

falling prey to transient notions of "relevance" or practicality. Perhaps the most important effect of a course such as this is that it humanizes; it forces students to consider the world in larger terms than is either convenient or comfortable. In helping make that possible, we partially fulfill the role Weber assigns to the competent teacher; that is, to help the student "to give himself an account of the ultimate meaning of his own conduct. . . [A] teacher who succeeds in this . . . stands in the service of 'moral' forces; he fulfills the duty of bringing about self-clarification and a sense of responsibility." I have found that students are still interested in such things. Tolstoy asked, "What should we do, and how should we live?" Given a chance, most students will recognize that as a question for which he or she needs an answer.

STUDENTS, PARENTS, TEACHERS AND TV
by Robert H. Miller and Don Johansen

When the first researcher discovered that by the time a student has graduated from high school, he/she has spent more time watching television than going to school, the "awareness level" of a number of individuals and organizations skyrocketed. As a result, many of these organizations have initiated programs to (1) use television to generate discussions between parents and children and (2) help students to become more critical of TV programs.

One of these organizations, the National Parent-Teacher Association, moved in two directions. First, they determined that there was too much violence on TV and organized a program to urge advertisers not to support programs that contained excessive violence. Second, they began a program to encourage parents to use TV to communicate with their children.

As a result of this second thrust, the PTA developed a program which trains facilitators to conduct workshops with small groups and they have provided a number of helpful hints to make the program successful. For example, they suggest that the facilitator be certain that the age separation of children is

not too diverse. They point out that it is important to choose a setting that is conducive to the warm exchange of personal feelings, which means no rigid seats and desks.

In general, they recommend that the group watch a television program, making notes during the commercials, and then conduct a discussion which gets into the feelings of the persons viewing the program. They point out that it is important to involve everyone in the discussion, particularly the children, and to avoid being judgmental.

The PTA particularly encourages teachers, who are recognized discussion leaders, to become facilitators in the program to assure the greatest possibility of success.

A copy of The Parent Participation TV Workshop Leaders Guide may be obtained by writing Minnesota PTSA/PTA, 55 Sherburne Avenue, St. Paul, MN. 55103, attention Karen Bacig.

In 1978 the U.S. Office of Education (USOE) awarded Critical TV Viewing contracts to four projects, each focusing on a different age group from grade K to the post-secondary level. Holders of these contracts developed classroom and family materials and presented workshops nationwide during 1978-1980. The directors of these projects, with lists of materials, addresses, etc. are shown at the close of this article.

One of the contractors, Far West Laboratories, has developed a video cassette and a slide/tape presentation which may be purchased or rented from Far West.

All of the materials developed by these contractors aim at improving the critical TV viewing habits of all ages. One book, INSIDE TELEVISION, by Ned White, is a high school textbook designed to be used as the basis for a one semester high school course in language arts. It presents information about television audiences, economics, images, persuasive techniques, news, dramatic form, production methods, and impacts on society. In addition, it challenges students to develop their own opinions and activities designed to stimulate their thinking and it tells them what television professionals think about many aspects of this media.

Accompanying the book is a detailed Teachers Guide which

contains day to day lesson plans, resources for teachers, student learning goals, class discussion questions, and optional long term class projects. The authors state that teachers with no previous experience in Critical TV Viewing will be able to teach this course effectively by following the suggestions and relying on the teaching skills they already possess.

One publication, Television and Children, published quarterly by the National Council for Children and Television, 20 Nassau Street, Suite 215, Princeton, N.J. 08540, deals with the whole topic. One issue, Volume 3/Number 2, Summer 1980, deals almost exclusively with Critical TV Viewing Skills and contains articles written by the directors of the federal contract programs and others.

The National Broadcasting Company has provided a grant to Teachers Guides to Television, 699 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10021 (telephone 212/688-0033) which has provided written materials and television programs closely allied to the Parent Participation TV Workshop program. They publish materials which highlight selected programs which they feel fit into the family discussion type thrust of the whole program and provide information on upcoming TV programs. Write to get on their mailing list.

If you are interested in posters dealing with TV viewing, a brochure illustrating 40 of them is available from the Institute for Visual Learning, Inc., 1061 Brooks Avenue, St. Paul, MN. 55113. Write for a brochure.

In the fall of 1980, Governor Al Quie announced that he, along with the Department of Education, the PTSA/PTA and WTCN-TV would promote the Parent Participation TV Workshops. The contact people in the DOE are Don Johansen, Supervisor, Secondary Education (612/296-4055) or Dr. Robert H. Miller, Supervisor, Educational Media (612/296-1570), Capitol Square Building, 550 Cedar Street, St. Paul, MN. 55101.

Other source information is listed below.

CRITICAL TELEVISION VIEWING SKILLS

PROJECTS

Elementary Curriculum Level
Southwest Educational Development
Laboratory
211 East 7th Street
Austin, Texas 78701

Project Director: Dr. Charles
Corder-Bolz
Telephone Number: (512) 475-6861

Children's stories and
fables in packet of 5. \$6.20

TV Frog Log..... \$1.34
TV Discovery Game..... \$5.06
Teacher Q Card..... \$.50
(a set)
Training Manual..... \$3.42

This material is in the public domain and may be duplicated.
A limited supply is available from the contractor while they last.

Middle Curriculum Level
WNET-Channel 13
356 West 58th Street
New York, New York 10019

Project Director: Debbie Bilowit
Telephone Number: (212) 664-7124

Publisher: Cambridge Publishing Co.
888 7th Avenue
New York, New York 10106
Telephone Number: (212) 957-5251

Training Manual for
Workshop Leaders:..... \$5.00
Available at cost from
WNET-TV

Critical Television Viewing:
A LANGUAGE SKILL
WORK-A-TEXT..... \$2.75
Teacher's Annotated
Edition..... \$3.90
Family Guide (not
available at this time)

Secondary Curriculum Level
Far West Laboratory for Educational
Research and Development
1855 Folsom Street
San Francisco, California 94103

Project Director: Dr. Donna Lloyd-Kolkin
Telephone Number: (415) 565-3000

Teacher's Guide to
INSIDE TELEVISION
and 46 reproducible... \$5.00
worksheets
(write to Far West)

Publisher: Science and Behavior
Books Inc.
P.O. Box 11457
Palo Alto, California 94306
Telephone Number: (415) 326-6465

INSIDE TELEVISION
Student Text.....\$12.00
(20% discount on orders
of 5 or more)

Post-Secondary Curriculum Level
Boston University
School of Public Communication
640 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts 02215

Project Director:
Dr. Donis Dondis
Phone: (617) 353-3488

Publisher: Grid Publishing Co.
4666 Indianaola Avenue
Columbus, Ohio 43214
Attn: Marlene Woo-Lun, telephone number: (614) 251-6565

Student Text - cost not
available