The Rural Public Television System: The Paradox of Identity and Role

James C. Jones Jr.
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The Rural Public Television System:

The Paradox of Identity and Role

(Title)

By

James C. Jones, Jr.

THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

In the Graduate School, Eastern Illinois University
Charleston, Illinois

2002
(YEAR)

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THIS THESIS BY ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING
THIS PART OF THE GRADUATE DEGREE CITED ABOVE

8-6-02
DATE

8-6-02
DATE
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The Rural Public Television System:

The Paradox of Identity and Role

James C. Jones, Jr.

Eastern Illinois University
Abstract

The American television broadcasting system is preparing for its greatest upgrade since color television. This change will not only effect commercial television it will also effect our community public television stations.

Since its inception in 1967 the public television system has been the innovation leader in the broadcast industry for using new technologies to benefit education and servicing the public. Public television was the leader in satellite programming distribution, descriptive television services and closed captioning. Public television has defined and demonstrated its role as a technology leader. This research study was undertaken to define from the public's perspective what it wishes to see from its local public television station and how our local financial dollars contribute to the programming funding organization.

This study review's the history of public broadcasting, investigates the identity crises, and examines the public's perspective of public broadcasting and examined the public's awareness of the convergence to digital. Central, Illinois was the primary market for this research, where two surveys were conducted to determine consumer's response toward public television in general and specifically the three focus stations serving the market.

The study found public broadcasting has done an excellent job of educating the public on the need for non-commercial broadcasting. However, we found a lack of a clear mandate for what programming is desired by the viewing audience. In fact, the respondents identified multiple programming options. For the local station programmer
this presents a challenge in satisfying this diverse audience. For PBS national it exposes a potential weakness to cable networks programming to targeted audiences.

This study also found a lack of understanding of the convergence to digital broadcasting and how it benefits the viewing public. For the general public the convergence to digital represents nothing more than an expensive new option in television. Clearly, there is a need for educating the public on the benefits to this upgrade in the television broadcasting system.
The Rural Public Television System:  
The Paradox of Identity and Role

Introduction

The American television broadcasting system is preparing for it’s greatest upgrade since color television. This change will not only effect commercial television it will also effect our community public television stations.

Since it’s inception in 1967 the public television system has been the innovation leader in the broadcast industry for using new technologies to benefit education and servicing the public. Public television was the leader in satellite programming distribution, descriptive video services and closed captioning.

Continuing in its technology leadership public television has lead the convergence to digital through its preparations of using high-speed TCP/IP networks to transfer programs as files from producing stations into PBS and the anticipation of programs being retrieved as data files from a PBS archive by its member stations, (Seaman & Lewis, S.1999). Public television has defined and demonstrated its role as a technology leader. When public television was established, the vision for the system was more than a leader in technology. The original founders of public television had no way of predicting the growth of cable and its growth of specialty networks of children’s programming, arts and how to’s. Programming which has traditionally been part of PBS’s core audiences. This research study will attempt to define from the public’s perspective what it wishes to
see from its local public television station and how our local financial dollars contribute to the programming funding organization.

In her 1976 publication titled, “The Future of Public Broadcasting,” Anne W. Branscomb raised questions on the identity of Public Broadcasting. Some of the questions included: What is public broadcasting? What does a noncommercial service really mean? What is the justification for reserve channels? How are noncommercial licensees to ascertain and serve public needs, interest and programming preferences? Who is responsible for what? Do “public stations” have higher or lower standards of responsibilities with respect to political and other public affairs programming? How are these various responsibilities and needs to be funded? Who is to decide what? (Branscomb, 1976).

The questions presented by Branscomb are too numerous and complex to be addressed in a single research project. This study will review the history of public broadcasting, investigate the identity crises, including the relationship between PBS national and the local member stations, examine the public’s perspective of public broadcasting and examined the public’s awareness on the convergence to digital.

Central Illinois was the primary market for this research; it is served by three public broadcasting stations. WILL located on the campus of the University of Illinois at Urbana/Champaign, Illinois, WEIU licensed to Eastern Illinois University in Charleston Illinois, and WUSI located in Olney, Illinois, a repeater station licensed to Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Illinois.
WILL is considered the dominant broadcaster in the region, and qualifies to receive the complete PBS program schedule as a full PBS affiliate. WILL is licensed as a service of the University of Illinois. WEIU, the smallest of the three stations participates in the Program Differential Plan that allows the station to receive a maximum of 25% of the PBS program schedule. WUSI, located in Olney, Illinois is a satellite (repeater) service of WSIU located in Carbondale, Illinois. WUSI is a full service affiliate licensed to Southern Illinois University.

Literature Review

History
From its inception the Public Broadcasting Service has struggled for its identity, resisted political interference, and competed with commercial broadcasters and cable operators for spectrum, capacity and viewing audience. The earliest forms of public broadcasting begin as a more narrowly defined service devoted explicitly to educational programming. While only operating for a few hours a week many educational institutions joined in the rush created by the 1920 radio boom (Head, Sterling, Schofield, Spann, & McGregor 1998). As the success of commercial radio grew, so did the desire of the commercial broadcasters to acquire the educational licensees. Based on the promise of airtime, some schools surrendered their licensees. As the value of commercial broadcasting grew, the willingness of the commercial stations to continue the practice of airtime was reduced (Head, et al).

The growth of the entertainment value of commercial broadcasting along with its increased political and economic power created a competitive atmosphere for spectrum between commercial and non-commercial stations. In 1930 the Wagner-Hatfield
amendment to set-aside 25% of radio spectrum for educational purposes was introduced and defeated. In 1945 when the FCC allocated channels for FM radio, they set aside only 20 television channels on the lower end of the spectrum (88 to 92 MHz.) for educational purposes. The development of television caused this debate to continue until 1952 when the FCC allocated 242 TV channels for educational needs.

Describing the growth of educational television as slow is an understatement. Stations lacked the financial resources necessary to stay on the air and produced quality programming. The 1969 formation of the National Educational Television (NET) cooperative provided limited programming, but it was low budget and also insufficient.

In the mid 1960’s, the non-profit Carnegie Foundation stepped into the picture, hoping to transform Educational Television (ETV) into what it considered “a dynamic vision”. The Carnegie Foundation felt ETV needed well-articulated national goals, top-notch public relations, and leadership at the federal level. To generate highly visible recommendations for achieving these goals, the foundation established the Carnegie Commission on Educational Television (Head, et al, 1998). Chaired by James R. Kellian, Jr. Chairman of the Cooperation Massachusetts Institute of Technology and consisting of leaders from industry, broadcasting, music, labor and education. The Carnegie Commission made twelve recommendations necessary for the survival of Educational Television.

Of the twelve recommendations made by the Carnegie Commission, the most relevant for this discussion was the second, calling for the creation of a federally chartered, nonprofit, nongovernmental corporation called the Corporation for Public
Public Broadcasting

Television (changed by congress to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB)). The Corporation for Public Broadcasting was created to receive and distribute private and governmental funds for the purpose of stimulating more local programming, supporting two national production centers and establishing an educational television system interconnected by conventional means and enabled to benefit from evolving technology (The Carnegie Commission On Educational Television 1967) (See appendix 1 for a complete list). This recommendation resulted in the 1967 Public Broadcasting Act (Turner, 1994), the 1967 creation of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and the 1969 launch of the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS).

In the beginning, public television aimed its programming toward secondary and higher education, along with providing cultural alternatives for all ages. Station managers did not program with rating (Turner, 1964) or with counter programming in mine. Although today’s public broadcasting is more sophisticated, ratings are not the determining factor, but they do program for ratings as well as content. Public television tends to program to avoid controversies and they generally provide well-known safe programming (Aufderherde, 1996; Head et al., 1998).

Today, millions of Americans look to public broadcasting for the best that television can deliver (Moyers, 1996). These same Americans look to public broadcasting to provide quality educational, children’s and local programming, provide a broadcast medium for candidates running for political offices, and an outlet for community and nonprofit organizations. Public broadcasting supports employees in the business community with training and self-improvement courses. Public broadcasting improves
the capabilities of math and science teachers through Mathline and Science Line. Many low-income children receive books through the First Book program (Bruger, 1998). Given all this history, public broadcasting has ended up with a complex organizational structure.

Public television is an affiliation-based system. Unlike the traditional network structure, it is the individual member stations that control the Public television system. In the traditional network system, the Network (i.e. CBS, NBC, ABC and FOX) provides their affiliates with programs in exchange for the station agreement to carry network commercials within those programs. Some radio and most television networks compensate the affiliate stations to carry their programs (Head and Sterling, 1998). In this system the network is solely responsible for the programming decisions. The public broadcasting system differs from this approach. It is the individual stations through membership and voting rights that direct the programming options.

Funding for public broadcasting programs originate from three primary sources: the Federal Government, corporate supporters, and individual members (figure 1). The Public Television Act created the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. This independent agency receives the appropriated funding from the federal government and distributes it to PBS member stations; independent producers, production companies and the Public Broadcasting Service according to established guidelines. The second source of funding is obtained through the support of corporations who sponsor individual programs/shows or a series of programs (e.g., ExxonMobil: Masterpiece Theater). This funding may be
distributed through The Corporation for Public Broadcasting, The Public Broadcasting Service, Independent Producers, Production Companies, and the Member Stations.

The third source is the individual memberships from "People like You" and me who contribute to their local public broadcasting station to support the programs and services provided by the local station.

The Public Broadcasting Service is not a programming-producing agency; they are a distributor of programming. PBS contracts with independent producers, and production companies for the production of programming ideas (figure 2). Additionally,
PBS purchases programs from international and domestic distribution sources or independent producers. Programming can also be obtained from member stations that produce programming to the PBS system. In fact, many of the popular programs are produced through affiliate stations.
For example, programs like *Between the Lions* are produced by WGBH in Boston, Massachusetts. Bill Moyers specials are produced through a collaborative effort between Moyers productions and WNET-13 in New York. *Mister Rogers Neighborhood* is produced through Family Communications, in association with WQED in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and *Clifford the Big Red Dog* is produced by WETA in Washington D.C.

Independent producers and production companies play a central role in the PBS programming cycle. They submit programming ideas and once selected they are either funded through CPB, PBS, and member stations. They can also obtain funding through sponsorships or a combination of any available sources. Ken Burns would be an example of an independent producer in a relationship with PBS. Independent producers and production companies may also be contracted to produce a program idea originating from one of the funding sources. Distributors arrange circulation of programming to the member stations for local airing or sell national rights to PBS.

*Why do we need Public Broadcasting?*

Ervin Duggan, the former president of PBS stated in a 1995 speech before the National Press Club: “We are facing a triple crisis of education, popular culture and citizenship. Duggan also went on to state he knew one institution that can constructively address every aspect of the triple crisis. This institution’s entire mission is education, culture and citizenship. It is public broadcasting.

For many years public broadcasting has played a major role in the educational development of our society. This involvement begins with the pre-school contributions of *Mister Rogers Neighborhood, Sesame Street* and *Between the Lions*. Continuing through
school age children programming with *Authur, Zoom and Popular Mechanic for Kids.* 

PBS has assisted in the educational mission of schools through the introduction to Spanish, and Ready to Learn. In the United States, many teachers use classroom versions of some of PBS’s most popular programs; a student may learn about the civil war using the Ken Burns’ documentary on the Civil War. Adult education needs are assisted through telecourses (G.E.D. preparatory programs, math and foreign Languages) (Dugan 1995), as well as the popular how-to skills programs (e.g. cooking, and home improvements) (Aufenheide 1996). The PBS Adult Learning Service, a partnership involving PBS stations and colleges, provides college credit TV courses to nearly 500,000 students each academic year (PBS corporate facts). Teachers may improve their teaching skills through the PBS service’s Mathline and Science Line.

Public television serves as an alternative to commercial television, providing quality family oriented programs that serve as a parent-friendly option to the increasingly violent, exploitative and sexually suggesting commercial programming. Public television gives a parent an option other than “turning the television off”.

*Problems of Public Broadcasting*

The problem with public broadcasting stems primarily from its complex structure. Figure three provides a representation of the various groups interacting in the system known as public broadcasting. This study focuses on three areas: governance, funding and image.
From inception, public broadcasting has been political. The original Carnegie Commission proposal recommended a board of directors consisting of twelve distinguished, public-spirited citizens would govern the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Six members appointed by the President of the United States with confirmation by the Senate. The remaining six were to be elected by these previously appointed commissioners. The Twentieth Century Fund 1993 report recommended the President select a non-participant committee of outstanding individuals to recommend qualified candidates for vacant seats on the CPB board (Twentieth Century Fund, 1993). Neither recommendation was accepted, the President appoints the entire twelve member board with Senate confirmation. The presidents’ choice of not accepting the recommendations has created a political environment for public broadcasting.

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting would coordinate the services provided by the public broadcast system. But it was not allowed to be involved in the distribution of programming for fear (by some) of creating a liberal network. PBS came under fire by the Nixon administration because of their airing of an anti-redlining documentary. The documentary was considered to be too controversial and it offended important campaign contributors (banks). To alleviate this problem the Nixon administration ensured that large chunks of the CPB funds would go directly to the local affiliates. Nixon believed that local stations would be less liberal and the stations had enough conflicting interest among them to make concerted political action difficult (Aufderheider, 1995).
Political control continued with the Reagan administration when the Office of Management and Budget declared there was “no overriding national justification for the funding of CPB” because it only served listeners and viewers who tended to be wealthier and more educated than the general populace.” Therefore, “taxpayers as a whole should not be compelled to subsidize entertainment for a select few” (Anfderheide, 1995). This feeling toward PBS resulted in a move to “zero-out or defund” public broadcasting during the 1995 Newt Gingrich era as Speaker of the House.

Each year the Corporation for Public Broadcasting must submit its budget request and be reviewed and debated along with other government agencies. This process alone continues the political atmosphere for public broadcasting. The annual ongoing dynamics of the federal budget process requiring agencies to lobby and compete for a limited amount of available resources will maintain the process of political influence.

**Funding**

The television landscape in the United States was developed under a market mechanism in contrast to the European non-market driven systems. Contrary to the broadcast development in most countries, public broadcasting in the United States emerged long after the commercial system was in place (Chan-Olmsted & Kim, 2002). To many state governments and certain federal bureaucracies, the public broadcasting community presents the view that the nation is a classroom, and public broadcasting is the teacher. To corporate sponsors, it presents itself as a popular, generally upscale, “good” entertainment vehicle (Tracy, 1995). This conceptual confusion may have contributed to the lack of funding for the United States Public Broadcasting System.
Compared to other developed nations, United States Public broadcasting is seriously lacking in financial support (Katz, 1989; Brown, 1996). The United Kingdom has the highest public service broadcasting expenditure (0.32% of GNP), and the United States has the lowest (0.05%). Which translates to approx. $39.00 per British citizen compared to $1.00 per U.S. citizen. Australia and Canada both devote 0.16% of GNP to public service broadcasting. The UK percentage is twice that of Australia and Canada and over six times that of the United States (Brown, 1996; Cave, 1996; Brown & Althaus; 1996, Boardman, 1996). The four countries referred to above (The United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, and The United States) use different methods for financing their public service broadcasting systems. The BBC is financed through a fee paid by owners of television sets, the Australian Broadcasting System through parliamentary appropriations, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation by parliamentary appropriations and advertising revenue while the United States public broadcasting system is supported by a combination of government grants, corporate sponsorships, public subscriptions and donations.

In addition to its programming, public television has been a leader in the development and utilization of technology. In the 1970’s public television advanced satellite technology for the distribution of programming. Public broadcasting was a pioneer in closed captioning for the hearing-impaired and descriptive audio channels for the visually-impaired.

As the U.S. public television stations, attempt to participate in changes in the market and the mandated digital technology, they are forced to pursue alternative
methods of funding. Public service broadcasting depends on an ability to stand out from commercial rivals and cultivate responsiveness to public concerns and needs. However, its ability to fulfill this task depends on an assurance of adequate financial resources to participate in new developments (Steemers, 1999).

**Identity**

Perhaps the largest and most persistent problem the system has had to face is its lack of a clear role and identity. Is public broadcasting a means of formal education? Is it a forum for change? Should public broadcasting strive for mass audiences, or aim to satisfy special interest groups (Blakely, 1997)? Much of public broadcasting’s identity is given by what it is not; it is noncommercial, has no advertising, is providing a service not found elsewhere (Rowland, 1986).

Public broadcasting’s identity confusion may also be explained by the fact it is the servant of so many masters; not only do its licenses try to dictate what it should be, but so does PBS and the CPB as well the FCC, Congress and the White House (Branscomb, 1976; Jervey, 2001). Michael Tracy (1995) writes:

> The organizational structure of American public broadcasting is a bizarre combination of both the monolithically bureaucratic and the anarchically fragmented. There is an unwieldy combination of university, state, and local education authority stations serviced by a confusing array of state and regional organizations, all overlain by an indescribably complex national bureaucracy represented by the welter of organizations known as the Corporation for Public
Broadcasting (CPB), the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), the American Program Service (APS), National Public Radio (NPR), American Public Radio (ARP), the National Association of Public Television Stations (APTS), the Children’s Television Workshop (CTW), and a myriad of other federal foundations, and corporate funding and program agencies. It has been widely reported that this chaotic structure severely restricts the creation of significant services, by permitting a complex pattern of competing interests who spend more time arguing over respective turf than designing and producing programs. As legend would have it, “public television is one long meeting occasionally interrupted by a program” (p. 165).

In an April 2001 Brill’s Content Gay Jervey interview of PBS President Pat Mitchell, Jervey describes the PBS organizational structure as “its legendary Byzantine structure” (p. 92). Jervey (2001) goes on to state, “put simply, the Public Broadcasting Service is not a network but the national entity that represents 347 local public-television member stations. PBS is a private nonprofit enterprise owned and operated by the member stations; at a commercial network, affiliate stations around the country defer to the network in most matters of scheduling, programming and advertising” (p. 92).

“Identity,” is defined by Webster as “the collective aspect of the characteristics by which a thing is distinctly recognizable or known” (Webster’s II New Riverside University Dictionary, 1988). “The mission statement (role) should describe the organization’s current purpose in terms of what the organization will do over the near term (Bounds, Yorks, Adams; Ranney, 1994)”. The three focus stations, The Corporation
for Public Broadcasting and the Public Broadcasting Service all have a mission statement that defines the organizations role. This study will review the public perception or identity of the services provided by the local stations.

In their mission statement, the Corporation of Public Broadcasting states, “The Corporation is accountable to the public for investing its funds in programs and services which are educational, innovative, locally relevant, and reflective of America’s common values and cultural diversity. The CPB is to facilitate the development of, and ensure universal access to, non-commercial high-quality programming and telecommunications services” (The Corporation for Public Broadcasting Mission Statement electronic media February 14, 2002). The Public Broadcasting Service in their “PBS in Brief” segment in their overview, describes its role as overseeing program acquisition, distribution and promotion (Corporate Facts. Electronic media February 12, 2002).

Examining the mission statements of the three study focus stations, WILL - TV seeks to stimulate discussion of public issues by providing forums for the exchange of ideas and information (WILL Mission Statement electronic media March 6, 2002) WUSI, endeavors to enrich the lives of radio listeners and television viewers with quality programming and services relevant to the local audience that improve the quality of life within the area, present a diversity of information, inform the electorate, and nurture an appreciation of the fine arts (WUSI Mission Statement electronic media March 6, 2002). WEIU strives to provide quality programming and outreach activities to enlighten the mind, inspire the heart and strengthen the spirit of those we serve (WEIU Mission Statement electronic media March 6, 2002). This representative example of mission
statements, which are unrelated to one another, creates confusion across the broader public broadcasting system.

The complex structure of the public broadcasting system combined with varied political spheres it must function within creates a chaotic environment. The purpose of this research project is to explore the impact that this complex structure has on the PBS audience. This exploration is framed in the following two research questions:

**RQ1:** Is public broadcasting important to the public and what programming do the viewers want?

**RQ2:** How informed is the public of the issues associated with the conversion to a digital signal?

*Methodology*

Two surveys were conducted to determine consumer’s response toward public television in general and specifically WEIU, WILL & WUSI, the three public television stations serving the Charleston Illinois market.

The first survey was a detailed seven page, 35-question document distributed during the months of July, August and September 2000. This document included general information, viewing hours, technology owned, viewing content and questions pertaining to some of the educational initiatives resulting from digital television. The majority of the questions were area specific, however several of the questions were obtained from the April 1999, “The Impact of Consumer Education on Public Response to Digital Television” research paper by Constance Ledoux-Book of Meredith College in North Carolina.
This survey consisted of 181 respondents from community members, university students, and university staff & faculty members. An incentive was provided to complete the survey. The data was processed using frequency distribution of Number Cruncher Statistical Software Program (2000). The comment sections were processed using Cat Pack version 1.0 a content analysis software program that identifies and counts the number of key words within a text.

The second survey drew the questions from the first survey, it consisting of 15 multiple choice and fill in the blank opinion questions. Each respondent was asked to complete the form and return the form to WEIU – TV. This survey had a mass distribution (color coded per location) via the community newspapers for the cities of Charleston (green), Mattoon (blue), Paris (yellow) and Effingham (white), Illinois during the months of December 2000 and January 2001. There were approximately 37,000 surveys distributed with 909 returned or a 2.4% rate of return. As with the first survey the data was processed using frequency distribution of Number Cruncher Statistical Software Program (2000). The comment sections were processed using Cat Pack version 1.0 a content analysis software program that identifies and counts the number of key words within a text.
**Study Results**

There were 1,102 total respondents to both surveys. The general demographic data and statistical tables are as follows:

The single majority group of the respondents to survey #1 were between 25-44 years of age. Survey #2 the single majority group of the respondents were over 65 years of age.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Survey # 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 – 44</td>
<td>54.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 – 64</td>
<td>47.51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 +</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of members living in the household, the majority of respondents on survey #1 indicated that three or more individuals lived in the household whereas on survey #2 the majority of respondents lived in households of two.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2</th>
<th>Members of Household</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Survey # 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>33.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 or more</td>
<td>55.55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On survey #1 the majority of the respondents indicated that they earned over $50,000 in annual household income. In contrast in survey #2 the single majority group of the respondents indicated that they earned between $25,000-$45,000 annual household income.

Table 3
Household Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Range</th>
<th>Survey #1</th>
<th>Survey #2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than $10,000</td>
<td>7.43%</td>
<td>27.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000 - $19,000</td>
<td>8.00%</td>
<td>33.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20,000 - $29,000</td>
<td>10.29%</td>
<td>19.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30,000 - $39,000</td>
<td>21.14%</td>
<td>18.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$40,000 - $49,000</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over $50,000</td>
<td>38.86%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the 2000 census and a 2000 report by Lewis and Kennedy associates, Inc. funded by the corporation for public broadcasting, the average age and salary for counties included in WEIU TV’s viewing audience is 35 - 54 years of age and $39,003 dollars per year. The respondents to these surveys are within that medium range.

As stated in the introduction, all respondents had public broadcasting service available to them via at least two PBS stations. When asked which public broadcasting station do you normally watch, the majority of respondents on survey #1 and on survey


#2 indicated that WILL in Urbana/Champaign, whether singularly or in combination with WEIU, was the preferred source of their public television viewing.

### Table 4

#### Station Watched

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Survey # 1</th>
<th>Survey # 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WEIU</td>
<td>10.50%</td>
<td>6.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILL</td>
<td>40.88%</td>
<td>17.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WUSI</td>
<td>1.66%</td>
<td>3.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEIU/WILL</td>
<td>6.63%</td>
<td>49.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEIU/WUSI</td>
<td>1.66%</td>
<td>2.84%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cable was the predominant signal source with over-the-air antenna reception a distant second. Satellite reception was surprisingly low considering the open rural location of the respondents.

### Table 4

#### Signal Reception

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Survey # 1</th>
<th>Survey # 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satellite</td>
<td>11.11%</td>
<td>6.72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antenna</td>
<td>25.15%</td>
<td>21.15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cable</td>
<td>57.31%</td>
<td>57.31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Since the 1967 Public Broadcasting Act established the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, programming has expanded from predominantly educational television to a variety of programs of interest to multiple audiences. Through this growth and development, the appreciation of the value for public broadcasting has been solidified. This was demonstrated during the Nixon and Reagan years when there was an attempt to cut public television funding and again during the 1994 congressional reforms led by Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich (Engelman, 1996). These attempts resulted in a public outcry forcing Congress to reestablish public broadcasting funding levels.

The survey results indicate the American public still supports the value of public broadcasting. When asked how important it is to have the ability to receive public broadcasting, overwhelmingly the respondents indicated that it was important.

Table 6
Importance of Public Broadcasting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey # 1</th>
<th>Survey # 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Important</td>
<td>80.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not important</td>
<td>13.41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While the respondents indicate that they feel public television service is important, their viewing interests suggest they lack a clear consensus for preferences in programming currently being offered. Very few respondents indicated they are viewing the current programming formats.
Furthermore, the respondents are indifferent to suggested programming formats when asked for what they might like to see public broadcasting offer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Survey # 1</th>
<th>Survey # 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local Programs</td>
<td>30.81%</td>
<td>32.78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature/Wildlife</td>
<td>26.74%</td>
<td>42.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documentaries</td>
<td>27.90%</td>
<td>40.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to’s</td>
<td></td>
<td>28.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoors/sports</td>
<td></td>
<td>22.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music/Concerts</td>
<td></td>
<td>34.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>28.91%</td>
<td>34.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational</td>
<td>31.78%</td>
<td>27.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td></td>
<td>25.96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>20.23%</td>
<td>13.20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8
Viewing Interest (would like to see)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Survey # 1</th>
<th>Survey # 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Music/Concerts</td>
<td>28.49%</td>
<td>35.97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoors/Sports</td>
<td>32.74%</td>
<td>26.51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controversial Community Issues</td>
<td>47.95%</td>
<td>23.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s</td>
<td>26.63%</td>
<td>16.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Theater</td>
<td>27.91%</td>
<td>30.47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional questions were asked on survey # 1 on knowledge, expectations and interest of digital television. More than one-half of the respondents were aware of digital television and anticipated improved picture quality. Almost 40% will be expecting a high definition signal.

Table 9
Knowledge of Digital

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Survey # 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>56.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>43.82%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 10

**Expectation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Survey # 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improved Picture</td>
<td>73.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved Sound</td>
<td>6.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All of Above</td>
<td>14.38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 11

**Digital Interest**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Survey # 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HDTV</td>
<td>39.31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-casting</td>
<td>20.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound</td>
<td>7.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactivity</td>
<td>13.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data</td>
<td>6.90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Respondents expressed a lack of knowledge or a lack of interest about the potential enhanced educational features of digital television. Respondents saw it as a tool for continuing education, tutoring and test preparation. However, respondents showed little support or knowledge for a degree granting possibility. Following the survey many very educated respondents commented they had never thought of obtaining a degree through interactive television.

Both survey’s provided participants the opportunity to describe their thoughts towards public broadcasting. In survey one, several respondents indicated they do not watch
television. Follow up conversations indicated this lack of watching is based on responsibilities, time and insufficient options of programming. This group expressed a desire for good educational programs. It must be noted this first survey group was a controlled group consisting of younger working/professional people, many with children.

The second survey group expressed a desire for good educational programs consisting of informative local and children’s programs. This group also expressed increased desire to see important community issues. This survey group comprised of respondents primarily 60 and over.

In addition to the survey instruments, two studies were taken to compare the percentage of local programming to national/syndicated programming during the weeks of February 16-22, 2002 and May 18-24, 2002 (figure 12). These studies reviewed the local/national programming for WILL, WUSI, WEIU and two national stations WTTW Chicago, Illinois and MPT (Maryland Public Television) Owings Mills, Maryland.

In this review, during the week of February 16, 2002, out of 798 total hours of programming only 59.0 hours (7.3%) was local programming. For the week of May 18, 2002 only 26.5 hours (3.3%) was local. When the national stations are removed from the equation, out of the 21.5 hours of local programming during the week of February 16 – 22, 17.5 hours (81.3%) were legislative sessions.

Discussion

The literature review identified three fundamental issues for PBS: funding, governance and organizational structure. Compared to other developed nations the American public broadcast system is funded at a lower level and has a governance system
that has resulted in it being in a state of constant political tug-of-war. This study also found sentiment that a lack of clear identity in the organizational structure has also affected the viewing audience resulting in little understanding of the exceptions of the public broadcasting system.

**RQ1:** Is public broadcasting important to the public and what programming do the viewers want?

Public television has clearly established the need for commercial free television. The results of this study did indicate the lack of clarity regarding desired programming selections. 80% of the respondents of survey #1 and 90% of respondents in survey #2 supports public broadcasting. The question still remains, what programming does the viewing public want to see? In the two surveys there lacked a clear topic of interest from the respondents. In survey #1 controversial community issues obtained 47.9% and music/concerts at 36% in survey #2 were the two most requested categories of interest.

It is encouraging the public supports PBS as strongly as it does. However, the public seems unable to articulate what it expects from public broadcasting. In this post 9/11 economic environment, the implications of this lack of clarity could result in a decrease in funding from shifting individual giving patterns and governmental priorities. This lack of expectations could also lead to the audience becoming fractured and public broadcasting loosing to cable-based niche programming.

One of the unanswered questions is what does the public expect? Can localism be defined by the concept of the stations selecting their own programming based
on local interest? Is localism defined as an outlet for the discussion of relevant
community interest, or is localism defined simply as an outlet for the non-traditional?

Localism is the cornerstone of public broadcasting. This concept has been
reinforced through its funding campaigns, organizational structure and its federal
mandate. However the debate never undertaken was whether or not such a structure could
possibly serve the larger public interest, or even that of the local community (Tracy,
1995). In the two weeks surveyed for programming content, only 7% of week #1
programming and 3% of week #2 programming were local. During the weeks of February
16 – 22, 17.5 hours of the 21.5 hours of local programming were state legislative
sessions.

In his 1995 paper “The United States: PBS and the Limitations of a Mainstream
Alternative”, Michael Tracy suggested public television is not “local”, but merely
balkanized, and therefore cannot provide a counterpoint to the centripetal forces that
threaten American society. Tracy also questions what is meant by local community, and
how do public broadcasters know they are serving it?

While commercial broadcast television has lost a significant audience share to
cable (Stanley, 1998) public television is also feeling the heat from a growing number of
programs that resemble public television programming (Chan-Olmsted & Kim, 2002).
Cable television has developed programming options that attract the same audiences and
programs that traditionally have been the domain of public television. For example,
Nickelodeon has entered into a high profile joint venture with the Children’s Television
Network (CTW) forming “Noggin” a commercial-free children’s cable network. This
venture targets one of public television’s core audience segments, preschoolers (Snyder, 1999).

Children’s programs have not been the only area of cable penetration. History, Arts and How to’s are being challenged by the programming of the History Channel, Arts & Entertainment Channel and the Discovery Network.

Public television is also facing unprecedented pressure to keep existing and new shows from migrating to other cable networks as more cable outlets are looking for documentaries and children’s programming. For example, in 1998 the Magic School Bus moved to the Fox Network while the Discovery Network created an alliance with the BBC to establish a BBC America Cable Channel (Davenport, 1998; Petrozzello, 1999).

Throughout its existence public television has established the public perception of being informative, educational and intellectual, along with niche formats of documentaries, children’s programming, in-depth news, how-to’s and British programming (Chan-Olmsted & Kim, 2002). This study reveals continued support for public television. However, the data also suggest the public’s inability to articulate were PBS should be going in this extended multi-channel environment. Future research will need to follow public television’s response to these external threats and how successful public television is in defining its position with the viewing audience in the new environment.

RQ2: How informed is the public of the issues associated with the conversion to a digital signal?
The transition from the current analog standard to digital broadcasting standard is continuing in this country. Commercial broadcasters were required by May 1, 2002 to broadcast a digital signal. Noncommercial stations are required to broadcast a digital signal by May 1, 2003. Of the 1,309 full power commercial stations, according to the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) 325 TV stations have made the transition (Zaccaria, 2002). Survey one asked the respondents questions on their knowledge, expectations and willingness to pay for digital television. Of the surveyed audience, 56% were aware of the conversion to digital, and of that 56%, 73% had the expectation of improved picture quality and 36% had the expectation of HDTV. When asked the question, "have you considered buying a digital television set", 77% of the respondent’s answered no. Of the 22% who has considered buying a digital television set 73% answered they were undecided when they would make that purchase.

The more revealing statistic may be that 87% of the respondents said they would be willing to pay less that $1,000 for a digital set. According the most recent sales information from electronic retailers Best Buy, and Circuit City. High Definition sets sell between $1800 for a 36” to $3500 for a 61”. These prices are for monitors only; these figures do not include high definition tuners, antenna and installation, which may run several thousand dollars or more.

This study demonstrates nearly half of the respondents were unaware of the transition. Public broadcasting can perform a valuable service through leading the education process on the benefits of this transition. Successful businesses in the future will need to be associated with well-positioned brands. Consumers know what type of
content to expect from the commercial networks. PBS has traditionally positioned itself as a leader in education. As PBS attempts to reestablish a discernible agenda, the public education of the capabilities and the benefits of digital television may lead to a recognized public service brand for public television.

Conclusion

This study documented two primary areas of uncertainty, the lack of a clear programming mandate. and consumers are unclear of how the convergence to digital will effect them and what benefit will be gained from the conversion to digital.

Public broadcasting has done an excellent job of informing the public on the need for a noncommercial television service. However, this research study found a lack of a clear consensus for what programming is desired by the viewing audience. In fact, the respondents identified widely varied programming desires. For the local station programmer this presents a challenge to satisfying this diverse audience. The complex organizational structure and the relatively weak funding of the public broadcasting system adds to the difficulty of establishing a clear programming direction. This potentially fractured viewership places public television at risk to loosing audience to specialized cable networks.

The second area of concern is the convergence to digital currently being undertaken by the American television broadcasting system. Consumers have demonstrated a lack of a clear understanding of this convergence (except for an increase in the cost of a television). It is understandable the member stations have been concentrating their efforts on meeting the guidelines for getting their digital signal on the air. However, ultimately,
in order to gain public support someone will have to educate the consumer on the benefits of the digital convergence.

The convergence to digital is and will be financially stressful for many member stations, but the ability to multi-cast educational and cultural programming along with the ability to enhance these programming options with datacasting (transmission of digital data with the broadcast signal) can prove beneficial for the system. Public broadcasting is in a good position for utilizing its experience as a technology innovator to provide leadership to the broadcast digital revolution through using this technology to support of the viewers learning experience.

In conclusion, the findings of this study would suggest a need for additional research into the public’s interpretations and expectations of public broadcasting. Future research could include, how can public television maintain and expand its viewing audience? Will digitalization be viewed as an unfunded federal mandate or an opportunity to expand the broadcasting’s service to the community? What is the public’s view of non-programming activities qualifying as serving the public needs? The existing public broadcasting system supports 349 television stations; can the current model survive the transition to digital?
References:


Chan-Olmsted, S., & Kim, Y. The PBS brand versus cable brands:


WILL Mission Statement Retrieved March 6, 2002 from the WILL web site http://www.will.uiuc.edu/WILL_Contents/AM_Contents/About WILL_Contents/About_WILL_Mission.asp.


APPENDIX I
THE COMMISSION URGES IMMEDIATE ACTION TO EXTEND AND STRENGTHEN EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION

1. We recommend concerted efforts at the federal, state, and local levels to improve the facilities and to provide for the adequate support of the individual educational television stations and to increase their number.

An effective national educational television system must consist in its very essence of vigorous and independent local stations, adequate in number and well equipped. They should reach all parts of the country. They should be individually responsive to the needs of the local communities and collectively strong enough to meet the needs of a national audience. Each must be a product of local initiative and local support.

Many good stations exist; they must be made better. Weak stations must be provided with the kind of support which will cure and not perpetuate their weakness. All educational television stations require greatly increased resources.

THE COMMISSION PROPOSES A NEW INSTITUTION FOR PUBLIC TELEVISION

2. We recommend that Congress act promptly to authorize and to establish a federally chartered, nonprofit, nongovernmental corporation, to be known as the "Corporation for Public Television." The Corporation should be empowered to receive and disburse governmental and private funds in order to extend and improve Public Television programming. The Commission considers the creation of the Corporation fundamental to its proposal and would be most reluctant to recommend the other parts of its plan unless the corporate entity is brought into being.

The Corporation will exist to serve the local station but will neither operate it nor control it. Its primary mission will be to extend and improve Public Television programming. Programs financed by the Corporation will be made available to all stations, but each station will decide whether and when it will use the program. We stress the critical importance of having private funds available to the Corporation; such funds should be available at the outset.

3. We recommend that the Corporation support at least two national production centers, and that it be free to contract with independent producers to prepare Public Television programs for educational television stations.

One center now in being is National Educational Television, which should at once be strengthened.
4. We recommend that the Corporation support, by appropriate grants and contracts, the production of Public Television programs by local stations for more-than-local use.

The greatest practical diversity of program production sources is essential to the health of the system. Stations exist which now produce programs of interest outside their own areas, but which are in need of further financial assistance. Other stations should be encouraged to develop comparable talent and capacity.

5. We recommend that the Corporation on appropriate occasions help support local programming by local stations.

These would be low-cost programs prepared to meet the direct needs of the local community.

6. We recommend that the Corporation provide the educational television system as expeditiously as possible with facilities for live interconnection by conventional means, and that it be enabled to benefit from advances in technology as domestic communications satellites are brought into being. The Commission further recommends that Congress act to permit the granting of preferential rates for educational television for the use of interconnection facilities, or to permit their free use, to the extent that this may not be possible under existing law.

The Corporation has the responsibility for the distribution of programs. Public Television can never be a national enterprise until effective interconnection has been provided both in order to distribute programs to educational television stations promptly and economically and to provide for live regional or national broadcasts when the occasion demands. The interconnection of stations should make the best of each community available to all communities.

7. We recommend that the Corporation encourage and support research and development leading to the improvement of programming and program production.

Public Television should be free to experiment and should sponsor research centers where persons of high talent can engage in experimentation. The kind of experimentation once sponsored by the Ford Foundation TV-Radio Workshop is an example of what we are reaching for.

8. We recommend that the Corporation support technical experimentation designed to improve the present television technology.

Intensive research and development could make possible significant improvements in picture quality or savings in frequency spectrum.
9. We recommend that the Corporation undertake to provide means by which technical, artistic, and specialized personnel may be recruited and trained.

The Corporation should sponsor fellowship programs designed to attract talented persons into in-service training programs and into its research centers. In addition, it should provide stipends for senior fellows -- men and women of talent and experience -- to enable them to spend periods of residence at the various centers.

THE COMMISSION PROPOSES ENLARGED FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC TELEVISION

10. We recommend that Congress provide the federal funds required by the Corporation through a manufacturer’s excise tax on television sets (beginning at 2 percent and rising to a ceiling of 5 percent). The revenues should be made available to the Corporation through a trust fund.

In this manner a stable source of financial support would be assured. We would free the Corporation to the highest degree from the annual governmental budgeting and appropriations procedures: the goal we seek is an instrument for the free communication of ideas in a free society.

The excise tax will provide the Corporation with approximately $40 million of federal funds during its first year of operation, rising gradually to a level of $100 million a year. We propose that the rate be raised to 3 percent, bringing in $60 million, after the first year. The Commission intends these revenues to be added to those available from other federal, local, and private sources to be used primarily for the support of programming for Public Television. We recommend that federal agencies continue to make grants to educational television stations for special purposes.

11. We recommend new legislation to enable the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to provide adequate facilities for stations now in existence, to assist in increasing the number of stations to achieve nationwide coverage, to help support the basic operations of all stations, and to enlarge the support of instructional television programming.

The Commission views the responsibility of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare as that of providing the basic facilities and operating funds for a national system of educational television stations. The Corporation, in contrast, will direct its attention to programming and related activities delineated in previous recommendations which are aimed to provide a new kind of Public Television for national and local audiences. The responsibility for instructional television for formal classroom use does not lie within the purview of the Corporation, but rather with state and local educational systems and the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The Commission urges, as an
interim measure, extension and amplification of the Educational Television Facilities Act of 1962, which has been of critical assistance in expanding educational television.

THE COMMISSION PROPOSES CONTINUING STUDY TO IMPROVE INSTRUCTIONAL TELEVISION

12. We recommend that federal, state, local, and private educational agencies sponsor extensive and innovative studies intended to develop better insights into the use of television in formal and informal education.

The Commission believes that the Public Television system it proposes will benefit the content of instructional television. But the Commission also believes that instructional television must be studied in the full context of education, and that further major investments in instructional television must benefit from the discovery of ways in which television can best contribute to the educational process. In addition to universities, nonprofit corporations and the stations themselves, some of the Regional Educational Laboratories contemplated in Title IV of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 might be appropriate agencies to conduct the necessary programs of research and development.

Source: Scanned from the commission's report with permission from the Carnegie Corp. of New York
APPENDIX II
Please answer the following questions

Zip code ____________________________

1. How many members are in your household?
   1) 1
   2) 2
   3) 3
   4) 4
   5) 5

2. Your Gender
   1) Male
   2) Female

3. Age of adults in household (select all that apply)
   1) 18 - 24
   2) 25 - 34
   3) 35 - 44
   4) 45 - 54
   5) 55 - 64
   6) 65 +

4. Ages of children in household (select all that apply)
   a) 0 - 1 year
   b) 1 - 3
   c) 3 - 6
   d) 6 - 8
   e) 9 - 13
   f) 13 - 18

5. Education
   1) Some high school
   2) Completed high school
   3) Some college
   4) College
   5) Graduate school
6. Household income
   1) less than 10,000
   2) 10,001 to 20,000
   3) 20,001 to 30,000
   4) 30,001 to 40,000
   5) 40,001 to 50,000
   6) More than 50,000

7. What time do you normally watch television each week?
   1) 6am – 8am
   2) 8am – 12 noon
   3) 12 noon – 2pm
   4) 2pm – 5pm
   5) 5pm – 7pm
   6) 7pm – 10pm
   7) After 10pm

8. How many hours of television do you routinely watch each week?
   1) Less than 5 hours
   2) 5-9 hours
   3) 10-14 hours
   4) 15-19 hours
   5) 20 or more hours

9. How many television sets are in your household
   A) 1
   B) 2
   C) 3
   D) 4
   E) 5 or more

10. How do you receive your television signal?
    a) cable
    b) satellite
    c) over the air signal (antenna)
    d) other

11. Other technologies in use (select all that apply)
    a) CD player
    b) Home video camera
    c) Premium Cable
    d) VCR
    e) DVD
    f) Web TV
    g) Personal Computer

12. Number of PC’s owned
    a) 1
    b) 2
    c) 3
    d) 4
    e) 5 or more
Please rate the following on a scale of 1 – 5. 5 = Almost always, 4 = Often, 3 = sometimes, 2 = Seldom, and 1 = Almost never.

13. How often do you use a computer for non-work activities? (Please check the response that most closely reflects your opinion.)

1 2 3 4 5

14. How often do you use a computer for activities other than games? (Please check the response that most closely reflects your opinion.)

1 2 3 4 5

15. How often do you visit a site referenced in a TV program? (Please check the response that most closely reflects your opinion).

1 2 3 4 5

16. Which of the following do you watch?

a) Local programs (Please check the response that most closely reflects your opinion).

1 2 3 4 5

b) Children’s programs (Please check the response that most closely reflects your opinion).

1 2 3 4 5

c) Educational programs (Please check the response that most closely reflects your opinion).

1 2 3 4 5

d) Nature programs (Please check the response that most closely reflects your opinion).

1 2 3 4 5

e) Documentaries (Please check the response that most closely reflects your opinion).

1 2 3 4 5
f) History programs (Please check the response that most closely reflects your opinion).
   1 2 3 4 5

g) Science programs (Please check the response that most closely reflects your opinion).
   1 2 3 4 5

17. How frequently is one of your sets tuned into Public Television?
   a) Daily
   b) Weekly
   c) Monthly
   d) Occasionally
   e) Never
   f) Don't Know

18. How frequently do you browse the web and watch TV at the same time?
   a) Daily
   b) Weekly
   c) Monthly
   d) Occasionally
   e) Never

Please rate the following on a scale of 1 – 5. 5 = Strongly agree, 4 = Moderately agree,
   3 = sometimes, 2 = Moderately disagree, and 1 = Strongly disagree.

19. Would you like to see more programs on
   a) local musical events (Please check the response that most closely reflects your opinion).
      1 2 3 4 5

   b) local theatre events (Please check the response that most closely reflects your opinion).
      1 2 3 4 5

   c) local activities (Please check the response that most closely reflects your opinion).
      1 2 3 4 5

   d) local sports (Please check the response that most closely reflects your opinion).
      1 2 3 4 5

   e) local children’s programs (Please check the response that most closely reflects your opinion).
      1 2 3 4 5
20. Which of the following are reasons you might increase your viewing of Public Television (Select all that apply)
   a) Open dialog on important community issues
   b) Had more time
   c) Improved picture quality
   d) Improved programming
   e) More realistic based programming
   f) Satisfied now

21. Have you heard that our country is making a transition to provide a digital television broadcast signal?
   a) yes
   b) no

22. What do you expect digital television to provide you that your current television service does not?
   a) Better picture
   b) Clear pictures
   c) Better sound

23. Have you considered buying a Digital Television set?
   a) yes
   b) no

24. When?
   a) next six months
   b) next year
   c) in the next two years
   d) My next set will be digital
   e) Undecided

25. How much are you willing to pay for a Digital Television set?
   a) $100 - $500
   b) $500 - $1,000
   c) $1,000 - $1,500
   d) $1,500 - $2,000
   e) $2,000 - $3,000
   f) $3,000 or more

26. In order to receive local television stations broadcasting a digital signal you may be required to install an outside antenna. Would you be willing to mount an outside antenna to receive a local station digitally?
   a) yes
   b) no
27. What interests you the most about digital television?
   a) High Definition picture quality
   b) Multiple selection through multi-casting
   c) Improved sound quality
   d) Interactivity
   e) Digital data

28. One of the capabilities of digital broadcasting would be to provide a mixture between broadcasting and digital data. This would allow greater interactivity between instructor and student.

   a) Would you be interested in receiving your GED through Public Television associated with a college or University? (Please check the response that most closely reflects your opinion).
      ___ Most likely
      ___ Likely
      ___ Neutral
      ___ Unlikely
      ___ Most unlikely

   b) Would you be interested in receiving your Associates degree through Public Television associated with a college or University? (Please check the response that most closely reflects your opinion).
      ___ Most likely
      ___ Likely
      ___ Neutral
      ___ Unlikely
      ___ Most unlikely

   c) Would you be interested in receiving your Undergraduate degree through Public Television associated with a college or University? (Please check the response that most closely reflects your opinion).
      ___ Most likely
      ___ Likely
      ___ Neutral
      ___ Unlikely
      ___ Most unlikely

   d) Would you be interested in receiving your Masters Degree through Public Television associated with a college or University? (Please check the response that most closely reflects your opinion).
      ___ Most likely
      ___ Likely
      ___ Neutral
      ___ Unlikely
      ___ Most unlikely

   e) Would you be interested in receiving your Continuing education certificates through Public Television associated with a college or University? (Please check the response that most closely reflects your opinion).
      ___ Most likely
      ___ Likely
      ___ Neutral
      ___ Unlikely
      ___ Most unlikely
f) Would you be interested in receiving tutoring through Public Television associated with a college or University?
   ___ Most likely
   ___ Likely
   ___ Neutral
   ___ Unlikely
   ___ Most unlikely

g) Would you be interested in receiving test preparation (i.e. SAT, ACT, GMAT, GRE) through Public Television associated with a college or University?
   ___ Most likely
   ___ Likely
   ___ Neutral
   ___ Unlikely
   ___ Most unlikely

29. How important is it to have the ability to receive Public Television
   1) Very important
   2) Somewhat important
   3) Not very important
   4) Don’t know

30. Do you financially support Public Television?
   1) Yes
   2) No

31. If you saw programs that appeared to you personally or benefited you, would you financially support Public Television?
   1) Yes
   2) No

32. What Public Television station do you normally watch? __________________________

33. If you financially support Public Television, Why?

34. If you do not financially support Public Television, Why?

35. How would you describe the role of Public Television?
APPENDIX III
WEIU TV Viewer Survey

The WEIU TV Program Research Committee is interested in your family's television viewing. Your responses to this survey are necessary for us to prepare and serve you with future program purchases and schedules. We thank you for your participation by completing this survey or passing it along to a friend.

1. Which Public Broadcasting stations do you watch? (check all that apply)
   _ WEIU TV (Channel 51, Charleston)  _ WILL TV (Channel 12, Champaign)
   _ WSIU TV (Carbondale)  _ WUSI TV (Olney)

2. What time of the day do you normally watch television? (check all that apply)
   _ 6-9am  _ 9am-Noon  _ Noon-4pm  _ 4-7pm  _ 7-10pm  _ After 10pm

3. How many hours of television do you routinely watch each week?
   _ Less than 10  _ 10-19 Hours  _ 20-29 Hours  _ 30-30  _ 40+

4. How do you receive your television signal?
   _ Cable  _ Satellite Dish  _ Antenna/Tower  _ Other

5. Which of the following types of programs do you watch (rate top three, #1 being favorite)?
   _ Local Programs  _ Children's  _ Educational
   _ Nature/Wildlife  _ Outdoor/Sports  _ Travel
   _ Documentaries  _ Music/Concert  _ Science
   _ Instructional/How To's  _ History  _ Other

6. Would you like to see:
   _ controversial community issue programs
   _ local musical events
   _ local sport events
   _ local children's programs
   _ local theatre productions
   _ other (specify)

7. How frequently is one of your television sets tuned to Public Broadcasting/PBS.
   _ Daily  _ Weekly  _ Monthly  _ Occasionally  _ Never  _ Don't Know

8. Which of the following are reasons you might increase your viewing of Public Television
   (select all that apply)?
   _ open dialog on community issues
   _ more realistic based programs
   _ improved picture quality
   _ had more time
   _ improved programming
   _ satisfied now

9. How important is it to you to have the ability to receive Public Television?
   _ very important
   _ somewhat important
   _ not very important
   _ don't know

10. How would you describe the role of Public Television?

11. How many members are in your household?
    _ 1  _ 2  _ 3  _ 4  _ 5/more
    Household Income:
    _ Under $25,000  _ $25-45,000
    _ $45-65,000  _ $65,000/Over

12. What is your age?
    _ 18-24  _ 25-44  _ 45-65  _ Over 65

13. What are the ages of the children in your household (select all that apply)?
    _ 0-5  _ 5-8  _ 9-13  _ 14-18

14. What is your personal status?
    _ employed  _ employed part-time  _ housewife  _ student  _ retired