c. Will recognise anything false or misleading in advertisements.

5. The pupil will be able to *use the press*

to become more aware of the world about him or her.

## Using The Press

### 1. CRITICAL THINKING:

#### Approach:

In schools all teachers are concerned with developing the critical thinking faculties of pupils. At the primary school level this takes the form of gradually leading the pupils to think for themselves yet at the same time teaching them to accept truth.

The pupils must also be given sound reasons for adopting other, more accurate, views than their own. This will include an appropriate appreciation of the authority of teacher, state and church.

The newspaper is an ideal too for the teaching of critical analysis. It does in its pages exactly what you want your students to do. It presents facts, it provides opinion; it draws conclusions; it interprets; it understands the interaction of writer and reader.

#### Learning Experiences:

- (i) Discuss a significant story from a newspaper: Lead pupils to ask:
  - What happened?
  - Why did it happen?
  - What difference does it make?
- (ii) List on blackboard in random order all news items in a paper. Have pupils list them in order of importance.
- (iii) Give pupils a list of facts from an actual news story. Compare stories written by the pupils with the original newspaper story.
- (iv) Have pupils write short news reports of a recent event. Compare and contrast these accounts.
- (v) Locate stories that provide only the facts.
- (vi) Read a section of a newspaper item and ask class to discuss possible conclusions.
- (vii) Find examples of slanting
  - by use of headlines;
  - by use of emotionally-toned words;
  - by playing a story up or down.
- (viii) Have the pupils re-write a newspaper story from various points of view, but keeping to the point.
- (ix) The "Studying the Press" Section will continue to develop the critical thinking powers of the children.

Initially, it is recommended that the whole class use the same edition of a particular newspaper. This can be achieved by asking the pupils to bring a particular paper to school on a given day each week (e.g. the pupils could be asked to bring the Tuesday edition of a particular morning or evening paper to school each Wednesday). The papers could be kept at school until the following Tuesday). The paper selected for study will depend of course on the paper the families in the area read. If the teacher has a choice of papers, it is recommended he select the one of better quality.

### 2. ENGLISH: The Skills of Communication:

#### Approach:

Our English studies form a pattern of inter-related skills that are all part of the single act of communication. After the Christian formation of the pupils the first aim in primary education must surely be the development of these skills of communication — speaking and listening, writing and reading, acting and watching. The ability to communicate also involves aspects of social studies and mathematics and almost all of man's activities in which ideas are transmitted and received. This ability is a necessary prerequisite for full human development.

The newspaper as a vehicle of communication can be a very valuable tool in any communications programme. It can be used to assist in the development of the speaking, listening, writing and reading skills.

In some ways, the newspaper in the upper primary years could complement the reading material normally used.

#### Learning Experiences:

##### A. Listening —

- (i) Teacher reads selected news items to class.
- (ii) Pupils read to class and groups.

##### B. Oral Expression —

- (i) Discussion of the headlines of selected stories.
- (ii) Local news discussion.
- (iii) Group work on stories of interest.
- (iv) Re-telling news stories to class or group.
- (v) Discussion of possible developments in current affairs.
- (vi) Discussion of solutions to problems related in the press; e.g. What would you do to clear the oil slick in the harbour?
- (vii) Discussion of the role or function of the daily paper.

### C. Written Expression —:

- (i) Re-writing some news items in own words.
- (ii) Writing summaries of particular stories.
- (iii) Re-writing a story and giving it, a different ending.
- (iv) Suggesting different headlines for the main story in the paper.
- (v) Writing an advertisement to sell an electric train set.
- (vi) Writing a letter to the editor.
- (vii) Producing a class newspaper with headlines, stories, advertisements, poems and perhaps a cartoon.

### D. Reading —

- (i) Selection of suitable items for the regular comprehension lesson.
- (ii) Oral reading to class or in group situation.
- (iii) Vocabulary exercises.
- (iv) Oral summaries of stories read.
- (v) Library assignments to find additional information on topics mentioned in the press.

## 3. SOCIAL STUDIES: Teaching About Society:

### Approach:

Social Studies is concerned with teaching about society and as the mass media have become an integral part of current Australian society, we cannot afford to ignore them.

The newspaper brings the world of today into the classroom. It gives us a picture of the real world rather than the world of the social studies text books. The better newspapers are a perpetual record of the day-to-day developments in our society and as such they cannot be ignored by educators.

In some ways the events related in the press will correlate and strengthen the Social Studies programme, but at other times the world events will be of such importance that the newspaper will actually direct the teaching of the social studies.

### Learning Experiences:

- (i) Direct pupils to collect news clippings on specific topics.
- (ii) Discussions and debates on matters of significant interest.
- (iii) Compare and contrast our country with others in the world news.
- (iv) Examine worthwhile cartoons. Compare the 'opinion' in the cartoon with that in the news story.
- (v) Local papers could be used profitably in

the local area study.

- (vi) Study of some advertisements showing:
  - (a) how people live in Australia, and
  - (b) how people live in other countries.
- (vii) Make an in-depth study of a particular country through a study of news clippings over a period of months.
- (viii) Make use of an atlas and a street directory to locate places mentioned in the press.

## 4. CATECHETICS: Christianity in the World:

### Approach:

The Vatican Council reminded religious shepherds of their obligation "of so training and directing the faithful that by the help of these instruments (of social communication) they may pursue their own salvation and fulfilment, and that of the entire human family" (Abbott, p.320). The document went on to remind the faithful of their obligation to animate the mass media with a humane and Christian spirit.

In a recent statement on media education in schools Cardinal Dell'Acqua reminded teachers that "the critical senses of the young must be trained as they approach the age of civic and social responsibility. They must learn how to read newspapers, judge films, view television, etc., in such a way as to retain mastery of their own minds and resist all that can de-personalize them. This is an imperative need of our times."

### Learning Experiences:

The role of the press in Catechetics will depend very much on the topic under consideration. The press might, for example, yield useful illustrations of:

- \* the poor of this world;
- \* those called to suffer;
- \* genuine Christian charity;
- \* Christian dedication;
- \* self-sacrifice;
- \* spreading the Gospel;
- \* the Church in the world.

## 5. MATHEMATICS:

### Approach:

The newspaper can be used for practical life experiences with number and currency.

### Learning Experiences:

- (i) Number concepts can be developed by a study of numbers in the newspaper.
- (ii) Reading charts, graphs and tables.
- (iii) Advertisements:
  - \* shopping exercises;
  - \* comparison of prices;
  - \* study of classified ads.
- (iv) Recording and graphing temperatures over a short period of time.

## Studying The Press

### 1. ANATOMY OF THE NEWSPAPER:

#### Approach:

The aim of this study is to familiarise the pupils with the anatomy of the newspaper by helping them to locate the:

masthead:	name of paper date of publication price edition symbol (if any)
News Items:	headline (or streamer) main story main local news items main national news items main international news items sources of some news items photographs, stop press.
Comment:	editorial letters to editor political cartoons.
Services:	advertising business news weather radio and television shipping
Entertainment:	sporting information comics and cartoons feature articles.

#### Learning Experiences:

Experiences to familiarise pupils with the general anatomy of the newspaper:

- (i) Ask class to tell you what they could expect to find in a newspaper. List them on the blackboard.
- (ii) Complete the list on the blackboard after the pupils have examined their newspapers.
- (iii) Direct questions: Read me the name of the paper? What is the date of publication? How much does it cost? Read the headlines. What is the origin of the main story on the front page? How many advertisements on page three? What is the weather forecast?
- (iv) Use labels or 'stickers' to drill the anatomy of the newspaper, e.g. Pin a newspaper on the notice board and let pupils fix the previously prepared labels to show the paper's anatomy.
- (v) Use subsequent sections of this programme to increase pupils' understanding of the anatomy of newspapers.
- (vi) Photograph Study: Suitable photographs could be used for some intensive questioning aimed at developing perception, e.g. What does the photograph tell us? How does it work? What happened? How many people are involved?

### 2. ADVERTISING IN NEWSPAPERS:

#### Approach:

The economists tell us that a twentieth century Western economy needs advertising and the overall result is cheaper goods for the consumer. In newspapers, advertising has a two-way role; as a service to the community and a vital component in a newspaper's economy. Thanks to advertising, the consumer can be better informed about the range of products available and can purchase a paper at a reasonable price. Without advertising the newspapers would be most expensive.

Teachers need positive attitudes towards advertising and should attempt to develop pupils capable of reading advertisements critically. Again, this is done through pupil discovery rather than preaching by the teacher.

#### Learning Experiences:

- (i) At the upper primary level the study of advertising is straightforward and aims initially at comprehension.
  - What is the product?
  - What are you told about the product?
  - What else about the product do you need to know?
  - What does the text say?
  - What captures the eye?
- (ii) Advertising quiz: The purpose of this activity is to make the pupils locate specific advertisements in a particular newspaper. The quiz could be commenced by the teacher and then the pupils could ask the questions, e.g.:
  - (a) On what page is the Fleming's advertisements?
  - (b) What firm is advertising Simpson T.V. sets?
  - (c) How much will a housewife pay for 2 lbs. sausages from Mastercut Butchers?
  - (d) How much is the deposit on new Holdens from Muirs' Motors?
  - (e) etc.
- (iii) Supermarket advertisements are very useful for the mathematics period. Here, some attention should be given to approximations and estimations, as well as straight computation.
- (iv) Ask pupils to find an advertisement that is creative. Discuss the most appealing words, etc.
- (v) Select suitable advertisements and ask pupils to locate exaggerations or possibly misleading statements.
- (vi) Ask pupils to re-write the text of a particular advertisement to convey a different message.
- (vii) From magazines and newspapers at home clip advertisements that depend on verbal

(not pictorial) messages for their product. These clippings could be discussed in class. As a follow up exercise the class could be directed to write a verbal advertisement for an item of clothing.

- (viii) The appeal in advertisements: The previous activities have been mainly concerned with comprehension, but by sixth grade some pupils could be led to discover the appeal in certain advertisements, e.g.:

(a) What in me is the particular advertisement appealing to?

Over a period of time a teacher might care to build up categories of appeal (e.g. youth, beauty, laziness, security, science, etc.).

- (ix) The writing of advertisements can be enjoyable and is easily correlated with creative writing and art.

- (x) Attempt to check the information in an advertisement with the actual product. Different pupils could be directed to check advertisements by:

- simple experiments at home;
- asking members of the family for their opinion of the product under discussion;

- (xi) Locate advertisements that cater for young people. What special features do you notice in these advertisements? Do they appeal to you? Compare these advertisements to others catering for a different age group.

### 3. PRESENTATION OF THE NEWS:

#### (A) Physical Variables in News Presentation:

##### Approach:

An examination of the way a newspaper actually prints news indicates the importance its sub-editor thinks each item has.

The main physical variables to look for are the amount of space given to a story, its position in the paper and on the page and the size and character of its heading and type. Stories that editors think will interest their readers will generally be given ample space and prominent headings.

Most newspapers plan their most important story on the left hand side of the front page. Inside the paper the right hand side pages are considered more important than the left hand side pages.

##### Learning Experiences:

Direct the pupils to locate examples of the following:

- (i) The principal story in a particular newspaper.
- (ii) Other front page news.
- (iii) The principal story on page three.

- (iv) The story with most space (that is, column inches) on page two. Is this story more important than the principal story on page three?
- (v) Which is the largest photograph in the paper?
- (vi) Which story on pages four and five has the biggest heading?

#### (B) Factual Reporting and Opinion

##### Approach:

Newspapers usually provide readers with both factual information and opinion. Young readers will require some assistance to discriminate between the two.

##### Learning Experiences:

- (i) Select suitable newspaper stories and ask pupils to:
  - (a) list the facts of each story;
  - (b) list the "non-factual information" found in each story.
- (ii) Organize a class discussion round the topic: "Why do we require newspapers to interpret the news for us?"
- (iii) Some of the more advanced pupils could be directed to re-write a news-story with a different interpretation of the facts.

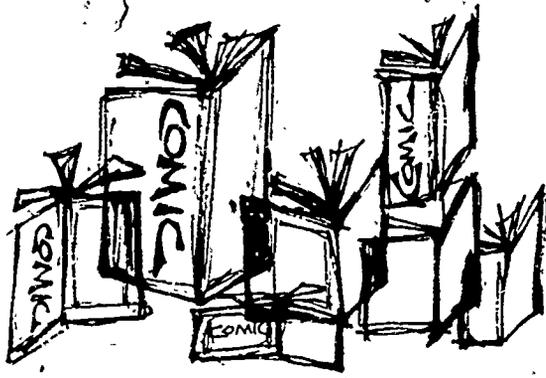
#### (C) Basic Differences in Newspapers:

##### Approach:

After the pupils become familiar with the anatomy of the selected newspaper, some work could be done on the differences in newspapers to help pupils discover that newspapers give different accounts of the same news. This is an attempt to make them more critical and discerning. Here there is also a long term goal — raising the standards of our newspapers.

##### Learning Experiences:

- (i) Note different headline topics of the papers on a given day.
- (ii) Compare page placements of the same item of news in different papers.
- (iii) Select a suitable story from papers available and locate differences in fact.
- (iv) Compare the photographs of a particular event in the different papers.
- (v) Locate news items in one paper that are not found in the same edition of a comparable paper.
- (vi) Compare the number of local news stories in the papers on a given day.
- (vii) Compare the space given to sport in various papers. It is interesting to compare the morning and afternoon papers in this regard. Does the amount of space given over to sport vary from Monday to Friday?
- (viii) Compare the 'good news' and 'bad news' items in the papers available.



#### 4. COMIC STRIPS:

##### Approach:

The comic strips published daily in newspapers are very popular with most children. They can follow the comic strips with less effort than is required to read a news story and they enjoy the fast and furious action of most strips. Children will tell you: "You know by the pictures what the people are doing, and you know by the balloons which person is saying what. You also know by the pictures which are the 'good' people and which are the 'bad' and you generally know what to expect from them." Hence, even the weaker readers usually have sufficient skills to follow and enjoy the comic strips.

The primary school teacher can capitalise on this interest in comic strips when he is teaching about society (i.e. the Social Studies programme) and when he is developing the skills of communication.

Comic strips present ideas about society and the teacher does well to help the children understand the pictures of society presented by the various comics. This is not achieved by preaching against the comic strips or explaining why a particular comic is poor, but rather by leading the pupils to discover the philosophy of the comic under discussion.

##### Learning Experiences:

The approach will depend on the actual comic(s) under review, but the following activities would generally be useful:

- (i) Direct the pupils to clip a full week's instalment of continuous comic strip and then raise these questions:—
  - (a) How many accidents actually happened during the week?
  - (b) How sensible would the plot and dialogue appear if expressed by real people?
  - (c) What kind of people appear in this comic?
  - (d) How can you identify 'the good' — 'the bad'?
  - (e) What are some of the goals possessed by the characters in this comic?

These questions are designed to force the youngsters to look closely at the comics and discover the stereotypes with the endless repetition of theme and character. When, or if, this is established, more questions could be asked along the following lines: Do you know any person like someone in this comic? Are the comic characters like your parents, brothers and sisters? Are they real people?

The second set of questions is designed to help the pupils realise the real world is not the world of the comic strips. This is not designed to destroy their enjoyment or stop them reading the comics, but rather to help them read with a greater awareness and understanding.

Used in this way, comic strips are useful tools in teaching our pupils about current Australian society.

##### (ii) More activities with comic strips:

- (a) Take a single strip and write a new text to accompany the pictures.
- (b) Design an original strip by collating single frames from a number of comic strips.
- (c) Select a serial type comic strip and discuss what might happen in the next episode.

#### 5. CARTOONS ON CURRENT EVENTS:

##### Approach:

Another useful approach is the discussion of cartoons appearing in the daily press. Many cartoons on matters of current interest are intelligible to upper primary children and can be discussed with profit.

A discussion of a couple of cartoons on the same topic would lead the pupils to discover that the press is not uniform in its interpretation of current events. Also, the pupils will quickly learn that a message in cartoon form can be just as effective as a written message.

##### Learning Experiences:

- (i) Ask the pupils to bring along current cartoons that they can understand and would like to have discussed.
- (ii) Make a display of all suitable cartoons on a particular event.
- (iii) Some of the more creative pupils could be asked to construct a novel cartoon from clippings.
- (iv) The caption under a cartoon could be altered to change the meaning of the original cartoon.

#### 6. REGIONAL NEWSPAPERS:

##### Approach:

This curriculum is designed for use with the smaller newspapers as well as the dailies produced in the capitals. In many ways, the country newspapers are preferable for this pro-

gramme because the vocabulary level is often lower, more stories are from the local area, perhaps the pupils will know some of the people featured, and the advertisers will be familiar. These papers contain much more suitable material for treatment in the classroom and provide useful material for local area studies.

The free papers distributed in the metropolitan area can also be very useful. If approached, the editors of these free papers will generally supply the papers required. The editors of some free papers are co-operating with teachers and publishing historical material suitable for the local area study.

#### Learning Experiences?

The experiences listed in this curriculum for the metropolitan papers would generally be just as suitable for a study of regional papers.

### 7. GENERAL NEWSPAPER ACTIVITIES:

- (i) Excursions to a newspaper printery can be very profitable.
- (ii) Invite the editor or reporter of a local paper to speak to the pupils about his work.
- (iii) Design and conduct surveys with the pupils to determine the newspaper buying habits of the families in the region. This could be correlated with graph work in mathematics.
- (iv) Study the large street posters for the daily papers. Some possible discussion points are: Is the poster reporting news accurately? Is it misleading? Does the paper have a more important story?
- (v) Ask the pupils to collect papers from country areas and overseas. These form an interesting display on the noticeboard.
- (vi) For the more advanced pupils the teacher could organise a class discussion round the question: "What makes news?"

### 8. CATHOLIC PRESS:

#### Approach:

This programme, although designed primarily for use with the secular press, can be profitably used with papers like "The Catholic Weekly", "The Leader", "Southern Cross", and "The Advocate". When the Catholic press is substituted for the secular press, the study could be correlated with the religion lessons.

#### Learning Experiences:

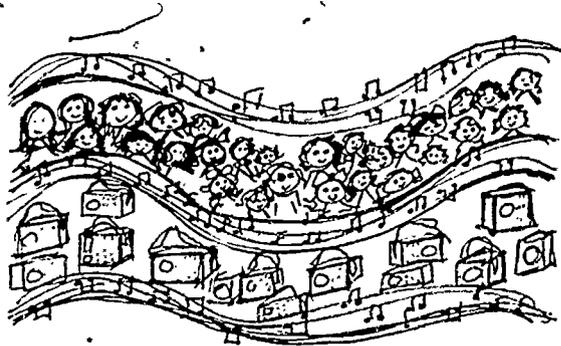
- (i) The anatomy of "The Catholic Weekly".
- (ii) Main local story.
- (iii) Main story from Rome.
- (iv) Features.
- (v) Advertisements.
- (vi) Correlation with religious instruction:

- (a) The references to the Pope;
- (b) Missionary activities;
- (c) Growth of the Church in Australia (e.g. ordinations, apostolic ventures, new foundations, blessing and opening of new buildings, etc.);
- (d) Liturgy.

The vocabulary level of the Catholic press, is higher than the secular press, but from time to time a profitable study could be made. Perhaps a detailed treatment of a Catholic paper once or twice a term would be sufficient.

### 9. MAKING A CLASS NEWSPAPER:

The printing of a little class newspaper can motivate the pupils with their Written Expression and associated activities. It also provides direct experience with many of the processes used daily in the publication of newspapers.



### 6.3 Radio

#### BEHAVIOURAL OBJECTIVES

- A. The pupil will have the *knowledge* to begin to be appreciative, discriminating and critical in his or her use of the radio.
  1. The pupil will *know how* the radio operates in Australia.
    - a. Will know that programmes are transmitted from many places.
    - b. Will know that a radio receiver is designed to pick up a number of programmes which are transmitted on a variety of frequencies.
    - c. Will know that radio stations use different formats to entertain listeners.
    - d. Will know that radio can bring news very rapidly to listeners.
- B. Pupil will have the *ability* to begin to be appreciative, discriminating and critical in his or her use of the radio.
  1. The pupil will be able to *appreciate and enjoy* what he hears on the radio.
  2. The pupil will have *effective listening skills*.

- a. Will be able to understand what he or she hears on radio.
  - b. Will be able to recall the important things he or she hears on radio.
  - c. Will be able to use the radio as a source of information.
3. The pupil will be able to *compare* radio programmes.
  4. The pupil will be able to *differentiate* between what he or she regards as pleasant and unpleasant radio music.
  5. The pupil will be able to *use the radio* to increase his or her awareness of the world about him or her.
  6. The pupil will be able to *rate* radio programmes on the basis of enjoyment and enrichment.
  7. The pupil will be able to *analyse* radio programmes.
    - a. Will distinguish between important and unimportant statements.
    - b. Will distinguish fact from opinion.
    - c. Will recognise bias and emotional factors in a presentation.
  8. The pupil will be able to *understand* radio advertisements.
    - a. Will recognise the truth in advertisements.
    - b. Will recognise anything false or misleading in advertisements.
  9. The pupil will be able to *make some evaluation* at the conclusion of a period of radio listening.
  10. The pupil will be able to *state why he or she listened* to a particular programme.
    - (b) direct the pupils to make a written list of the items as they are mentioned;
    - (c) direct the pupils to make a written list of the news items after the broadcast is concluded;
    - (d) direct the pupils to report a single news item by a simple line drawing.
- (ii) Tune the radio to a news bulletin and direct the pupils to note all the details of the first item mentioned. The radio could then be switched-off and an intensive oral comprehension could follow. If the material is suitable a written expression exercise might profitably follow.
  - (iii) Tune the radio to a story (serial, narrative, news, etc.) and let the pupils listen for a short while. Switch-off the set before the segment finishes and ask the pupils "What do you believe happens next?"
  - (iv) List on the blackboard all news items for a radio news broadcast. Have pupils list them in order of importance.
  - (v) Select a suitable news broadcast item and lead pupils to ask
    - How?
    - When?
    - Where?
    - Why?
  - (vi) After listening to a news item on the radio ask the class to discuss possible future developments.
  - (vii) Listen to a news broadcast for possible examples of sensationalism (emotionally-toned words, etc.).
  - (viii) Have pupils re-write a radio news item from various points of view, but keeping to the point.
  - (ix) Listen for news stories that provide only the facts.
  - (x) Select a suitable programme (Health, Social Studies) and direct the pupils to make brief notes on the more important points in the programme. At the conclusion of the programme the class could be divided into pairs or small groups to compare notes. After discussion a final written summary could be prepared by each Group.
  - (xi) A comparison of news items on the radio with those in the newspaper could be a profitable exercise.
  - (xii) Divide class into groups and direct each group to listen to the news on a different station. A comparison of the items mentioned by each station could lead to a profitable discussion.
  - (xiii) Play a short pre-recorded segment to the class (news, serial, guest speaker, etc.) and test their listening ability by a short written test, perhaps with one-word answers.
  - (xiv) The teacher may guide a discussion on

## Using The Radio

### 1: CRITICAL THINKING AND LISTENING:

#### Approach:

In all curriculum areas we are attempting to help children grow as persons by developing their skills of communication. One of these skills is the ability to think and listen critically. This curriculum outline emphasises the critical use of the medium of radio and indicates how it explodes into all curriculum areas. Guiding the pupils to use this modern medium critically will therefore occur right across the full spectrum of the school curriculum.

#### Learning Experiences:

- (i) Tune the radio to a news bulletin and
  - (a) direct the pupils to listen for the various news items mentioned and then build up a blackboard list of the items mentioned by the news reader;

listening by writing the following questions on the blackboard:

- \* How does listening affect school work?
- \* What part does a listener play in a conversation?
- \* How does listening affect speaking?
- \* What can hinder listening?
- \* Why are listening skills important?

(xv) Pupils make posters illustrating good and bad listening habits.

## 2. ENGLISH: The Skills of Communication:

### Approach:

The radio is another vehicle of communication that can be a very valuable tool in any primary school communications programme. Radio can be used to assist in the development of listening, and can be correlated with work in oral and written expression and reading.

### Learning Experiences:

#### A. Listening:

See list of activities in previous section.

#### B. Oral Expression:

- (i) Discussion of the headlines of news broadcast.
- (ii) After listening to a radio interview divide the class into pairs for simple interviews. Some of these could be taped and played back to the class.
- (iii) Listen to a segment of a 'talk back' or 'open line' programme as a stimulus for oral expression.
- (iv) Re-telling news stories to the class or group.
- (v) Discussion of possible solutions to problems related by the radio.
- (vi) Music and sports programmes are popular with upper primary children and could be used for discussion material.
- (vii) Plan a discussion around radio programmes the class would like to hear in the months ahead.

#### C. Written Expression:

- (i) Re-writing suitable radio news items.
- (ii) Writing short summaries of selected items of general interest.
- (iii) Writing interesting headlines for the main news story of the day.
- (iv) Writing a radio advertisement to sell children's shoes.
- (v) Writing an account of a recent school function that could be read on a class radio programme.

#### D. Reading:

- (i) Seek additional information on people or places mentioned in a radio programme.
- (ii) Use an encyclopaedia to check some facts and figures given in a newscast.

## 3. SOCIAL STUDIES: Teaching About Society:

### Approach:

Like the newspapers and television the radio brings the world of 1975, into the classroom. Radio gives an up to the minute record of some developments in our society and hence should be included as an aid to our Social Studies programme.

### Learning Experiences:

- (i) Discussions and debates on significant matters mentioned on the radio.
- (ii) Compare and contrast our local area with other places mentioned on the radio.
- (iii) Prepare a class radio programme to tell people in other places how we live.
- (iv) Using an atlas and street directory locate some places mentioned in a particular programme.

## 4. MUSIC:

### Approach:

Popular music has the widest audience appeal on radio in this country and within the primary class music programme some study of current recordings fits naturally.

### Learning Experiences:

- (i) Have pupils listen to a couple of the more popular disc jockeys and then discuss their styles.
- (ii) Listen to some of the pupils' favourite tunes in the Top 40. Discuss the main appeal and any messages they might contain.
- (iii) Tape a popular song and after playing it to the class discuss the basis of its popularity. Is it the words? the sounds? the message?
- (iv) Have pupils select a singer who is noted for singing personal songs. Let them make a list of the songs he has recorded and perhaps a brief summary of what each song is about. Discuss the summaries in class.

## Studying The Radio

### 1. ANATOMY OF RADIO:

#### Approach:

The aim of this small unit of work is to familiarise the pupils with the programming of radio stations.

#### Learning Experiences:

Suggested activities to familiarise pupils with the general anatomy of radio stations in Australia.

- (i) The pupils are directed to listen to the type of programmes being broadcast from each station at a given time. This can be done by slowly moving the tuning dial across the radio. The pupils would list what they heard on each station. To get a true overview of radio in a city this activity would be repeated at different times on different days. The result of these sweeps across the dial could be compared and some generalizations should result.
- (ii) Assignment. Pupils make a list of the programmes on a particular radio station. The more advanced pupils could graph the time spent listening to different programme types.

## 2. CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF PROGRAMMES:

### Approach:

Comprehension and discrimination are two of the fundamental goals of mass media education. In the study of radio exercises to achieve these goals should be provided.

### Learning Experiences:

- (i) See sixteen activities listed under the heading Critical Thinking and Listening in the first part of this unit.
- (ii) News Quiz. Over a period of a couple of days the class listens to the news broadcast from a particular station. Selected pupils prepare a quiz to cover the items mentioned over these days. At the end of the week the teacher conducts the quiz, using the questions prepared by the pupils.

## 3. ADVERTISING ON RADIO:

### Approach:

The rationale for a study of advertising was given earlier.

On radio, advertising has a two-way role: as a service to the community and a vital component in a radio station's economy.

### Learning Experiences:

At the primary level an introductory study of advertising is straight forward and aims initially at comprehension.

- (i) Basic comprehension of a particular advertisement heard by the whole class:
  - (a) What is the product?
  - (b) What are we told about the product?
  - (c) What else about the product do you wish to know?
- (ii) More advanced questions:
  - (a) What type of person read this radio advertisement?  
Did you recognise the voice?
  - (b) Did the advertisement have back-

ground music or sound effects?

- (c) Did you like this particular advertisement? Why?
- (d) Did the advertisement use any very interesting or creative words?
- (e) Did this particular advertisement give you all the relevant information about this product?
- (f) Was this radio advertisement exaggerated or misleading in any way?
- (iii) The following questions could lead to some profitable discussions:
  - (a) When do you prefer to hear commercials?
  - (b) Do any commercials annoy you?
  - (c) How often can a commercial be repeated before it becomes boring?
  - (d) Are there any commercials which you think are dangerous or misleading?
  - (e) What are your favourite commercials? Why?
- (iv) Frequency of advertisements. Have pupils listen to the various commercial radio stations and make a count of the number of advertisements in a given period, perhaps 15 minutes. Some of the more advanced pupils might be able to actually time the advertisements in this survey. The results of these little surveys could be graphed during a Mathematics period.

## 4. MAKING CLASS RADIO PROGRAMMES:

### Approach:

Pupil involvement in the preparation and presentation of a class radio programme is probably the most effective technique for developing a genuine appreciation of radio. A tape recorder makes it possible for a class to make a radio programme and at the same time provides interesting activities for the development of oral and written expression together with oral reading and listening skills.

### Learning Experiences:

- (i) With the aid of a tape recorder involve the class in the production of some short radio programmes. Suggested segments for class radio programmes are:
  - (a) Brief descriptions of things in the classroom, e.g. fish tank, nature corner, art display.
  - (b) One minute reports on some local function or event at school.
  - (c) Pupil interviews.
  - (d) Reports on excursions.
  - (e) Digests of sports results.
  - (f) Summaries of the news from radio and newspaper.
  - (g) Pupil made advertisements, both individual and group.

- (h) A pupil reporter interviews the class teacher or principal.
- (i) Imaginative descriptions, e.g. a tortoise race.
- (j) Class singing or recitation.
- (k) Book reviews and reviews of television programmes.
- (l) Visitors to the school would also make for interesting interviews.

- (m) Representatives from class sporting teams could be interviewed about recent games.
- (n) Interesting pieces of written expression from the pupils could also be included in class radio programmes.
- (o) The segment of a class radio programme could be separated by a few bars of music, perhaps from pupils' recorders.

## 7.0 Communication with Parents

When this curriculum is first introduced teachers might consider informing parents of the scope and objectives of mass media education. Without some explanation parents could be excused for any misgivings about the media programme. Also, as so much of the children's contact with the mass media takes place within the home environment it is obvious that any programme aimed at teaching media discrimination will ideally need to be supported by both parents and teachers.

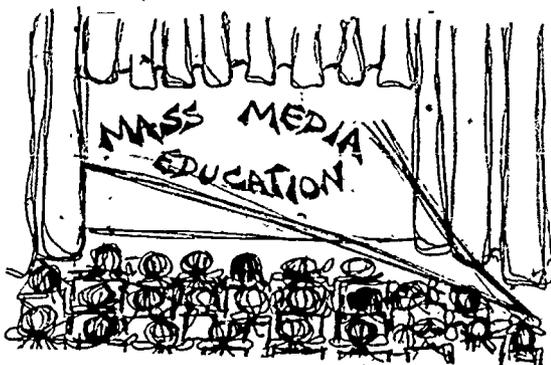
### Mass Media Education Evening:

The general aim of such a session would be to arouse parental interest in media education and to seek support for the programme.

### Sample Programme:

1. Provide the parents with some statistics on the exposure of children to the media.
2. Invite the parents to suggest ways in which their sons and daughters appear to be influenced by the media.

3. Make some comment about research findings on the impact of the media on children.
4. Develop the idea of mass media as agents of education.
5. Explain the objectives and learning experiences of the programme.
6. Display some of the media work of the pupils.



## 8.0 Guidelines for Evaluation of Television, Film, Press and Radio

Standard	Desirable — If . . .	Undesirable — If . . .
1. Does it appeal to age level of audience?	It gives information and/or entertainment related to real life situations or interests.	It is dull, boring, not related to experience or interests.
2. Does it meet needs for entertainment and action?	It deals with wholesome adventure, humour, fantasy, or suspense.	It is emotionally disturbing and overstimulating; places unnecessary emphasis on cruelty and violence; is loud, crude, or vulgar.
3. Does it add to one's understanding and appreciation of himself, others, the world?	It is sincere, constructive, informative; gives a balanced picture of life; encourages decent human relations; is fair to races, nations, religions, labour, management.	It is one-sided, or propagandist; arouses or intensifies prejudice; takes advantage of immaturity and lack of knowledge.
4. Does it encourage worthwhile ideals, values, and beliefs (concerning such matters as family life)?	It upholds acceptable standards of behaviour; promotes democratic and spiritual values, respect for law, decency, service.	It glamorizes, crime, indecency, intolerance, greed, cruelty, encourages bad taste, false standards of material success, personal vanity, intemperance, immorality.
5. Does it stimulate constructive activities?	It promotes interests, skills, hobbies, encourages desire to learn more, to do something constructive, to be creative, to solve problems, to work and to live with others.	It gives details of crime and its detection; solves problems by force or miraculous incident; leaves one a passive spectator on the sidelines.
6. Does it have artistic qualities?	It is a skilful production as to music, script, acting, direction, art work, color, settings, sound effects, printing, photography.	It is poorly done, confusing, hard to follow, action is too fast, too slow; sound is too loud, too low; it hurts the eyes; is poor art work.
7. Is the language used suitable?	The language is correct, suited to its subject; right for age level.	It uses vocabulary that is too hard or too easy; poor grammar; or language of the underworld.
8. Is the over-all effect likely to be desirable?	It has a positive effect; gives larger understanding of the world; helps one become a happier, more informed, more useful, more responsible, more interesting person.	It has a negative or zero effect; discourages living in real world; encourages one to be more dependent, fearful, or insecure; leaves one where he was before, or pushes him back.

Taken from USING MASS MEDIA IN THE SCHOOLS, W. D. Boutwell (Ed.)  
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**NOTES**

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