A Qualitative Study of Interpretive Communities Among LDS Women

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A Qualitative Study of
Interpretive Communities Among LDS Women

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by
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A Qualitative Study of Interpretive Communities Among LDS' Women

Interpretive Communities Among LDS Women

A number of communication theorists have turned to the concept of the interpretive community to explain the nature of media audiences in the context of everyday experience. In the broadest definition, an interpretive community is delineated by the strategies its members employ to interpret media content (Biocca, 1989; Gunter, 1989; Fish, 1980; Lindlof, 1988b; Radway, 1984; Schröder, 1994; Stout, 1993). The concept of the interpretive community is based on the theory of social constructionism, or the theory of the social construction of reality. Social constructionism purports that individuals create their realities through a complex interconnection of communication behaviors in the context of social interaction in everyday life. The use of the theory of social constructionism to explain the interpretive community has been supported by the studies of researchers such as T. R. Lindlof (1988b).

D. A. Stout (1993), drawing on the interpretive community theories of Lindlof and the religious sociological approaches of P. L. Berger (1967, 1969) discovered three interpretive communities among the audience of LDS women who watch television: Traditionals, Independents and Contextuals. For LDS women, the interpretive community is a site of conflict where they must resolve differences between personal strategies for interpreting television and the LDS Church’s
recommendations for interpreting television. Therefore, the interpretive strategies that define Stout’s interpretive communities are primarily conflict resolution strategies. (See Appendix A for a profile of the characteristics of these interpretive communities.) Building on the personal community construct used in the religious sociology (Berger, 1967, 1969; Cornwall, 1987, 1989, 1990), Stout defined his interpretive communities by identifying and describing the divergent strategies LDS women use to resolve this conflict.

After looking at the way LDS women use, and talk about, television in relation to their everyday lives, Stout (1993) concluded that, "Rather than resolving television-related conflicts in predictable, uniform ways, viewers do so within interpretive communities which emphasize different values and have different styles of television talk" (p. 14). For example, Traditionals watch television less, and talk more critically about television. They resolve conflict by adhering more closely than the other interpretive communities to LDS leaders’ traditional recommendations for interpreting television. Contextuals are much like Traditionals in their criticisms of television, but view more often. They resolve conflict by attributing their behaviors to other people or other activities. Independents watch television more than either Traditionals or Contextuals, and speak more favorably of television. According to Stout’s study, they resolve conflict by referencing personal, rather than institutional, aspects of their religiosity. They are more independent than either Traditionals or Contextuals from the LDS Church in their interpretations of television (pp. 93-107).
Social Interaction With Other Communities

K. Schröder (1994), a researcher of interpretive communities, showed through deductive analysis that in order to fully understand the nature of an interpretive community a researcher must transcend the study of the singular community and explore the interpretive community member’s social interaction with other communities. These other communities, said Schröder, include both other interpretive communities and institutional and non-institutional social communities. For LDS women, these other communities may include the interpretive communities of their family and friends. Because Stout’s interpretive communities are comprised of individuals with unique characteristics (they are women who belong to the LDS Church), it is also necessary to look at studies outside the interpretive community that support the need for exploring the social interaction between interpretive community members and other communities. Studies in conflict resolution and religious sociology have also suggested the need to explore social interaction with other communities (Cornwall, 1990; Folger & Jones 1994; Sipes, 1993). This knowledge becomes important in studying a religious interpretive community defined by interpretive strategies that are also conflict resolution strategies.

The Social Semiotic Approach

In her analysis, Schröder (1994) also showed how the social interaction between interpretive community members and other community members can best be analyzed by using "social semiotic" approaches that study the multiple discourses that make up an interpretive community member’s social interaction with other
communities. Although other researchers have suggested moving between a member’s social situations (such as school, home, job, etc.) during the data collection phase to obtain these multiple discourses, Schröder has suggested that multiple discourses can best be obtained through an interview conducted in the natural setting of an interpretive community member’s home. This type of ethnographic methodology, said Schröder, does not preclude the obtainment of pertinent multiple discourses, because multiple discourses become evident as a member talks about their social interaction with other communities.

**Qualitative Analysis**

Using Stout’s (1993) definition of the interpretive communities of LDS women who watch television, the present study follows Schröder’s (1994) suggestion for qualitative analysis using interviews in the natural setting of a participant’s home. It also incorporates principles of ethnography, a qualitative methodology that focuses on studies of micro situations in order to make macro applications to larger groups (an approach Schröder encouraged).

By definition, an ethnographic study brings to it theories or cultural rituals that have been pre-established in the field. The present study brings to it the pre-established interpretive community approaches of Stout (1993) and Schröder (1994) and the cultural rituals (interpretive strategies) that defined Stout’s interpretive communities. Because the present study seeks to expand the understanding of the nature of these strategies, and possibly disclose theories of heuristic value, it demands a method of data analysis that allows for inductive thinking that links interpretive
communities to the possible influences of social interaction. To meet this demand, the present study incorporates grounded theory procedures and techniques, which allows inductive analysis and provides a Conditional Matrix to trace conditional paths between communities. (See Strauss & Corbin, 1990.) N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (1994) said: "Qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter ... [and] deploy[s] a wide range of interconnected methods" (p. 2). Using both ethnography and grounded theory procedures meets qualitative analysis’ requirement for the use of multi-methodological procedures.

Summary and Study Proposal

Stout’s (1993) study established that religious audiences can be sub-divided into interpretive communities by identifying interpretive communities among LDS women who watch television. He also showed that religious interpretive communities can be defined by conflict resolution strategies. The present study seeks, by using ethnography and grounded theory procedures in a qualitative analysis, to explore whether or not interpretive community members’ social interaction with other communities influences their strategies for interpreting television. The present study explores the following questions:

1. Does interpretive community members’ social interaction with other communities influence their strategies for interpreting television?

2. Do members of the same interpretive community engage in social interactions with other communities that produce similar strategies?
3. Do members from different interpretive communities engage in social interactions with other communities that produce dissimilar strategies?

4. Are there other elements that influence interpretive community members' strategies for interpreting television?

**Study Significance**

These questions are significant to interpretive community studies, because they go beyond the immediate interpretive community to explore the social interaction of community members between other communities. Not only have recent studies in interpretive communities suggested the need to explore social interaction, but other studies of mass media communications also continue to explore to what degree social interaction, personal values, and external messages impact the development of attitudes of audiences toward mass media. Such studies in mass media communications, as Stout's study (1993) suggested, have emphasized various ways in which audiences use the mass media in their everyday lives. The exploration of these questions will not only help to further understand the nature of the interpretive community, but will help to further discern the nature of communities in other areas of mass media communication. Understanding the social interactive nature of the interpretive community where conflict resolution strategies become primary strategies for interpreting the media will also help to further explain the nature of interpretive communities where conflict exists, such as in gender and ethnic minority interpretive communities.
CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

The Evolution of the Interpretive Community

From Theories of Direct Effects to Theories of Limited Effects

In the socio-historic scope of mass media research, media effects theories have in general vacillated between direct and limited effects theories. Direct effects theories purport that the media is powerful enough to influence its audiences' behavior, while limited effects theories maintain that audiences will interpret the media based on personal perceptions, needs and values. H. Mendohlson (1989) gave a historical analysis of the evolution of limited effects theories from direct effects theories. In his analysis, Mendohlson said that theories of direct and limited effects emerged as anciently as Plato who taught that communicators have the power to change cognitive perceptions, attitudes and possibly the behavior of their audiences with their messages.

Direct effects theories extended through the theories of 17th and 18th century Europe where Royalists and anti-democrats tried to impose authoritarian rule out of fear of a strong media. Theorists, such as Tonnies, Simmel and Marx perpetuated the theory in their use of the media to influence crowds; and, early stimulus-response behaviorists, such as Wundt and Pavlov used these theories in association experimentation. Traces of the theory existed during the American Industrial Revolution when communication was believed to operate like an input-output system,
penetrating the minds of its audience without their reciprocation.

Before World War II in America, sociologists such as Mead, Cooley, Thomas, and Znaniecki established the foundation for theories of limited effects, changing the focus of communication theories to two-way, horizontal communication, with the receiver being more independent, selective and powerful. It was in 1973, that Elihu Katz stated the opinion, "People bend the media to their needs more readily than the media overpower them" (Katz, Gurevitch, & Haas, 1973, p. 164 as cited in Mendohlson, 1989). Although direct effects theories did not entirely lose their dominating role in the realm of mass media research, they were in some ways preempted by increasing theories of limited effects (also see Littlejohn, 1989, 1992). As communication theorists continued their social phenomenological studies of the media audience, with an emphasis on social interaction, researchers discovered within the scope of media audiences smaller audiences that could be defined and shaped by similar strategies for interpreting media content.

From Single Communities to Multiple Communities

Schroder (1994) said that in everyday life people are members of multiple communities and the exploration of an interpretive community member’s social interaction with these communities is necessary in fully understanding the nature of the interpretive community. Until recently this concept has not been understood in interpretive community studies. Schroder traces the history of the concept of the interpretive community, which was first brought to media studies in J. Radway’s (1984) study of women readers of romance novels, transferred from S. Fish’s book Is
There a Text in This Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities (Fish, 1980). Fish’s concern, said Schröder, was not with multiple meanings of texts, but with "a way of reading, which, if it became accepted, would be, for a time at least, the true one" (Fish, 1980, p. 16 as cited in Schröder, 1994). Fish defined an interpretive community as a social and institutional community, as opposed to a semiotic community, and implied that interpretive communities were like clubs with rules that interpretive community members must follow. Schröder said that although Fish introduced the idea of the sub-community into the concept of the interpretive community, he did not solve the problem that different interpretations arise, not because members belong to secondary sub-communities, but "because they inhabit in different proportions a whole range of interpretive communities" (Schröder, 1994, pp. 338-9).

Social Constructionism

The theoretical framework of the interpretive community is based on the theory of social constructionism (see Lindlof, 1988b). As mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, social constructionism, or the theory of the social construction of reality, suggests that an individual’s social reality is constructed by interconnecting communication behaviors in the context of everyday social interaction (Berger & Luckmann, 1966 as cited in Littlejohn, 1992). A. Schutz (1970) expressed the idea of the social construction of reality as follows:

The world of my daily life is by no means my private world but is from the outset an inter-subjective one, shared with my fellow men, experienced and
interpreted by others: in brief, it is a world common to all of us (p. 163).

Stout (1993) found in his study that the strategies interpretive community members used for interpreting television are influenced by the exchange of messages that take place within "a context of social practice and interpersonal relationships" (p. 6).

**Symbolic Interactionism**

The theory of social constructionism, or the theory of the social construction of reality, takes its impetus from the theory of symbolic interactionism, the theory that purports that communication occurs through a filtering of symbols. (See Neitz, 1990; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). H. Blumer (1972) stated:

The position of symbolic interactionism is that the worlds that exist for human beings and for their groups are composed of objects and that these objects are the product of symbolic interaction. An object is anything that can be indicated .... The nature of an object ... consists of the meaning that it has for the person for whom it is an object. This meaning sets the way in which he sees the object, the way in which he is prepared to act toward it, and the way in which he is ready to talk about it. An object may have a different meaning for different individuals (p. 408).

In the context of the theory of symbolic interactionism, television can be said to be an object, or a symbol for which interpretive community members attribute a particular meaning. According to Stout (1993), the meaning for the symbol television varies from interpretive community to interpretive community. A member’s meaning for television may vary as symbolic interchanges take place.
Conflict Resolution

Conflict Resolution and Symbolic Interaction

The theory of social constructionism, based on symbolic interaction, has not only been used as the theoretical framework for interpretive community studies, but has also been used as the theoretical framework for the study of conflict resolution strategies. H. Cohen (1981) discussed conflict in the context of symbolic interaction and social interaction as follows:

Symbols come from interaction and lead to interaction, and are part of interaction (symbolic interaction). Interactions are exchanges. Symbols make exchanges and are part of exchanges. They are part of exchange processes (p. 169).

Cohen also said, "The conflict perspective in sociology perceives that conflict is a normal part of social exchange processes" (p. 87). Based on Cohen’s ideas, it might be said that the conflict Stout’s interpretive community members experience "is a normal part of social exchange processes" (p. 169) that take place within their own interpretive community and between members of other interpretive communities.

Conflict Resolution and Religious Interpretive Communities

Using M. Cornwall and D. L. Thomas’s (1990) concept of the personal community and the religious philosophies of Berger (1967, 1969), Stout (1993) showed how LDS women experience conflict between the secular, or the "worldview" (see Berger, 1967, 1969) of television and religion’s view of television. Cornwall and Thomas (1990) said that an individual’s concept of religion is reinforced and
influenced by the personal communities of which they are a part. "Personal communities," said Cornwall and Thomas, "are social worlds created by and centered around individuals or families" (p. 230). Cornwall and Thomas's definition of personal community is much like Schröder's (1994) definition of the social community, which influences the interpretive strategies of interpretive community members. Like Schröder, Cornwall and Thomas recognized the social differences between communities and their points of intersection as being significant:

Religious identities are sustained within these personal religious communities and the religion and family interface cannot fully be explored without careful attention to the distinctive impact of these communities apart from the impact of institutional religion (p. 229).

A. Sipes (1993), who draws on the religious philosophies of Berger in her dissertation *Cognitive Dissonance Among Traditional Women: How Mormon Women Resolve Conflict*, discussed the anxiety or conflict LDS women feel when confronted with differences between secular and religious views. Sipes discussed two types of social values: secular and traditional, the first consisting of current movements and ideologies that have not been assimilated into mainstream institutions, and the second consisting of the traditional values passed down historically from parent to child. In her study, Sipes found that most of the conflict the LDS women in her study experienced "came from the difficulty to reconcile internal paradoxes rather than externally imposed situations" (p. iv).

Building upon ideas that closely align with social constructionism, Berger
discussed conflict that exists between the symbols that make up the social realities of the secular world and the social realities of the private religious world, the two being opposite "poles":

The concentration of religious activities and symbols in one institutional sphere, however, *ipso facto* defines the rest of society as "the world," as a profane realm at least relatively removed from the jurisdiction of the sacred. The secularizing potential of this conception could be "contained" as long as long as Christendom, with its sensitive balance of the sacred and the profane, existed as a social reality. With the disintegration of this reality, however, "the world" could all the more rapidly be secularized in that it had already been defined as a realm outside the jurisdiction of the sacred properly speaking (p. 123).

Berger went on to say:

The collapse of the alienated structures of the Christian world-view released movements of critical thought that radically de-alienated and "humanized" social reality (the sociological perspective being one of these movements), an achievement that often enough was bought at the price of severe anomy and existential anxiety (p. 125).

**Conflict Resolution and Social Realities**

J. P. Folger and T. S. Jones (1994) found that conflict in social exchange processes are usually due to the meeting of a triad of differing social realities. (Also, see Freeman et al., 1992; Littlejohn et al., 1987, 1991; and Pearce et al., 1989 for
further reading on social reality theories). The success of an individual's strategy to resolve this conflict, said Folger and Jones, depends on how well they can match or coordinate differing social realities. When a person's strategy does not successfully coordinate differing social realities, conflict remains unresolved: "Mediation, then involves a triad of realities ... and the success or failure of the intervention may depend upon the extent to which the three realities match or coordinate" (p. 69).

Various other theories exist to explain the conflict that arises between differing social realities and the strategies that resolve that conflict. E. T. Hall (1976), a cultural communication theorist, has maintained that each community has its own cultural rhythm. Hall said that communities must learn and practice the other culture's (community's) medium of communication in order to reduce conflict. Littlejohn (1992) classified Hall’s theory of communication as a theory of "uncertainty reduction," and referred to W. Gudykunst (1988) who found like Stout (1993) that different communities reduce certainty, (or resolve conflict) in different ways. For Schröder (1994), the meeting of differing social realities, or the differing cultural rhythms, is the "weaving" or "intersection" of unique systems of codes. The theories of Hall, and Folger and Jones, and Schröder support the theories of social constructionism and symbolic interactionism.

**Social Semiotics**

Schröder (1994) said that in order to understand "the complex, socially situated interpretive processes of everyday life" of interpretive communities, it is necessary to adopt a "social semiotic of the media audience" (p. 339. Also, see
Hodge & Kress, 1988; Jensen, 1991; Schröder, 1988 as cited in Schröder, 1994). A social semiotic, said Schröder (1994), sees culture as being produced from intersecting code systems where the media is read in multiple ways "because each reader/viewer's individual and social meaning potential leads to differentiated perceptions of the media text, as well as to shared ones." These readings originate in macro-social or situation/interaction relations and are "meaning potentials," which trigger the interpretive community member's meaning potential, and in turn are a product of the members' "cumulative and cultural experiences." Each interpretive community member's cumulative cultural experiences are unique, and therefore each member's "meaning resources" are unique. Members share meaning resources with many other people (p. 330).

In semiosis, individuals use codes, or words, as referents for symbols to communicate their attitudes toward a particular symbol. C. S. Peirce (1958), who developed the first theory of signs, defined semiosis as a relationship between a sign, an object (symbol), and a meaning. Schröder (1994) said that the most productive way of conceptualizing individual and cultural meaning processes is one that builds on the work of Peirce (Jensen, 1991; Schröder, in press b as cited in Schröder, 1994), because compared with the dominant Saussurian approach, it: (a) sees signs as components in "situations of use," and (b) it encompasses not only verbal signs, but other signs as well (Peirce, 1982). In other words, said Schröder, the Peircean perspective "conceptualizes the analysis of media signifying processes ... in a communicative context where meanings are only potential until actualized by socially
situated human beings" (Schröder, 1994, p. 344).

Schröder (1994) said that the social semiotic approach to analysis, which focuses on the study of these codes (the style of talk that individuals use to discuss the media), becomes the foundation for understanding interpretive communities. The language individuals use to talk about the media, not in the Saussurian, but in the Peircean sense, becomes the: "Over-arching and heterogeneous symbolic environment individuals live in, and out of which they create their own communicative repertoires through cultural positionings and interactive communities" (p. 345).

Other researchers have also emphasized the study of language. J. Radway (1984) said that one of the major mistakes some interpretive community studies have made in the past has been to ignore "the complexities of sign production or semiosis" (p. 8). Radway also emphasized the study of language in understanding interpretive communities (pp. 186-207). Denzin and Lincoln said that a semiotic analysis "provides a history and context for understanding meaning that is congruent with a symbolic interactionist perspective" (pp. 469-70). Littlejohn et al. (1992) found that in the study of conflict resolution, interpretive research "requires examination of the actual discourse produced" (as cited by Folger & Jones, pp. 68-9). By understanding the way interpretive community members talk about the media, or their styles of talk, researchers can better understand their interpretive strategies and the development of those strategies (Schröder, 1994; Stout, 1993). (See Appendix B for a glossary of theoretical terms.)
Social Interaction

Studies in interpretive communities, television, and conflict resolution strategies have pointed to the need to study other communities when attempting to understand an interpretive community (Folger & Jones, 1994; Lindlof, 1989; Press, 1991; Schröder, 1994; Sipes, 1993). Schröder (1994) probed the transcendental factors that may influence the development of the interpretive community: "There is a whole array of interesting questions concerning media experiences and uses that transcend the single social situation of use, and the single interpretive community" (p. 341). She gave the example of a researcher who wants to study the role of broadcast news and its "social signifying processes" in a certain country. The researcher could only do justice to such a "vast" subject if they were to capture all of the interpersonal and internalized discourses that an individual typically has regarding broadcast news during a single day. (Schröder, 1994, pp. 341-2.) An individual typically communicates with multiple interpretive communities, which may include multiple interpersonal discourses through which an individual makes sense of the media.

Other studies, beside Schröder’s (1994), have suggested the need to explore interpretive community members’ social interaction with other communities. Lindlof (1989) noted that individuals within an interpretive community derive meaning from "an entire range of sources, one of which is (their) social affiliations and reference groups ... in the setting of human activity" (p. 86). A. Press (1991), a researcher of television audiences, found that women talk about television in the context of the
social interactions they have with family and friends. Both Lindlof’s and Press’s study suggested the need to learn more about the social interaction members of an interpretive community have with other communities in their everyday experience, relative to the interpretation of television.

Chapter Summary

Recent studies in interpretive communities, social constructionism, symbolic interactionism, conflict resolution strategies, and religious sociology have suggested that in order to fully understand an interpretive community, one must take a social semiotic approach to analyzing a member’s social interaction with other communities. The present study incorporates these studies and their supporting theories in making such an analysis.

Although Schröder’s (1994) work, and other works in religious philosophy, mass media communication, conflict resolutions strategies, and social reality theory have suggested the need to explore the impact of interpretive community members’ social interaction with other communities, there as yet have been no studies that have applied this concept to the study of interpretive communities. The present study synthesizes an eclectic selection of theories and philosophies to further explore the social interaction patterns that contribute to the conflictive nature of the interpretive communities of LDS women who watch television.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Study Procedures

As discussed in previous chapters, the purpose of the present study is to discover more about how social interaction with other communities contributes to the development of the interpretive strategies that define Stout’s interpretive communities. The methodology in the present study has been selected to direct the researcher in doing this. Using qualitative methodology, which incorporates ethnographic interviews and grounded theory procedures, the present study followed these phases of methodology: (a) sample selection, (b) data collection, and (c) data analysis. (See next page, Figure 1, for a summary of these phases.) The first phase utilizes Schröder’s concept of transcending the immediate interpretive community to study social interaction with other communities. The second phase utilizes grounded theory procedures similar to those used by L. D. Browning (1978), as Stout’s study did, and the grounded theory Conditional Matrix proposed by A. Strauss and J. Corbin (1990). In the sampling phase, the researcher selected a small sample of women who fit the interpretive communities identified by Stout (1993). In the data collection phase, participants were interviewed to determine if interpretive community members’ social interaction with other communities influenced their interpretive strategies for television. In the data analysis phase, the discourse of the participants were analyzed through a social semiotic approach to discover emerging patterns that might show how social interaction with other communities influenced interpretive strategies.

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Figure 1. This Figure outlines the author's synthesis of methodology.

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS: MULTI-METHOD

PRE-PHASE: STUDY FOUNDATION

STOUT'S STUDY

1. Discovery of interpretive communities.

2. Defining these by interpretive strategies that are conflict resolution strategies.

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
\text{PHASE I:} & \text{PHASE II: DATA COLLECTION} & \text{PHASE III: DATA ANALYSIS} \\
\text{SAMPLING} & \text{ETHNOGRAPHIC AND GROUNDED THEORY PROCEDURES} & \text{ETHNOGRAPHIC PROCEDURES PROPOSED BY SCHRÖDER} & \text{GROUND THEOREY PROCEDURES AND JUDGES' PANEL REVIEW} \\
\rightarrow & \rightarrow & \rightarrow & \\
\text{Requires small samples in order to make macro applications from micro applications.} & \text{Interviews small samples of participants in the natural setting of the home. Interviews are semi-structured to allow for the free-flow of conversation. Interview questions concentrate on the social interaction of participants with other communities.} & \text{Lets theory emerge from data. Is an inductive process that allows emergence of categories and new understanding. Follows Open Coding (general) and Axial Coding (specific) procedures to allow the researcher to move from general categories to more specific categories, and to determine relationships between categories and sub-categories. The judges' panel review controls for reliability.} & \\
\end{array}
\]
Phase I: Sample Selection

Relational and Variational Sampling

The sampling methods used in both ethnography and grounded theory procedures are quite similar in that they require small samples (Morse, 1994; Strauss & Corbin, 1990.) In grounded theory procedures and techniques, relational and variational sampling is used to allow for the cross-sectional analysis of categories. The present study chose a small sample of six women from each interpretive community, with some emphasis on variation in age, birthplace, stage in life, etc. Depth was developed through the social semiotic analysis of interview comments on social interaction with other communities.

Pre-Screening and Sample Qualification

Stout (1993) used a survey instrument to categorize his interpretive community members. The present study used this survey (omitting question 14) to pre-screen the participants and select the samples. (See Appendix C for a copy of this survey.)

Phase II: Data Collection

Ethnography

Ethnography, a qualitative cultural analysis, has become used more and more in the study of interpretive communities. In the recent "turn toward" ethnographic methods in interpretive community studies, the focus has shifted from the media to the individual within the audience. Although this turn seems to endanger excluding the media from interpretive community studies, it presents a viable and historically proven means of analysis (Schröder, 1994). Schröder (1994) found that ethnographic,
qualitative analysis adapts well to the study of interpretive communities, because it allows for the study of the cultures of the individuals who make up those communities.

In studying the interpretive community, Radway (1988) maintained that ethnographic, qualitative analysis is useful because it demands "the social is always actively constructed by living subjects" (p. 373, as cited in Schröder, 1994, p. 340). B. Gunter (1989), an independent broadcasting authority in London, England maintained that a study of an interpretive community requires looking "beyond standard parameters of classifying individuals to discover the socio-cultural reference groups that have the most significant mediating influence on media interpretations" (p. 121).

The Interview

Schröder (1994) said that neither situated analysis (going to the various places an individual inhabits), nor focus group analysis, is as beneficial as interviewing the participants in the natural setting of the home. The first, she said, tries to build discourses into the interview, and the second fails to capture situated social interaction because it brings together unrelated individuals. As mentioned earlier, interviewing the participant in the home, said Schröder, "best does justice to the whole array of cultural discourses that the individual inhabits, for the simple reason that it does not try to build any of them into the interview situation" (p. 341). Such a research design does not prohibit the researcher from exploring the multiple socio-cultural discourses that make up an individual’s reading of the media (ibid.). Other researchers have also
suggested the use of the interview (Biocca, 1989; Morse, 1994; Radway, 1984).

The present study utilized the unstructured, open-ended interview format, and moved from a general set of specific questions to an unstructured interview format. Stout (1993) provided a section in his survey to ascertain the social interaction LDS women have with other communities in their discussions of television. The results of this section obtained during the sample selection phase were used as a starting point. (See Appendix C, question 18.)

The interview in the present study lasted for 30 minutes to 1 hour and took place whenever possible in the natural setting of the home (see Morse, 1994; Schröder, 1994). The participants were told that they were being interviewed, that the interviews were being transcribed, but confidential. (See Morse, 1994, pp. 309-10. Also, see Appendix D for a copy of the interview questions.)

Phase III: Data Analysis

Grounded Theory

Strauss and Corbin (1990) said the following of grounded theory procedures: "A grounded theory is one that is inductively derived from the study of the phenomenon it represents .... One begins with an area of study and what is relevant to that area is allowed to emerge" (p. 23).

The present study used grounded theory procedure coding procedures. It first used Open Coding procedures, which emphasizes the discovery of general categories, and then Axial Coding, which emphasizes the discovery of specific categories. This process of categorizing allowed theory to emerge from general theory to specific
theory. The study also used the Conditional Matrix proposed by Strauss and Corbin, which allowed the induction of theory by tracing conditional paths through levels of communities.

**Coding, Stripping, Sorting and Categorizing**

After the interviews were transcribed, each interview was given a code. Statements were stripped and sorted. The data analysis phase of the present study extrapolated categories from interview data and looked for emerging patterns that arose from those categories. Although Browning (1978) used grounded theory procedures to obtain field research data, and also analyzed nonverbal behavior, in keeping with the social semiotic method of analysis suggested by Schröder (1994) and Radway (1984), the present study limited its analysis to statements. The unit of an analysis, per Browning, was "the completeness of the thought" verbalized by the individual. Comments were coded to correspond with an interview and placed on a table, sorted first by the researcher and then by two independent panels of judges. The first panel consisted of three women and one man, and the second panel consisted of two women and one man.

In qualitative research, various methods have been suggested for sorting and categorizing information. Most have included some basic steps that allowed the researcher to make general connections between the data and form logical conclusions. Grounded theory procedures for data analysis in the present study were supported by the research methods suggested by Browning (1978), M. Ely et. al. (1991), C. Glesne and A. Peshkin (1992), J. Morse (1994), C. K. Riessman (1994),
A. Strauss (1987), Strauss and Corbin (1990), and the researchers they cite. Their suggestions for methodology were utilized in the present study to develop the following, coding, stripping, sorting, categorizing procedures:

1. The interviews were transcribed

2. Each interview was placed into its group (Traditional, Independent, or Contextual).

3. Each interview was coded according to its group. Traditionals were given the letter "T," Independents were given the letter "I," and Contextuals were given the letter "C." In each group the interviews were placed in order and given a second letter. For example, the first interview in the Traditional group was labeled "TA," the second interview in the Traditional group was labeled "TB," etc. The first interview in the Independent group was labeled "IA," and the second interview in the Independent group was labeled "IB," etc.

3. Each question and comment given by the interviewer and each response and comment given by the participant was given a code. Each comment for the interviewer and the participant were given a code using the interview code (e.g. "TA," "TB," etc.), and the comment number. The codes for questions and comments made by the interviewer were preceded by "Q," such that a code for the first question or comment made by the interviewer during interview "TA" was "QTA1." The codes for responses and comments made by the participant were preceded by "A," such that a code for the response or comment made for the first question during interview "TA" was "ATA1."
4. The coded questions, responses, and comments (the phrase comments will be used from hereon) were cut into strips.

5. The comments were sorted into groups (Traditionals, Independents, Contextuals).

6. The researcher read through the comments in their groups.

7. The comments were shuffled within their groups. They were read through again in their groups. The researcher looked for styles of talk and dimensions that seemed relevant to certain words or phrases that called up comparative cases (see Strauss, 1987).

8. The comments were sorted into categories according to these terms and dimensions. The researcher let the information emerge. A non-descriptive category was included.

9. Categories were labeled, and comments were paper clipped according to categories for each group.

10. Two panels of judges--the first consisting of three women and one man, and the second consisting of two women and one man--looked at the categories in their respective groups (Traditionals, Independents, Contextuals) in a closed discussion. A judges’ script was used, and the discussions were recorded and transcribe for further analysis. (See Appendix E for a copy of the judges’ panel script.)

11. After transcribing the recorded panel discussion, the researcher re-evaluated the categories, looking for fit, additional ways to group the information,
and additional ways to name the categories.

12. The categories were finalized.

13. The findings were summarize for each group and given a basic summary.

(See Chapters IV and V.)

The Conditional Matrix

Using the Conditional Matrix

Strauss and Corbin (1990) proposed a Conditional Matrix, a "transactional system" (see next page, Figure 2) that traces processes in the "interactive nature of events." In grounded theory procedures, process is the "linking of sequences of action/interaction as they pertain to the management of, control over, or response to, a phenomenon" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 143). Some of the main properties of a transactional system are (a) interactive and interrelated levels of conditions, (b) the phenomenon under investigation, (c) action/interaction, and (d) temporality. (See Strauss & Corbin, 1990, pp. 143, 160-1.) The present study makes the following applications to Conditional Matrix:

Condition: the conflict that arises when interpretive community members meet with other communities that have differing interpretive strategies.

Phenomenon: the interpretive strategies that define Stout's interpretive communities.

Action/interaction: social interaction.

Temporality: the time period over which an interpretive community member talks about television with others.
The present study utilized the following levels:

1. **Community level (cultural positionings):** includes culture, values, philosophies, and history as they pertain to the community. Each community has its own demographic features.

4. **Organization and institutional level (the larger audience of LDS women who watch television):** these has its own structure, rules, problems, history.

5. **Sub-organizational, sub-institutional level (the interpretive community):** includes the peculiar features of a sub-location, (or the interpretive community) within a larger location (the larger audience), where the present study takes place.

6. **Collective, group, and individual level (the social communities):** includes biographies, philosophies, knowledge, and experiences of persons and families, as well as those of various groups (special interest, professional, and scientific).

7. **Interactional level (social interaction):** where interpretive community members do things with respect to the phenomenon (the nature of the interpretive community, or the nature of those interpretive strategies that define them). This is where interactional processes (like the discussion of television), and action processes (like the use of television) is carried out to respond to the phenomenon.

**Figure 2.** This Figure is an adaptation of Strauss and Corbin’s Conditional Matrix (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 163). It has been scaled to fit the parameters of the present study.
The Conditional Matrix "denotes a complex web of interrelated conditions, action/interaction, and consequences that pertain to a given phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 161.)

The Representation of the Conditional Matrix

The Conditional Matrix itself is represented as a set of circles, each circle corresponding to a different social dimension, the outer ring representing the dimension where "conditional features" are most distant from the action/interaction sequence, and the inner ring representing the dimension where the conditional feature is closest to the sequence. These circles may represent communities, sub-communities and condition levels. According to Strauss and Corbin (1990), one operationalizes the Conditional Matrix by tracing its conditional paths. This involves tracing an event either from the level of action/interaction through the conditional levels, or vice versa, to determine the relationship between the action/interaction and the conditional levels. It is relevant to explore all levels of the Conditional Matrix, because individuals have values and attitudes that relate to these levels.

In the present study the phenomenon (the nature of the interpretive communities, or the nature of the interpretive strategies that defined the interpretive communities), stood in conditional relationship to the levels above and below it, or in other words the phenomenon stood in conditional relationship to the communities that surrounded it. The social interaction links that connect the interpretive community with other communities were studied by analyzing the links that connect the levels of the Conditional Matrix.
Social Semiotics

According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994) symbolic interactionism and semiosis are interconnected. As mentioned in Chapter II of this thesis, Schröder (1994) suggested a social semiotic approach to analyzing data in interpretive community studies. This entails the analysis of the language people use to describe the media. By looking at the way members talked about their social interaction with other communities in relation to their interpretive strategies, the researcher discovered emerging patterns that gave greater insight into the development of these strategies.

Intervening Conditions and Controls

Author’s Bias

Transcription and Judges’ Panel

It is agreed by sociologists that the interpretation of interview data is highly problematic at times because of the difficulty in removing the author’s biases. (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Transcribing the interview helped to ensure objectivity. Bias was further prevented by using two independent panels of judges to help analyze the data. (See Table 1 for a profile of the judges.)

Closed Communication

Developing Reciprocity

Traditional methods encourage an interviewer never to develop a real conversation with the participant (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 371). However, other methods have shown that it is necessary for an interviewer to maintain enough reciprocity through honesty and intimacy with the participant to prevent closed
conversation and to facilitate openness. Morse (1994) showed how participants are more willing to respond when there is reciprocity. There should always be a shift between the interviewer and the participant to minimize status differences, and hierarchy and to emphasize the human side of the interviewer (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 370). The researcher was able to facilitate open communication through reciprocity.

**Developing Self Presentation**

One of the critical preparations for the interview is selecting self presentation, for self presentation influences the answers of the participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 367). The interviewer assumed a relaxed presentation to further communication.

**Addressing Gender Issues**

Occasionally, problems can arise because of the sex of the interviewer (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Historically, women have been considered better suited to interviewing (Morse, 1994). The female gender of the interviewer in the present study probably provided greater facilitation of openness and communication with the women participants.

**Limited Budget: Using Applied Research Techniques**

Schröder (1994) suggested conducting multiple interviews for each participant. However, according to D. M. Fetterman (1989), when budgeting and time limitation prevent extended analysis, applied research techniques can allow a sufficient scope of analysis. Applied research techniques dictate concentrating on a specific area of study
within a limited period of time. The present study followed applied research techniques in this sense. Limitations are discussed in Chapter V under "Study Limitations."

**Similar Geographic Location: Using it as a Study Variable**

Many of the participants were neighbors and/or attended the same ward (church group). Although in some studies this may have negatively affected the results, in the present study it provided additional insight into unexplored variables. Cornwall (1989) found that peer ties in religious groups tend to have significant impact on religious behavior. Because some participants in the present study appeared to be influenced in their attitudes toward television by each other, it opened doors for further understanding. (See Appendix F for a demographic biography of each participant.)
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Chapter Overview

This chapter gives the results of the data analysis relevant to the research questions of the present study. It (a) gives an overview of the procedures followed, (b) discusses the results of the judges’ panel discussions, and (c) gives the combined results of the researcher and the judges’ analysis by answering the research questions. The main purpose of this chapter is not to give an in-depth analysis, but to identify social interaction patterns that emerged from the data analysis phase of the present study. Chapter V goes into a detailed discussion of these social interaction patterns and offers suggestions for future studies.

Procedures Followed

After analyzing 135 pages of transcribed interview data and 26 pages of transcribed judges’ panel data, the present study explored comments made by interpretive community members that reflected patterns of social interaction between interpretive community members and other communities. The researcher followed the procedures outlined in Chapter III of the present study. Categories were ascertained that helped the researcher to answer the research questions (which focused on social interaction) of the present study and further explore the nature of Stout’s interpretive communities.

The categories and sub-categories discovered during coding were used during data analysis only as a framework for the researcher to explore the social interaction
patterns of interpretive community members. For example, the category of Social Interaction was used to look at the social interaction patterns of interpretive communities and determine what type of influence these social interaction patterns might have had on the development of interpretive strategies. The categories of Television has Changed Over Time and Religious Associations were used in looking at elements other than social interaction that influence or contribute to the understanding of the interpretive strategies of community members. The researcher used the sub-categories of Collective Other Community, Extended Family Community and Immediate Family Community to look in detail at the social interaction patterns of interpretive communities relative to these communities. (See Tables 2-7 for a list and description of these general categories and sub-categories, as well as other categories that are not mentioned in this chapter.)

The Results of the Judges’ Discussions

As a result of Session I, the researcher and the judges noted that many of the comments that were categorized in Social Interaction could also be categorized in Personal Views and vice versa. Perhaps this suggests that interpretive community members’ strategies are a complex interweaving of personal views and the influences of social interaction with other communities. This finding supports Stout’s finding that "rather than resolving television-related conflicts in predictable, uniform ways, viewers do so within interpretive communities which emphasize different values and have different styles of television talk" (Stout, 1993, p. 14).

The judges disagreed with the researcher on the categorizing of a few of the
participant's comments. The codes of these comments were read into the recorder and the comments were later reassigned to different categories according to the panel's suggestion and in line with the focus of the present study. The judges and the researcher also felt that numerous categories could be made from the comments of the participants. The final selected categories are those that reflect the decisions of the researcher and the judges'. (See Appendix G for an outline of the judges' panel discussions.)

**Traditionals**

The consensus of the judges' panel was that Traditionals, while they hold strict views on television viewing in their home, appear to be "ambivalent" or "wishy washy" in how they go about trying to control television viewing standards in their home. Overall, they seemed more difficult than the other groups to assess. One of the conversations about Traditionals that took place between two of the judges went as follows:

"I don't know what to write about this group."

"I had them last time .... They were hard to pinpoint."

Traditionals were also seen by the judges' panel to be more negative toward television, and appeared to have strict standards. (Susan said she believes that she and her husband must always "be on top" of their children to see that they are watching the right amount of television and the right programs. Anne said that not only does she restrict her children from seeing "R-rated" movies, but she also restricts "PG" and "PG-13" movies.) The judges found that Traditionals use television
more as a past time after other work is done, to relax or spend time with families.

**Independents**

The consensus of the judges’ panel was that Independents are more autonomous. One of the judges commented: "I think they ... were more independent thinkers. They were not influenced by outsiders as much as by their parents and brothers and sisters."

Another commented:

"This group seems to just take life as it comes .... It’s (television’s) there and that’s what they do. They don’t really plan it like this other group (Contextuals) who seem to be a lot more structured and goal-oriented .... These people make it through in spite of it all .... These people really do not set standards."

The judges also found that the parents of Independents really had not set standards for television viewing as they were growing up. (Cheryl said adamantly that there were no standards for viewing television in her home growing up, and that her family members are all "media junkies." Carol said her mother left her and her siblings alone to watch television, and it was a "free for all."

**Contextuals**

Contextuals, like Traditionals, were seen to hold strict standards for viewing television, but were still seen as being able to use television in a positive way after evaluating all of its aspects. Contextuals were also seen as conservative television watchers.
General Comments on Interpretive Communities

The judges felt that each of the groups could be differentiated more by their attitudes toward, and their use of, television more than their age. So, while one interpretive community may have included more participants from a particular age range, in general, this did not overtly affect the outcome of the study.

The Results of the Researcher’s Analysis and the Judges’ Discussions

The following pages offer summaries of the combined results of the researcher’s analysis and the judges’ discussions. Deeper descriptions of the social interaction patterns can be found in Chapter V. The results in this chapter reflect dominant themes found in the sorting stage, rather than offer quantitative statistics. These results reflect the dynamic and unfixed nature of these interpretive communities, a topic that is further discussed in Chapter V. Narratives are provided at the beginning of this section to show to what degree these themes dominate the data.

Narratives: Traditionals

Anne

Biography

Anne was primarily raised in England. She is 52 years old, married with six children. She was married in the LDS temple. She is currently unemployed and works as a full-time homemaker. She has 1 year of college education. Her husband earns $50,000 or more a year.
Summary

Anne grew up in England and didn't have a television until she was 10 years old. Growing up, Anne and her family enjoyed watching musicals and political events together, but never really spent a lot of time around the television. Her parents talked about how marvelous it was that you could see an event that was around the world. Neither of her parents ever spoke negatively of television, because there was nothing negative on television at that time. Television was just a sort of entertainment. Now her parents, however, "watch everything." Anne said, she is "so conservative" and her family are liberal to the point that "anything goes." Her parents' attitude toward television, said Anne, because it is so different from hers, doesn't influence her in the least, because she just doesn't watch, wouldn't "even dream of watching what they watch."

Anne's home life was "not religious at all." Her mother's attitudes was that religion was okay for other people, but not for them. She remembers talking to her mom about where dead people go, and her mother would say, "I don't know. I don't think anybody knows, because nobody's ever come back to tell us." Anne said that never having religion in her home did not stop her from wanting to know about it. Her parents lack of religious beliefs did not influence her decisions. She was guided, rather, by a personal desire to know about religion. When Anne heard the LDS "gospel," she just "soaked it all up." Anne now measures her parents lack of religiosity against her own religiosity. She said, "It's a good yardstick, because whenever I visit them I can see how far I've come just by how much more
conservative I am than they are. I think, 'Wow. I must be getting somewhere.'"

Anne inherited, if not a sense of personal or institutional religiosity from her parents, a deep sense of independence from her father who thinks he's the only one who knows what is right. She said, "I am a lot like my dad in the fact that I have a lot of very definite ideas, but I also can give and take, which my dad can't. I'm not so adamant that my mind can't be changed."

Today, Anne emphasizes family unity in her values for television: "I'd like to think that my kids will grow up and we'll all have the same standards and all be able to talk about the same things, and we won't be like, for example when I visit with my folks." Anne and her husband have similar strategies for interpreting television, which she emphasizes in her use of "we" instead of "I" in talking about attitudes toward television. She said, "We're pretty much together on how we feel about things and so if he says that something isn't good, I may be influenced by it one way or the other." She and her husband "give mutual consent" to their children for what they watch on television.

Anne feels that violence on television has a negative effect on children. She also feels that her children do not influence her attitudes toward television, because they are not "on the same wave length." They may recommend a show that has good values, however, and she will watch it while she does laundry or something. She and her granddaughter use television as a source of "interaction," and Anne believes this influences her.

Anne said she listens to LDS Church leaders about television viewing
standards, and they influence her a lot. However, she and her husband go beyond what Church leaders say to provide additional standards for their family. She said, "Since my husband and I both have the same standards, we decide if it's good or if it isn't. Like the Church leaders say you don't see 'R-rated' movies, and we have a tendency to go further and say some 'PG' are awful .... I would say that the church leaders influence us and then my husband and I would set standards and say, 'Even this isn't good enough for us,' and we would turn the television off and I still do."

Anne also emphasizes keeping a good "spirit" in her home through screening negative television. One time she went down stairs and found her returned-missionary son and his friends watching a movie that conflicted with her standards. She told him he was bringing a bad "spirit" into their home:

I told him once before there's a certain spirit that we have in the home and an atmosphere that we like to keep, a good atmosphere. It might be stormy outside but we always like to see that it's peaceful inside. We don't like stormy atmospheres and we don't like a bad spirit to be in the home and I feel--I very, very strongly feel, and so does my husband--that television can bring into the home a real nasty spirit or a spirit of contention, a spirit of evil, or just depending on what you watch .... We just talk about not defiling the spirit of the home.

Anne doesn't really talk to her friends about television. However, when she goes to Relief Society she and the people she work with there might say, "Did you see this terrible thing that happened? Did you see this wonderful thing that
happened?" She and her friends don’t talk about television on a regular basis.

Margaret

Biography

Margaret was primarily raised in Idaho. She is 47 years old, married with nine children. She was married in the LDS temple. She is currently unemployed and works as a full-time homemaker. She has three years of college education. Her husband earns between $30,000 and $49,000 a year.

Summary

Margaret came from a large, traditionally religious family. Her parents were active in the LDS Church and were basically institutionally religious, although they did not have family prayer as much as she would have liked. She feels this was probably because they had too much television in her home. Margaret’s mother was president of one of the main church auxiliaries, and her grandparents attended her same ward (church group).

Margaret said there was a lot of social interaction in her home growing up, and she was encouraged to develop her talents and do well. Her mother was a full-time homemaker like she is now. She said they "had a lot of happiness in the home." Like Anne, Margaret doesn’t remember her parents having anything negative to say about television.

Margaret’s mother was widowed and alone for twenty-six years and made television her source of social interaction. She said, "She watched several shows regularly on a regular basis. She would read about the stars that play on them. She
was living her life, in my opinion, vicariously through the television. Since she remarried last May, she has hardly watched television at all, because she has someone to share her life with that's very active and they go and do things and see things and participate. And I think it's a much, much healthier situation." Rather than ignoring her mother's television behaviors Margaret took opportunities to persuade her to do other things with her time. She said, "I would say to her, 'You know, are you sure .... Do you have to watch this?' When she came to visit, I would try to say, 'Are there other things you would like to do with your time?' and she was quite defensive about it." Margaret's siblings are divided in the way they feel about television. One brother finding that television is a waste of time for he and his family (She said he's like her.), and her other brother doesn't really care about how much or what he and his family watch on television.

Margaret emphasizes family unity in her values for television, even though she and her husband feel differently about television. Margaret's husband "loves" television and doesn't think there's anything wrong with it, and she thinks it's a waste of time. He's not as particular as Margaret is about what he watches, and doesn't see the negative side of television. She thinks this is because he has been exposed to a lot more things than she has. She grew up with too much television, and he grew up with no television, said Margaret. Although Margaret doesn't believe as her husband does about television, she has come to recognize it's place in his life and how he has the ability to relate with other people more than she does on certain issues because he watches television. In the past, Margaret resented that her husband and her sons
watch so much television. She does not resent this as much now, because she has come to recognize it as their source of relaxation.

Even though Margaret feels that television is a waste of time, if she wants to be close to her husband or a child, she will sit down and watch for a while: "I occasionally watch something. If I just want to go and sit down on the couch and be close to him (my husband) and visit with him for a while, I may watch whatever he has on. And, the same with the children." If Anne wants to watch a program with some of her children that others do not like, she will go to another television.

Margaret uses "we" and not "I" to emphasize that she and her husband set standards together for their children's television viewing in their home. Margaret and her husband pre-defined their standards in her home and will let their children know if they feel they might be watching a "distasteful" program. Their standards for their younger children are stricter than their standards for their older children, and Margaret limits and controls the television viewing of her youngest daughter. She and her husband emphasize a sense of work ethics in their standards:

We have a standard, which is not particularly observed anymore as our children have gotten older. Our standard has been for years that you don't watch television without permission. So, theoretically they are suppose to have permission from either me or my husband before they watch television. And basically, it would be what they wanted to watch, but obviously that would have to do with whether their work was done, whether their practicing on the piano was done, whether they had homework to do. If their homework is done
and they've done their chores around the house and if practicing, or whatever, then generally speaking the answer would be 'yes.'

Margaret dislikes having the television on in the home on Sunday, but said she "lost on that one," because "when you live in a family with a lot of people you kind of have to go along with the majority."

Margaret adamantly states that the women she chooses to associate with have the same views toward television as she does. Margaret talks with her friends "about the negative things that are on TV." They discuss how men have come to use sports as a religion, even to the point of watching it on Sunday. Margaret believes that those who believe as she does about television reinforce her opinions. More than listening to others, however, she reads conservative newspapers. She knows that certain programs are bad, not because she has seen them, but because she has read about them: "I read reviews and subscribe to some conservative newsletters and so on, and so I have some very negative views toward NYPD. And, I’ve never watched it, so I can’t tell from first-hand experience that it’s bad. I just know the things I have read about it are very negative and made me not want to watch it."

Heather

Biography

Heather was not raised in one location, because her father was in the navy. She spent a lot of time in Japan while she was growing up. She is 39 years old, married with four children. She was first married civilly and then in the LDS temple. She is currently unemployed and works as a full-time homemaker. She has three years
of college education. Her husband earns $50,000 or more a year.

Summary

Heather was raised in the military and traveled a lot, and so she was limited in the television she could watch. However, she remembers passing judgement on some of the programs her mother and her grandmother used to watch: "I can remember my mom talking about how my brother would come home from kindergarten and he really liked the Dating Game. This little five year old really liked the Dating Game and he and my mom would sit and have lunch and watch the Dating Game together, which just seems really funny to me." She also remembers her grandmother watching As the World Turns, and never saw what her grandmother saw in that program.

Heather’s parents monitored the amount of television she watched and told her not to sit too close because of the radiation; but they never monitored the content of the program. They did, however, have moral standards for rock music and she feels this might have influenced her. Heather feels that the fact that television was limited to her as she was growing up--either because of her travel or because she chose other interests--influences her now to limit her television.

Heather’s parents were never actively institutionally nor personally religious until later in life. Heather does not even see television as being related to religion, because television represents such different values than her religious values.

Heather’s parents, today, don’t talk about television, she said, they argue: "They argue about it, but they don’t talk about it. There’s no common ground. They watch the news, but then my mom will make a comment and my dad will say, ‘Shhh
I can't hear.' So they argue about the TV. It’s not talk. It’s a bond of contention with them." Her father believes that her mother’s television watching is a waste of time. He calls the talk shows she watches "toxic talk shows." Her parents will try to get her to take sides in their arguments. Heather said she is neither like one nor the other, but somewhere in "between."

Heather’s mother, who is an Independent, and was also interviewed in the present study, often calls Heather and talk to her about her television shows, which Heather tries to ignore.

In her home, today, Heather said she’s "the TV master" and that she "controls" everything in her home, including the remote control. Like Margaret’s husband, Heather’s husband will watch "whatever is on." Heather said he even continues to watch when the television’s on mute.

Although Heather said she is the TV master, like Anne and Margaret, she emphasized that she and her husband set standards for television viewing in their home together by using "we" rather than "I" when she talked about these standards. She and her husband have one rule that when anyone comes over, even relatives, the television goes off, because it can "inhibit relationships." Heather said that she and her husband have definite standards for their children, and she imposes the same standards on herself as she does on their children. They don’t watch anything with foul language, nudity, extreme violence, or sexual situations:

So we monitor what they watch and what we watch because we’re susceptible to it too. I don’t know why everybody thinks there is this one standard for
adults and another one for kids. Because it’s as hard to sweep garbage out of our minds as it is to sweep it out of kids’ minds. So if I don’t have it for them why should I have it for me? This is my guiding principle: ‘If it’s not good for me then it’s not good for them and if it’s not good for them then probably it’s not good for me.’ That’s kind of the motto we go by I guess.

Heather does say that she will sometimes use programs with foul language to teach her children that foul language is bad. She and her family watch television on Sunday more than any other day as a family.

Heather and her friend talk about "how bad TV is" and how even some LDS families don’t have good standards for watching television. She, herself, uses a personal sense of inward moral right and wrong to direct her standards for television viewing; and although she will listen to others, she reserves the right to judge for herself. She recognizes even in the friends she trusts a tendency to watch too much television. She does find that she and her friends have more similarities in their interpretive strategies than she does with her parents.

Heather, like Margaret, listens to reviewers, but whereas Margaret will rely solely on what reviewers say, Heather chooses to make personal value judgements, and expresses a sense of independence in her decisions on television viewing: "The bottom line is you. Nobody can make you watch or read or do anything that you don’t fundamentally want to do .... I reserve the right to judge that myself. Just because they say it, doesn’t mean it is a good show. Or good for my family. You can have different standards." Heather finds that television has little "redeeming value."
Mary

Biography

Mary was primarily raised in Wyoming. She is 82 years old, married with 13 children. Six of her children survived birth. She was married in the LDS temple. She is currently unemployed and works as a full-time homemaker. She and her husband collect less than $9,999 a year in social security.

Summary

Mary was raised without a television, but a strong sense of traditional values, including traditional work ethics. She said her mother was a naturally born psychologist when it came to getting her children to work:

She made work sound fun. We loved to work because she made it such a fun thing, such a great thing that .... And, so very early she started me out to washing dishes at three years old. At five years old I was helping with the ironing, and by the time I was five I was able to make a cake by myself, make the cereal, to stir the gravy, to do a lot of things in the cooking business .... My mother did lots of entertaining and she liked to have her silverware shiny. So she would sit me on a stool by her kitchen cabinet, and give me a dish of soda and a little rag, and I would polish in the little crevices, and I’d hold it up and I’d say, ‘Boy it will be a miracle if I get this one shiny, Mama.” Then I would work and work and work ,and then I’d be so happy if I’d get it all shiny. This is the way she did. Work was a pleasure.

Although Mary’s family was not strictly institutionally religious, they
emphasized strong moral values. Mary developed a strong sense of independence in her own religious values:

In those days scripture reading was not stressed, although we had many, many religious books in our library, and I had access to them, and those were my favorite books. And I loved to read the Bible and the Book of Mormon and the doctor books. My mother would never allow us to read "True Stories" or any of the literature of that type. She was very selective of the literature we read. We had family prayer when I was little mostly. She taught me to pray. We were taught to pray by kneeling by her knees, and at a very young age. I don’t remember how young I was, but when I was three years old we moved into the big house and my Aunt was helping me say my prayers and she was having me repeat that little one, "Now I lay me down to sleep," and mama was in the other room’, and she said, "Ida, she knows how to say her prayers by herself. She don’t need that." So evidently I had learned to pray at a very, very early age .... My dad was the most Christlike person I have ever known in my life. I don’t think he ever came into conflict with one of his children before we were married or after we were married .... But he was not very active in the Church except for his younger years, in his later years he managed the creamery and the barbershop. He would get up at four in the morning, churn the butter, and when he would get through with that he would barber sometimes ‘til 2:00 in the morning.

Mary believes that the moral standards she grew up with influenced the
attitudes she has toward television now:

I didn’t like anything that wasn’t up lifting or that wasn’t morally clean or anything like that. I grew up with those attitudes. My mother never allowed even slang. She couldn’t stand slang. She couldn’t stand to hear a dirty joke or allusion to anything that was sexual, you know. Those things I learned were very, very sacred. And so swearing was never allowed in our home. None of us grew up with swearing.

Mary doesn’t remember her parents saying anything bad about other media, such as the radio. In fact, her father bought the first radio in their town. Her own children never knew television until after most of them were married. When television did come about, her mother liked soap operas, but her father never had time to watch television and emphasized doing other things.

Mary chooses to socially interact primarily with her husband and her grown children, who are all daughters. She talks about interpretive strategies in terms of how she and her husband view television, using the word "we" as opposed to "I," as most of the other Traditionals do: "We are pretty much agreed on what we like together. Except the sports. He enjoys the sports and I don’t. We don’t like the modern music, the rock and roll music or whatever you want to call it. And we don’t like shows that are immoral or risque. We don’t like that type of thing." She also emphasized that she and her daughters have the same values for television, "All of my daughters pretty well agree on the things that we like. We like the cultured things, the good things." Mary, like most Traditionals feels her "standards are pretty well grounded."
Narratives: Independents

Jean

Biography

Jean was primarily raised in Idaho. She is 64 years old, married with four children. She was first married civilly and then in the LDS temple. She is currently unemployed and works as a full-time homemaker. She has six years of college education. Her husband earns between $30,000 and $49,999 a year.

Summary

When Jean was growing up there was no television, but when it did come (after she was married), she was excited about it like everyone else. Jean’s father did not belong to any religious denomination when she was young, and her mother was not an active member of the LDS Church; but her parents did have definite standards and values. These standards and values, she said, influence her standards today. However, she has also distanced herself from her parents’ standards and replaced them with her own: "And as I have matured my own standards and values have grown and developed and perhaps replaced theirs; but theirs were the foundation upon which mine began." Jean was baptized into the LDS Church at the age of 16.

Jean adamantly said that her husband does not control what is watched on television. Both she and her husband enjoy television, but have different programs they like to watch. Jean enjoys television, because it’s relaxing: "By and large I enjoy television."

Jean’s children, who are grown, have different views on television, which
doesn’t seem to bother her. When her children were growing up, Jean set standards for them as she saw the negative side of television evolve. She said she found that after having television in her home for awhile, she began to see some programs that she did not want to have her children watch. Jean doesn’t mention the influence of Church leaders on this decision.

Jean and her husband never really pre-defined their standards for television viewing like Traditionals. Their standards just seemed to evolve: "It was kind of as things came along you began to think, ‘Oh, well, maybe ... maybe not.’" For Jean and her husband, television is a natural part of a child’s world and should be accepted as such. She said,

"Television? Oh it’s a part of the world and I think children have to be acquainted with it because they are going to grow up in this world. I think there are people who protect their children from television and protect them from any kind of bad literature, and protect them from anything else out there in the world, and children grow up and, my goodness, it’s a rough world out there. I think children have to be taught how to evaluate right from the time they start growing up and that doesn’t mean I think they should be allowed to watch anything that comes over TV .... I think they are just much better prepared to live in this world if they have learned how to evaluate things. She said she believes that her husband feels the same way she does in this regard.

Jean also highly approves of the fact that television today presents shows that no longer show men and women sleeping in different beds:
I fully approve of the fact that we are no longer in the era of movie making and television programs where husband and wife sleep in separate beds. We saw an old movie the other day where husband and wife were in separate beds and I am well aware that that’s not very accurate. It’s a lie, on I Love Lucy they did that. But, I am glad we’re past that. To me there’s a middle ground somewhere where we can be less inhibited about these natural things; but we don’t have to dwell on the grosser side of life.

Jean’s friends have different opinions, which doesn’t bother her: "I have talked about television to a number of people, a number of my friends. I don’t always have the same opinion as they do on things but that’s true in any case." Jean recognizes that many of her friends also see the benefits of television, such as the fact that one can stay inside a nice warm house and watch sporting events when it is cold outside." Jean said she has her opinions about television and she stands by them. She’s willing to listen to other people, but she will not argue about things. She’ll just change the subject.

Jean remembers once going to Relief Society and hearing a lesson on the effects of the media. She said that the point of view of the lesson "depends entirely on how the lesson is presented, and the teacher and how they handle it. The last time that I heard the lesson it was given in our ward here. The sister who gave it was very positive in that she concentrated on the many good things about television that we benefit from. And then some of the more negative aspects came up, but she didn’t really dwell on that. She just kind of suggested that we use certain values and
standards." Jean said she believes that many people "get on a hobby horse sort of thing and pooh-pooh and bah-bah everything that comes over television," and she disagrees. "I think they miss a lot if they take that attitude. You will throw the baby out with the bath water if you're not careful." Jean has a theater background and frequently watches television to evaluate it for its theatrical content.

**Jill**

**Biography**

Jill was primarily raised in Utah. She is 64 years old, married with three children. She was married in the LDS temple. She is currently unemployed and works as a full-time homemaker. She has five years of college education. Her husband earns $50,000 or more a year.

**Summary**

Jill didn’t have television when she was growing up, but when she did get it she thoroughly enjoyed watching. Her parents did have some set standards for television viewing. Jill was the third child in her family growing up, and never felt like she was accepted because she wasn’t a son. She also felt alienated from the rest of her family for other reasons:

I always got compared scholastically to these older siblings, because I had the same teachers; and they were unthoughtful comparisons to my detriment. I was a very sensitive child to what people said about me, so I guess I grew up with an idea that, hey, you know, I always felt I wasn’t as bright or good looking, this or that. I had a sister who was a knockout .... But anyway, I grew up
with negative feelings.

Even though Jill felt alienated, she acknowledge that "a lot of wisdom" made her "independent" from her mother and her father. She "did [her] own thing." She attributes her sense of independence to the people in her cultural background--Norwegian, Swedish and Danish--who were "non-demonstrative people" in their affection.

Jill’s family has a history of separation from the religious institution of the LDS Church:

We have a history of not excommunication, but breaking away. This was my mother’s grandmother and grandfather. Because of the United Order where the bishops and stuff down there did not handle it correctly .... We’re very independent people, my side of the family is. Hardworking, independent you know. Mama, joined the Presbyterian church down there and so because of it my mother never really baptized until she married Dad. She never learned the doctrine she always had this concept of God as being a spirit. You know this concept that Catholic break off churches have. She never read the Book of Mormon. In fact I don't think there was even one in our family. And so I grew up not knowing; and, so I did some praying about it but they never stopped us, in fact they had all of us baptized in the LDS Church .... And then there was just in my estimation no way any other church could be the true church.

Today, Jill’s husband tries very hard to influence her television viewing habits,
but he doesn't generally succeed except to make her feel guilty. She said,

I guess I'm too independent again. I'm too headstrong, I'm mild but I'm headstrong. If he wants to watch, there's certain programs that he likes that are more masculine--shoot 'em up.

Although Jill's husband can make her feel guilty about television, she stands up to him:

I tell him, 'Honey, my job is in here and yours is out there or other places. It just gets awful boring doing the same thing day in and day out.' I say, 'Why don't you get me a radio?' I'm sure that I would get along with a radio. Why not go back to radio?

Jill believes that her daughter has similar attitudes toward television, but when asked, her daughter adamantly said she does not. Jill said she really doesn't talk about television at all, but her daughter said that she frequently does.

Although Jill watches a lot of television, she feels that television should offer "more high class programming or use it more as a teaching tool," because it goes to the "lowest common denominator." She also feels that television does not accurately represent society:

I'm deciding that television influences people a lot more than we realize as far as morals, when you view it so much you begin to think that this is the natural way. We have a lot of violent crime in America, but I don't think it's as bad as what they try to dish out on television to us, but I do think it influences people a lot.
She likes educational programming, but is "very fussy" about watching shows that aren't realistic. For example, she won't watch ER, because she's asked some of her friends in nursing if it's realistic, and they said it's not true to life. Jill also criticizes the way commercials do not represent reality.

Jill said she has standards for television, and adamantly believes that religion, or the lack of it, influences one's attitudes toward television. She attributes moral decline to the "square box." "It's catching," she said, "It's catching."

Jill said she's a home-oriented women and associates a lot with her grand kids. She doesn't have a lot of friends outside of her family, and the friends she does have are church friends.

Carol

Biography

Carol was primarily raised in Utah. She is 27 years old and has never been married. She is currently employed as a flight attendant. She has two years of college education. She earns from $20,000 to $29,999 a year.

Summary

When Carol was growing up, her mother used television as a baby sitter:

We didn't really have a TV to start out with, so we were kind of very creative. Very active. I think my mother always encouraged us to do a lot of different things. She always had books there for us to read. My brothers were involved in scouting, so we were always encouraged to do things. My parents were gone quite a bit. I was old enough to baby sit, so I would baby sit and
we would basically tear the house apart, you know, hide and seek, clean house and different things. We weren’t allowed to have friends over while my parents were gone, but we could play among ourselves. So we would bake cookies or whatever. When TV came along it was—we would just kind of sit in front of the TV and watch. We stopped doing a lot of things .... And, so mom would come home, and she would have a fit because we hadn’t done anything we were just glued to the TV. It’s used as a baby sitter.

Carol’s mother seemed to be the primary enforcer of television standards in her home when she was little. When she got older, and her mother had more kids, her mother "just got tireder" and television basically became "a free for all." "What you wanted to watch," said Carol, "you could get away with." Carol’s father loved sports, and really didn’t give her a choice as to what she could watch.

In their personalities, Carols’ parents are quiet, but incredibly talented people. She did a lot of crafts with her mother. Both of Carol’s parents were members of the LDS Church and institutionally religious; although, they were not "typical LDS parents." Carol was never forced to go to church. She said that her parents encouraged a sense of religious independence:

I wouldn’t classify them as typical LDS parents. Because I think that LDS parents typically have too many expectations for their children and expect them to do everything perfect and right. My parents, I think, taught us correct principles and then let us choose for ourselves. One thing that I would say is that they always let us make our own decisions and then they would stand
behind us no matter what. I think if any of us would have strayed from the path, they never would have stopped loving us. They were always there no matter what we did. They always supported us and always encouraged us no matter what we chose to do, what ever we had an interest in.

Carol doesn’t believe that religion in her home growing up affected her attitudes toward television. She does believe, however, that her parents maybe shouldn’t have let her watch so much television.

Today, Carol has shows she enjoys watching, but she doesn’t have standards for what she watches. She believes this is similar to the way she was raised. She watches television when she gets up, while she’s getting dressed, and before she goes to bed "to relax." Like Jill, Carol watches a lot of television, but talks about it’s extreme negative effects. Carol believes that television is a "plug-in-drug," not because LDS Church leaders say it is, but because she sees how "society itself has gone down quite a bit, because people tend to come home and turn the TV on … instead of reading a book or learning or socializing.""So," she said, "it’s probably more how I’ve seen society, and why I think society is the way it is." She recently watched a show that made her realize how the movies today reflect "gloom and doom," which she said isn’t really how the world is today.

Carol said she talks to her friends about television, but not her family. She and her friends mainly talk about television to "find out what's going on." So she doesn’t believe they influence her. She said, "It was more of a mutual we liked the same shows and so we discussed them along those lines." One of her friends,
however, converted her to watching more educational programs. He used to call the things she watched "garbage."

Even though Carol watches a lot of television and talks about it with her friends, she said that television is not really a big part of her life in that she doesn't "live to go watch a show." Carol said she pretty much has her own opinion about TV and talking to someone will not change her views.

Hana

Biography

Hana was primarily raised in California. She is 50 years old, married with eight children. She is currently unemployed and works as a full-time homemaker. She has two years of college education. Her husband earns from $20,000 to $29,999 a year.

Summary

Hana's father was a nightclub entertainer from Mexico, which has influenced her love for entertainment. Her father and mother divorced right after she was born, so she never really lived with her father. She was raised Catholic until the fourth grade. Her mother was married three times, she thinks. Her father was married six times. She said she learned from her parents what she wanted to be and what she didn't want to be and how she wanted to raise her family. She had a happy childhood, but she didn't want divorce. She found out about the LDS Church in a little theater in Santa Monica, California. Catholicism, said Hana, taught her about the Savior, and when she heard about the LDS Church, she said it just made perfect sense. Hana feels
a sense of independence in the way she defines being "active" in the LDS Church.

The trick here is active members of the Church. The more I'm in the Church the more I realize active means a whole lot of different things to different people. What people will allow in their homes and what they feel .... But it doesn't make them any less active members of the church, it just makes them have different opinions.

Hana's parents never talked about television as she was growing up. There was nothing to complain about on television then. Everything was "good and pure, and you know, you had to be in separate beds .... You had the one foot rule. You had to keep one foot on the floor at all times .... It became the Cinderella Syndrome and Harriet Nelson and all these people that nobody really was in real life, but we would all like to be, especially as mothers .... It was so unrealistic."

Hana, like Jean, has a background in theater and uses television extensively to "keep abreast" of what's going on in the industry. Lately, since she's moved to Utah where it snows, she's tried to curtail the television viewing of her children. She talks about television viewing standards in the home in terms of setting them with her husband, using "we" instead of "I." Not watching television on Sunday is unrealistic, said Hana, so she and her husband have the standard that on Sunday everyone must read one article in a church magazine before they watch television. They don't make their children watch religious programs on Sunday anymore. (Everyone got tired of the Ten Commandments.) Hana also has the standard that she won't let her children watch pornographic, violent, or scary movies, and anyone who watches MTV has to
pay $50.00. (No one has ever been caught.) Although Hana and her husband have standards for television, she doesn’t go down to check up on her children late at night.

Hana and her husband will also watch shows that some people might "consider borderline" with their children and then talk about what went wrong in the show. You can learn as much from the "bad" as you can from "all good Disney fun and light stuff," said Hana. She and her family all like television and they all watch it. She doesn’t feel television will ruin her children’s lives. Hana and her husband didn’t pre-define their standards for television viewing; they "just evolved."

Most of Hana’s friends are involved in theater, so they talk about television in terms of the acting, etc. Hana said she doesn’t know anyone who has thrown television out of her house, and as far as she knows everyone watches television. Most of her friends have attitudes similar to hers. She doesn’t believe that her religion has influenced her attitudes toward television. She does, however, listen to Relief Society lessons and conservative LDS members:

No, I don’t think so. The only attitudes of mine that have changed or wavered is when I hear the Relief Society lessons on about how bad television is, and then I try and curtail or I try and watch, you know, take more care. But I watch so much for people, acting, actors and actresses and we’re all kind of movie buffs.

Hana believes said when she talks to very conservative members of the Church, she tries and listens with an open mind, so it will help her not be "so liberal." "I’ve just
got to watch .... keep control over what I watch and certainly what my children watch." Hana quoted Brigham Young, a prominent early LDS Church leader, who said that one can learn from the presentation of evil as much from good. (See Endnote 8.)

Narratives: Contextuals

Melonie

Biography

Melonie was primarily raised in California. She is 34 years old, married with no children. She was first married civilly and then later married in the LDS temple. She is currently a renowned musician and music teacher. She has had six years of college education. She and her husband together earn $50,000 or more a year. (Her husband is also a renowned musician.)

Summary

Of her family life growing up, Melonie said it was by "some standards" strict. Her mother always made her practice the piano and the violin. Her brother had to practice the trumpet. Melonie’s mother emphasized education as being really important. "And by education she did not mean TV," said Melonie. Television to Melonie’s mother was like "candy" to the mind and you weren’t very educated if you watched television. On the other hand, because Melonie’s father was a television repair man for 25 years, they had nine televisions that they were not allowed to watch, except for on Sunday nights for "socializing." Melonie’s father didn’t have the negative feeling about television that she felt from her mother:
Probably because he was involved with it every day. From him was the example that it was not a big deal. You could have it on. But, for us somehow, growing up, we weren't allowed to do it and so maybe it was a double standard. But, somehow we grew up with the feeling that it wasn't good for children to watch a lot of it. But when you're adult, like my dad, it was "okay" to do.

She feels that her mother's attitude toward television really influenced her attitudes toward television, because she's now more aware of the effects of television. She also spent many more hours with the piano, which made her a successful musician. Melonie doesn't really know if she has standards for television viewing now. She does have "similar tastes" to her father.

Melonie's family joined the LDS Church together, after her twelve year-old brother came home, sat the family down and told them that he wanted them to be Mormon. Melonie said her mother had the hardest conversion, because she was Buddhist, and religion for her was more of "an attitude about religion, rather than strict things you had to do." When the family became converted, however, her mother "jumped into being a Mormon mother" and the family embraced religion whole heartedly. She feels that this affected their TV experience, because the LDS Church has a "pioneer heritage" that believes in the work ethic and TV "was a lazy person's thing to do." It was not then the educational tool that Melonie thinks it is now. Melonie sees television as having the potential to be very educational:

It's an instrument in the world that has actually cut down on prejudices of
people, because suddenly you see other cultures and realize that those are normal for them ... so that you don’t have a sense of isolation. I think it’s broadening to society.

Melonie’s husband has a big influence in her life, because she will have a tendency to get "hooked" into something trashy, where he won’t. Melonie, believes that it would be very hard to limit television viewing for children. She disagrees with the locks she sees on television. She, herself, enjoys the convenience of television, and uses it for videos and social interaction with her friends. One friend, she said, got her started watching a particular program and they watched it for a year, talking back and forth about what was happening in the program. Another one of her friends she trusts "spiritually" to make recommendations for TV viewing. She also has a friend who is not a member of the LDS Church whom she trusts to make recommendations for a television program.

Melonie laughed as said that the LDS Church tries to impose standards on her for television viewing. She basically agrees with them, but she will see an "R-rated" movie, because she trusts herself to know "the line of negativity."

Joyce

Biography

Joyce was primarily raised in Idaho. She 56 years old, married with 7 children. She was married in the LDS temple. She is currently unemployed and works as a full-time homemaker. She has five years of college education. She did not disclose her household earnings.
**Summary**

Joyce's mother went to school with Philo T. Farnsworth, who, she said, invented television. The first television she had was after her high school graduation. She loved mysteries then as she does now, and she would build her life around trying to find time for the shows she liked. When she was growing up, she used to invite her friends over, not to watch TV, but to watch her father watch TV!

I do remember that I used to invite my friends to come over on Friday nights because the fights were on, and they would come over and we would watch my father. We wouldn't watch TV. We'd watch my father watch the TV, because he was so fun. He would get so involved.

Joyce and her family "TV-trayed it" for a few years and her parents liked a variety of shows. She remembered: "Mother more than Father would get upset with inappropriate TV, things that she thought shouldn't be coming into the home." She said she matches that role now, and will even say to her husband, "Is this the kind of thing a priesthood holder should be watching?"

Joyce's parents were "very good people, very gentle people." Her mother was always active as a drama teacher, so Joyce "grew up in the theater," and she was a theater major in college. Her parents were always very supportive. Her father was "very responsible, (and) hard working," but he lost everything in the depression. They had a sheep ranch at that time. Religion, growing up was very important in Joyce's family, although her father often had to work on Sundays:

It was very important .... My Father's drugstore was open Sunday afternoons
and he worked and I worked from the time I was 12 or 13, in the drugstore, frequently on Sundays—never interfered with choir practice if I had it, never interfered with anything else church-wise. But that was just sort of a separate part. But the church was important. My father was always active, so was my mother, very active in the church.

Joyce believes that religion influenced her attitudes toward television.

Joyce now has a family of five boys and one girl. Her husband was a professional television sports broadcaster:

He is, was a broadcaster. He took his bachelors and masters in radio and TV, and worked in the profession for a few years, did some live TV, some news, things of this nature. And then was drawn into education, did some teaching here at the University. But then moved into continuing education and that was his emphasis and spent 30 more years as an administrator until he was retired. So, he’ll, we’ll talk about something he’s seen, something we like, or there are certain things he likes. I do like the ability to tape. The VCR is a wonderful thing.

Her husband controls the remote control, but he just flips the channels back and forth and, which she said "drives" her "bananas," because you never find out who died or what happened. Today, Joyce keeps television on just for background noise. Her feelings for television, however, are "ambivalent." She likes television, and there are things on television that she likes a great deal, but, she whispers, "My husband watches too much TV, and I find that irritates. I go into the other room and
Joyce believes that television "is a passive media," but her kids are so involved in sports that that’s why they’re drawn into it. She also said she thinks television can too easily dominate family life, and she doesn’t like that. She feels there is a lot of questionable television, and that the stations need to take responsibility for what is being shown. She said she wishes her family could limit it to one hour a day, but, she said "It’s not a practical thing in this family .... I don’t have that kind of control."

Joyce adamantly stated that no one influences her attitude toward television, "Because I pretty much have my own feeling about what I watch and what I like and what I don’t like." Joyce will watch shows that have been recommended by others, even her children. She and her husband discuss things about television while they are watching. He influences what is watched in the family, but they have multiple sets, so if she doesn’t like what he’s watching, she’ll go somewhere else.

Joyce doesn’t like to sit and watch television very often, because she’s usually in the kitchen sewing. Joyce said her children have a "very bad habit of having it on while they study." She said she tries hard, but with the older ones, she doesn’t seem to have any control. "Maybe, I’m a defeatist," she said. Joyce uses television as an educational tool with her daughter to talk about sexual relationships, and other things that are "difficult to bring up." Most of what she sees on television is against what she believes, but it does "open an avenue for discussion." Joyce’s daughter-in-law is more controlling than she ever was with the television, she said.
Joyce said she wouldn’t say she never sees an "R-rated" movie. She saw one movie that her 13 year old daughter will never let her forget. She doesn’t really have set standards now, other than she’ll change the channel if there are things that are sexually inappropriate."There is a lot of garbage on TV that is not welcome in my home, and I’ll change channels," said Joyce. She and her husband never discussed standards, the standards just "evolved."

Jeanette

Biography

Jeanette was primarily raised in Arizona. She is 35 years old, married with 5 children. She was married in the LDS temple. She is currently unemployed and works as a full-time homemaker. She has a high school education. Her husband earns from $30,000 to $49,999 a year.

Summary

Jeanette grew up in a home where her father left when she was nine, and her mother, because she was bedridden and ill, watched extensive television to "ease" her pain. Jeanette she said that she had the "funnest childhood" of any child she ever knew. Her mother was really loving and kind and strong. Her mother influenced her attitudes toward television, she said, because they did watch a lot of television. Her mother had standards for television in that she wouldn’t let her watch anything objectionable.
Jeanette feels that society has changed now, and television, which reflects society, has also changed for the worse, making it necessary to impose more standards. Jeanette said she hates television, but she can't live without it:

When we were in Chile, we didn't have, you know, a TV for a year-and-a-half, and it was wonderful. I never missed it at all. And so when we moved back, I thought, "We're just not going to have one," and so for about maybe six months, we didn't have one, but then we ended up getting one, just so the kids could watch, you know, *Sesame Street* or videos or things like that. And then you just get back into the habit of watching it again. But I hate it. I really wished I had the strength to just throw it out.

Jeanette's husband also hates television and hardly watches it. He probably influences her the most in her attitudes toward television, she said.

Her standards now are that her children can't watch very much television, and after 5:00 p.m. the television goes off. She and her husband never really talked about standards, their standards just evolved. Jeanette gets the feeling that some of her friends think she is a "fuddy-duddy," because her standards for television are stricter than hers.

**Summary of the Discovered Social Interaction Patterns**

**Traditionals**

**General Styles of Talk**

Traditionals discuss television with other communities in terms of what is appropriate and what is not appropriate on television. They generally talk with others
about the negative side of television. For example, Mary said, "My standards are pretty well grounded and if I mention something it would be in a negative way to the modern (television) entertainment." Heather said she talks to her best friend about "how bad TV is."

**Styles of Religious Talk**

Traditions talk about television in terms of religion and standards; most of their conversations about television involve these issues. They mention often that they listen to Church leaders's recommendations for watching television; but unlike Contextuals they do not mention relying on "spiritual" friends to help them make their decisions about television viewing. Unlike Independents, they do not mention relying on personal evaluations of what television does to society in order to help them make their decisions for television viewing.

1. Do interpretive community members' social interaction with other communities influence their strategies for interpreting television?

Traditions, although they may marry a member of another interpretive community, will choose to socially interact with members of their own interpretive community. Traditions' interpretive strategies are influenced by their social interaction with members of other communities if these individuals are members of their own interpretive communities. They find that members of their own interpretive communities reaffirm their interpretive strategies. Margaret said, "I think I pretty much have my own opinions. Obviously the ones who agree with me would reinforce my feelings." If a spouse or a child does not have their same interpretive strategies,
they are not at all influenced. For example, Heather said that her husband doesn’t influence her attitude, because "he’ll watch anything that’s put on."

The conversations of members of the Traditional interpretive community reflect that they resolve conflict in their homes by discussion and discipline. They may listen to a child regarding a particular program, but will then screen the program and discuss with the child the negative aspects of the program. They encounter little conflict outside of their home with members of other interpretive communities, because they choose to socially interact with their own interpretive communities. Traditionals resolve conflict with spouses by making small behavioral compromises, while continuing to try and exert their persuasions. For example, Margaret will slip in and sit next to her husband while he is watching television to be close to him, but she continues to voice her opinions in the home about the negative effects of television.

2. Do members of the same interpretive community engage in social interactions with other communities that produce similar strategies?

Traditional’s engage in social interaction with members of the same interpretive community that reaffirm their interpretive strategies. When they engage in social interaction with members of other interpretive communities relative to interpretive strategies for television, they try to influence others to adopt their interpretive strategies. Margaret has a mother who was widowed and was alone for twenty-six years, during which time her mother "made television her social interaction, so that she watched several shows regularly." Margaret said, "She would read about the stars that play on them. She was living her life, in my opinion,
vicariously through the television. I would say to her, 'You know, are you sure? Do you have to watch this?' When she came to visit, I would try to say, 'Are there other things you would like to do with your time?' And she was quite defensive about it."

**The Influence of Associations**

Most Traditionalists say un-equivocally that the people they socially interact with do not influence their attitudes toward television. Mary said, "I’m pretty well set in my ways about what I like and what I don’t like." Anne said, "I’m pretty much adamant in what my views are one way or the other." Traditionalists believe they have the power to influence those they socially interact with in regards to interpretive strategies for television more than they are influenced. Of her social interaction with her sister, Mary said, "I think mine (my attitude toward television) influences her more than hers influences me." Traditionalists feel a sense of responsibility to influence the interpretive strategies of those they socially interact with.

**The Influence of Talk and Conversations**

Traditionalists say that most of the people they choose to socially interact with talk about television the same way they talk about television. Although Traditionalists do not believe that conversations with others influences their attitudes toward television, they will ask the advice of others on how to better maintain their strategies for interpreting television (such as controlling and monitoring television viewing). They will ask others how they can maintain high standards for television viewing for their families. For example, Susan said, "Well, sometimes I just say, 'What do you do about television? Do you let them watch television on school nights?' .... Just getting
other people's input and then talking to my husband and saying, 'What do we want to
do with our family?' (has helped). It has helped to get other people's viewpoints on it,
see what they were doing, what's working for their families. It gives you an idea if it
will work for your own."

If Traditionals are influenced at all through conversations it would only be in
that conversations with members of their interpretive communities reaffirm their
interpretive strategies. They may watch a show on the recommendation of someone
they trust. Heather said that no one influences her interpretive strategies for
Television, "except that maybe if somebody says, 'This is a good show.'" Then, she
said, "I might keep it in mind. But I reserve the right to judge that myself. Just
because they say it doesn't mean it is a good show. Or good for my family. You can
have different standards."

Traditionals believe that more than their conversations with others, they are
influenced by listening to LDS Church leaders and authorities in the community, and
reading conservative newsletters. Anne said she is influenced by the Church leaders.
Margaret said, "I think more than my conversations it would be the things that I read.
The things that I read about raising children. The things that I read about Christian
values in your home and your community would have much more impact on me than
conversations with my friends .... For example, I read reviews and subscribe to some
conservative newsletters and so on, and so I have some very negative views toward
**NYPD**. And, I've never watched it, so I can't tell from first hand experience that it's
bad. I just know the things I have read about it are very negative and made me not want to watch it."

Traditionals who do not share the same interpretive strategies with their spouses will try to influence their spouse through conversation to adopt their own strategies for interpreting television and adopt these for their children. They will usually make a compromise if they feel they cannot get their spouse to adopt their interpretive strategies, but they will continue to try to persuade him. Susan said one of her children recommended a show that had good values, and so she decided to watch it and found it "opened up a whole new entertainment" to her.

**The Influence of Standards**

Traditionals are very concerned about standards for their children and others, and this seems to be the main focus of their conversations with anyone, whether it be with friends, or extended and immediate family members. Susan said she talks with her friends about how she can maintain standards for television viewing in her home; she talks to her husband and her parents about the kinds of shows she should let her children watch; and she talks with her children about their standards for television viewing. Traditionals usually set up standards for their children that have to do with controlling the viewing of programs that have nudity, sex, violence, bad language, stupidity, and anything that they think might be immoral. They also set up standards that reflect traditional work ethics, as in "work-before-play," and include limits for when television can be watched, like no television on week-nights, etc. Heather said that she and her husband feel that television can interrupt relationships, so they have
the standard that television goes off when company comes over, even when
grandparents come over.

Traditionals will more frequently talk about standards for television
viewing with their children than either Contextuals or Independents. Susan said if her
children want to watch a show they are not sure of, she and her husband will sit down
and watch it with them. Then, they will point out their own standards for television
viewing.

The Influence of Use

There are some parallels between the way Traditionals' parents used television
with their families in their home and the way Traditionals use television today. This
use, however, does not necessarily reflect a value system, (such as not watching "R-
rated" movies), but rather reflects how and when television is used in social
interaction. For example, Susan and her father watched Westerns while eating a bowl
of ice cream as a means of social recreation and relaxation when she was growing up.
Her mother never had the time for television, because "she was busy," like Susan said
she is today. Today, Susan watches television with her children as a means of
recreation and relaxation while she is doing other things, like latch stitching. She
especially enjoys watching *Little House on the Prairie* with her family while they are
eating dinner and doing the dinner dishes.

The Influence of Control

In general, Traditionals believe that children do not have the capability to
make their own judgements on television, and are easily influenced by social
interaction with others. This belief is reflected in Traditionals’ standards for monitoring television for children.

3. **Do members from different interpretive communities engage in social interactions with other communities that produce dissimilar strategies?**

Because, in general, Traditionals do not choose to socially interact with friends who are members of different interpretive communities, they are not as influenced to develop interpretive strategies different than they’re own strategies. Because of this, it is perhaps likely that a Traditional will not change interpretive communities, but continue to remain within the same interpretive community.

Traditionals may marry individuals who have different interpretive strategies, and as a result will have children who may also choose different interpretive strategies. Although these family members may express their different interpretive strategies, Traditionals will not completely change their own interpretive strategies, but they will instead make compromises that emphasize family unity.

Traditionals tend to develop their personal strategies for television viewing early in life, breaking away from their parents and siblings in terms of their personal strategies for television viewing. Heather said, "I can remember my mom talking about how my brother would come home from kindergarten and he really liked the Dating Game. This little five-year-old really liked the Dating Game and he and my mom would sit and have lunch and watch the Dating Game together, which just seems really funny to me." Heather said she remembers her grandmother watching soap operas religiously, and wondered what she saw in them.
4. Are there other elements that influence interpretive community members' strategies for interpreting television?

Traditionals seem to be influenced by a deep sense of personal value and people who have their same interpretive strategies, whether those people are part of their family or authorities in the community. They choose to associate with members of the LDS Church and believe that religion definitely has an influence on their interpretive strategies for television. Although Mary did not grow up with television, she believes that her religious background "definitely" had an influence on her attitudes toward television. She said, "I didn’t like anything that wasn’t uplifting or that wasn’t morally clean."

Authorities in the Community

As mentioned above, Traditionals, in general are influenced more by what authorities in the community and the LDS Church have to say about strategies for interpreting television then their social interaction with family and friends.

Personal Value Systems

Traditionals base their interpretive strategies on a strong personal value system. The present study shows that while Traditionals may rely on the influence of LDS Church leaders to set their interpretive strategies, they will also go beyond the recommendations of Church leaders to set additional standards. Traditionals, whether they were raised with those who have their same interpretive strategies for television viewing or not, will incorporate a deep personal value system at a very young age.
Heather, who finds that she's "in between" her parents in her interpretive strategies for television, developed her personal interpretive strategies in her early teens.

**Times Have Changed with Television**

Tradionals believe that standards for television viewing were not necessary when they were growing up, because television was not as "suggestive" then as it is today. They feel that current television programming requires additional standards. Margaret said about setting standards for her family, "Well, you have to realize that forty-years or thirty-five years ago there were not that many choices. The things that were on television thirty years ago were somewhat innocent and went along with the value system we believed anyway. Where I believe that's very different now."

**Religious Associations**

100 % of Traditionals listed on the pre-qualifying survey only active members of the LDS Church as those with whom they closely associate.

**Independents**

**General Styles of Talk**

Independents talk about television with others as if television were "a part of the world." Whereas Traditionals talk about television with others in terms of "how bad TV is," Independents tend to talk about television more in terms of either enjoyment, or objective evaluation. Although a Contextual will say they can become "hooked" on a program, an Independent will say they will not become "hooked" on a show. They talk about their program selection more in terms of conscious decisions.
Traditionals and Contextuals use words and phrases like "talk about" and "discuss," and Independents use words and phrases like "rehash" and "watch a ton of movies."

**Styles of Religious Talk**

Independents, unlike Traditionals and Contextuals, do not say that they listen to Church leaders in making decisions about interpretive strategies for television. Their religious talk about television has to do with making personal evaluations on what they see television doing to society. Although a Traditional or Contextual might mention that they see television has a negative effect on their children, they also mention that they listen to Church leaders for guidance. Independents, on the other hand, do not mention modern Church leaders at all as a part of their interpretive processes.

1. Do interpretive community members’ social interaction with other communities influence their strategies for interpreting television?

Independents say they are not influenced by their social interaction with other communities. Jill said, "Well, no, I guess I’m too independent again, I’m too headstrong, I’m mild but I’m headstrong. " Like Contextuals, Independents will choose to socially interact with those who have different interpretive strategies, but not to the degree that Contextuals choose to socially interact with those who have different interpretive strategies. Independents may allow their interpretive strategies to be influenced by the interpretive strategies of Traditionals, whether these individuals are close family members or others. Hana said, "The only attitudes of mine that have changed or wavered is when I hear the Relief Society lessons on about how bad
television is, and then I try and curtail or I try and watch, you know, take more care .... When I talk to very conservative members of the church I try and listen with an open mind, so it will help me not be so liberal and I've just got to ... keep control over what I watch, and certainly what my children watch."

2. Do members of the same interpretive community engage in social interactions with other communities that produce similar strategies?

Independents primarily choose to socially interact with members of their own interpretive communities more than with members of other interpretive communities. This social interaction reinforces their own interpretive strategies. Hana said, "I don't know any friends who have thrown away their TV. Everyone I know watches TV."

Independents will not try and impose their own interpretive strategies on others.

The Influence of Associations

Independents, more than Traditionals and less than Contextuals, choose to socially interact with those who do not have their same interpretive strategies. Most Independents feel they are not influenced by the opinions of others, contrary to Contextuals who say they are influenced by what others say about television. Independents say they just tend to like the same television shows.

The Influence of Talk and Conversations

Most Independents say they don't talk with others about television. Those who say they do, say they talk a lot about television. Most of Independents just talk about television in terms of the facts. Jennifer said that she doesn't "speak about television an awful lot," but when she discusses television with her husband, they discuss
"mainly just facts." Carol and her friends will watch a sitcom or a soap opera and talk about "what’s happening." She said, "We have to find out what is going on."

Carol also said that when she talked with her friend about television it had more to do with the fact they have a "mutual" liking for the same programs: "I don’t think she really influenced me. It was more of a mutual: ‘We like the same shows,’ and so we discussed them along those lines."

More than conversations with other, Independents draw conclusions about television relative to what’s happening in society. Carol said, "I’ve seen it affect people. Like if I see people just--they don’t really develop the creative side of the brain. They let someone else tell them what it is, instead of thinking, ‘What about this?’ So it’s probably more how I’ve seen society, and why I think society is the way it is." Independents, like Traditionals, believe that most of the people they talk with about television have their same interpretive strategies, whereas Contextuals may say, "Some do. Some don’t." Independents, less than Contextuals and Traditionals, use conversations with others to guide them in selecting what they feel is good programming. This is perhaps because Contextuals interpret television according to the situation, and that Independents base their personal identity on a sense of independence and individualism. This could also be influenced by education factors. (Independents have more education than Contextuals, and Contextuals have more education than Traditionals in the present study.)
The Influence of Standards

Independents' standards for television sometimes have to do with just watching programs they like. Carol said, "I have shows I enjoy watching. There is a certain standard there." An Independent will watch a program on the recommendation of someone else, but, will not feel it is necessary to preview programs for their children. They believe like Jean, that if children see a show that has values contrary to the values of their parents, children "have something upon which to base their ideas of right and wrong and good and bad." Hana agreed, "I don't think it's (television is) horrible. There's been a number of programs that some people might consider borderline that we'll watch and talk about what went wrong: 'Why did they make those wrong choices, and what were the wrong choices they made?' I think you can learn as much from the presentation of that stuff, as long as you talk about it and understand it's bad." Independents do not feel television will ruin their lives or the lives of their children, as most Traditionals and some Contextuals believe about television. Hana also said, "I think it's a wonderful medium. I think it can definitely be used for good. I don't consider it, like so many people do, that it's going to ruin your life and your children's lives and all that kind of stuff."

In general, Independents didn't grow up with standards for television viewing in their home. Independents may or may not have standards for television viewing in their home; if they do have standards they do not find it necessary to control or enforce them like Traditionals enforce their standards. Most Independents did not
have standards for television viewing when they were growing up and find their own standards are similar to their parents with a few exceptions.

The Influence of Use

There is some evidence that the way Independents' parents used television in their home growing up influences their own use of television. Hana said that her father was an "entertainer" and she likes to be entertained. Jill said that her Dad liked "a lot of lovey dovey stuff" and this influences her. When Carol was young and television came along she said she and her siblings "would just kind of sit in front of the TV and watch." She said, "We stopped doing a lot of things." Today, Carol watches television in the morning and in the evenings.

The Influence of Control

As mentioned above, Independents, contrary to Traditionals, believe that children have the ability to evaluate television and decide its influence. Jean said, "Television? Oh, it's part of the world and I think children have to be acquainted with it, because they are going to grow up in this world. I think there are people who protect their children from television and protect them from any kind of bad literature and protect them from anything else out there in the world. And, children grow up and, my goodness, it's a rough world out there." Whereas Traditionals express that they want their children to grow up with values like they did (monitoring and limiting television), Independents say that their entire family enjoyed and liked watching television together. Hana said she has standards for her children, but she really doesn't check up on what they watch.
3. Do members from different interpretive communities engage in social interactions with other communities that produce dissimilar strategies?

Independents choose to socially interact more with members of the same interpretive communities, but will still socially interact with and listen to the opinions of others, particularly if others are members of the Traditional interpretive community. They will occasionally change their strategies to match the strategies of members of other interpretive communities, if they feel it is beneficial to them.

4. Are there other elements that influence interpretive community members’ strategies for interpreting television?

Authorities in the Community

Unlike Traditionals, Independents do not mention that they depend on authorities in the community to develop their standards for television viewing in their home. It is interesting to note that whereas a Traditional will understand from a Relief Society church lesson that television is negative, an Independent will see how a lesson brought out the positive aspects of television. Jean said, "The last time that I heard the lesson it was given in our ward here. The sister who gave it was very positive in that she concentrated on the many good things about television that we benefit from, and then some of the more negative aspects came up, but she didn't really dwell on that. She just kind of suggested that we use certain values and standards."

Independents and Traditionals emphasize different aspects of what Church leaders say. Hana said, "Oftentimes they (my children) can see the mistakes that youth or adults or whatever make on TV and you can talk about it and that's what theater is supposed
to do for you. At least, that’s what Brigham Young said, you know. When he first came in to the valley, and started all the theaters and stuff, he said, ‘We can present evil, as long as good wins out and people can learn from it and then they don’t have to experience it.’ People are going to experience whatever they want to experience anyway.”

**Personal Value Systems**

Independents base their evaluations of television more on what they see, rather than what others, including friends, family, LDS Church leaders and leaders in the community say about television. Independents in the present study do not mention depending on authorities in the community or modern LDS leaders for advice on television programming. Jean said that she started to monitor what her children watched after she saw some things on television that she thought wouldn’t be appropriate. Yet, she doesn’t mention listening to Church leaders, friends, or authorities in the community to help make her decisions. Jill said that while her husband feels she shouldn’t watch so much television, she stands for her right to do so. Carol said that although LDS Church leaders admonish you to not see "R-rated" movies, she saw two "R-rated" movies that she felt were appropriate, even the sex and the violence in the movies. She said that her standards for television viewing are based on what she sees happening to society, not on what others say about television. Cheryl sees nothing wrong with television. She said she was brought up in a very "honest" and "realistic" home environment. Hana will occasionally listen to more conservative members of the LDS Church to help her keep an open mind about the
negative aspects of television, but she believed that television can be personally
evaluated and used as a tool for teaching her children good and bad.

**Desire for Social Interaction**

Independents use television for social interaction, either in watching with
friends and family, or in talking about television with friends and family. Carol and
her friends watch the same television programs and then talk about them. Hana and
her family watch television as a source of social interaction. Because, she and her
family of ten are part of the theater business, they watch television and talk about the
acting and the plots of certain television programs. Cheryl and her friends decide
what movies to watch, exchange movies, and talk about them afterward. She and her
family watch a "ton of shows together." According to Jill’s daughter, Jill will often
call her daughter on the phone and recite to her the plot of a television show or tell
her about upcoming shows.

**Times Have Changed With Television**

Whereas Traditionals and Contextuals feel that television has changed for the
negative, Independents see television in some ways as having changed for the
positive. Jean said, "I fully approve of the fact that we are no longer in the era of
movie-making and television programs where husband and wife sleep in separate
beds. We saw an old movie the other day where husband and wife were in separate
beds. I am well aware that that’s not very accurate. It’s a lie. On *I love Lucy* they did
that. But, I am glad we’re past that; to me there’s a middle ground somewhere where
we can be less inhibited about these natural things. But we don’t have to dwell on the

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gesser side of life." Hana said before "everything was good and pure and you know, you had to be in separate beds .... You had the one foot rule. You had to keep one foot on the floor at all times. There was nothing immoral about watching TV when I was growing up. It was all very moral; it became the Cinderella Syndrome and Harriet Nelson and all these people that nobody really was in real life, but we would all like to be .... Now it's too realistic, you see."

**Religious Associations**

Independents, more than Contextuals and Traditionals socially interact with people who do not belong to the LDS Church. 100% of the Traditionals in the present study listed on their pre-qualifying survey only active members of the LDS Church as people they associate with. 67% of the Contextuals in the present study listed only active members of the LDS Church as people they associate with. 50% of the Independents in the present study listed only active members of the LDS Church as people they associate with.

**Contextuals**

**General Styles of Talk**

Although Contextuals, like Traditionals, talk with other communities in terms of what is appropriate and inappropriate on television, they also talk with others about the shows they like to watch. Contextuals talk about television program selection with references to "preferences" or "tastes," as opposed to Traditionals who talk about television program selection with references to "standards," and Independents who talk about television program selection with references to objective "evaluation."
Styles of Religious Talk

Contextuals, like Traditionals talk about television in terms of religion and standards. Their conversations about television, however, more than Traditionals, reflect a an eclectic mixture of reliance on Church leaders and close "spiritual" friends to help them make decisions about interpretive strategies for television. Contextuals, unlike Independents, do not talk about television and standards in terms of evaluating what television does to society.

1. Do interpretive community members’ social interaction with other communities influence their strategies for interpreting television?

Contextuals choose to socially interact with both members of their own interpretive communities, as well as members of other interpretive communities. Their interpretive strategies are influenced by members of both the Traditional and Independent interpretive communities. If a friend from the Independent Interpretive community makes a recommendation for a television show, a Contextual will be more likely than a Traditional to accept that recommendation. A Contextual will also try and change their interpretive strategies to match those of a close family member, if that family member is a member of the Traditional interpretive community. Misty said that her father and her family have had a great influence on her interpretive strategies. She said, "They’ll point out some negative aspects of shows. I realize they’re right now. So, I gear my tastes other ways." Often, Contextuals will use the Traditional interpretive strategies of others as ideals. Melonie said her husband "has a big influence" on her. She said, "He’s even choosier than me. Sometimes I could get
hooked into something kind of trashy ... something that's just not worth the time.
Instead he'd go down and practice (music)."

2. Do members of the same interpretive community engage in social interactions with
other communities that produce similar strategies?

Contextuals have mixed attitudes toward television, and that although they
may talk about the negative aspect of television, they will at the same time say they
need television as a crutch or an escape. Cathy said, "It's a crutch for me. It's my
escape, you see. So I keep trying to find something to watch." Jeanette said, "I don't
like it, I hate it. I do. It's one of those things that I hate, but you can't live without.
When we were in Chile, we didn't have, you know, a TV for a year and a half, and
it was wonderful. I never missed it at all, and so when we moved back, I thought,
'We're just not going to have one.' And, so for about maybe six months, we didn't
have one. But then we ended up getting one, just so the kids could watch Sesame
Street or videos or things like that. And then you just get back into the habit of
watching it again. But I hate it. I really wished I had the strength to just throw it
out."

Contextuals, like Traditionals, reaffirm their interpretive strategies for
television viewing through social interaction with others, but because their strategies
reflect a mixture of strategies from all communities (including Traditional and
Independent views) they can reaffirm their interpretive strategies through social
interaction with members of other interpretive communities. Even when they interact
with members of other interpretive communities, the product of their social
interaction will most likely be interpretive strategies that are similar to their own, because their interpretive strategies reflect a mixture of strategies.

The Influence of Associations

Contextuals, unlike Traditionals, say they are influenced by the social interaction they have with those they associate with. Although they do not feel the obligation nor the responsibility that Traditionals do to influence others to adopt their personal interpretive strategies for television, they do feel that they have an influence on the interpretive strategies of others. Misty said of her relationships with her friends relative to interpretive strategies, "I think that we've had a lot of give and takes so that I may see some things that person doesn't and vice versa." Because Contextual's interpretive strategies reflect portions of the strategies of other interpretive communities, their interpretive strategies are reaffirmed by socially interacting with members of all interpretive communities.

The Influence of Talk and Conversations

Contextuals do not talk about the negative aspects of television with others as much as Traditionals do talk about the negative aspects of television. They seem to reflect an anticipation for television in their conversations. Melonie said, "She (my friend) did get hooked into this show Northern Exposure, so that got me hooked into that for about a year. And we would watch it and then we'd talk about it, you know. We just like those kind of 'slice-of-life type' of situations. We have similar tastes." Misty said, "I think if you hear enough people talk about a certain program then you start picking up on it and watching it. Someone told me about one program that I

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thought was just hilarious and funny and so I find myself watching every week for a few weeks thinking I was going to like it and it was going to be funny .... I think I sometimes, if I hear people talking about certain programs and what they watch, think, ‘Oh, I need to see it, too. It must be great. I need to be in on this.’

Contextuals, like Independents, tend to believe that television can be a "controversial" topic of conversation. Cathy said, "If it is a controversial subject a lot of times you wouldn’t discuss it with non-LDS people because it is just like religion and politics. There is no use arguing about something, but it’s interesting."

The Influence of Standards

Contextuals, like Traditionals, set up standards for themselves and their in children in terms of what is appropriate and the traditional work ethic of "work-before-play." They also have restricted hours for television viewing (the television goes off after five o’clock, etc.). Contextuals do not believe in complete control of television, however, in setting up their standards. In general, Contextuals, although they have standards in their home for television viewing, do not enforce them as Traditionals enforce their standards. Joyce said, "My children have a very bad habit of having it on while they study. I try, but it’s hard .... Maybe I’m a defeatist."

Whereas, Heather, who is a Traditional, said that she has her children trained to not even feel that going without television is a punishment. Contextuals discuss television with their children about what is appropriate more than Independents. Contextuals say their standards "evolved," whereas Traditionals say they tried to pre-define their standards by talking to their husbands.
Again, Contextuals are less likely than Traditionals to try and influence others to adapt their interpretive strategies, even their children. If they do talk about television with their children, they will use a television program as "a window of opportunity to discuss some subjects that may be more difficult to bring up." Joyce said, "Most of what you see on TV is against what I believe and so it opens an avenue for discussion."

**The Influence of Use**

There is also evidence that Contextuals' interpretive strategies, in terms of use, are influenced by the way their parents used television in their home growing up. Melonie had a mother who restricted television and a father who worked as a television repairman. For her, she grew up with a "double-standard" for television, which is reflected in the way she now uses television. Now, for example, she spends hours with her music, because her mother made her practice music instead of watching television when she was growing up. Yet, she still doesn't have the negative feelings toward television that her mother does, because she's adopted some of the more the positive views her father had about television.

**The Influence of Control**

Contextuals feel that no one has tried to impose their standards on them except occasionally the Church leaders or friends as they were growing up who did not have their same values. More than Independents and Traditionals, Contextuals feel that others have tried to impose their standards on them. They will sometimes feel the need to defend their interpretive strategies (e.g. by saying they use television as a
"crutch") to others. Contextuals do not try to influence others to adopt their strategies of interpretation as much as Traditionals try and influence others.

3. **Do members from different interpretive communities engage in social interactions with other communities that produce dissimilar strategies?**

   For Contextuals this is not true, because their own strategies reflect a mixture of strategies that are reaffirmed by their social interaction with all interpretive communities.

4. **Are there other elements that influence interpretive community members’ strategies for interpreting television?**

   **Authorities in the Community**

   Contextuals don’t rely on authorities in the community or LDS Church leaders to make their decisions about television selections as much as Traditionals as rely on these individuals. For example, Melonie said that she trusts herself to find "the line of negativity." Joyce said that she will go to an "R-rated" movie.

   **Personal Value Systems**

   Contextuals rely on a personal value system that reflects both LDS leader’s recommendations for interpreting television and their own personal values. Because their attitudes toward television are mixed, socially interacting with members of other interpretive communities does not seem to go against a Contextual’s personal value system.
Desire for Social Interaction

Although Traditionalists will only use television as a means of "social interaction" while they are doing something else, the Contextuals of the present study are more likely to use television as a sole means of social interaction. Cathy watches a program with her family and then they discuss the program. She said that she wants her family to watch television as a family.

Times Have Changed With Television

Contextuals, like Traditionalists believe that television has negatively changed with time. Misty said television "is going down hill, " and "these days there’s not a lot of choices." Whereas a Traditional will talk about the way television has changed with times makes it necessary for them to impose stricter standards for television viewing, a Contextual will talk about how it has changed makes less programming available for them to watch. Cathy said, "So I keep trying to find something to watch, but this year is the least I have ever."

Religious Associations

In the present study Contextuals, more than Traditionalists, and less than Independents socially interact with members outside of their LDS Church. 67% of Contextuals listed that as those with whom they closely associate with as being only active members of the LDS Church, compared to 100% of Traditionalists and 50% of Independents.
Chapter Conclusions

This chapter outlined the patterns of social interaction that were discovered through ethnographic and grounded theory procedures used in the present study. It built the foundation for further discussion of these patterns in Chapter V.
CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION

Chapter Overview

Using the philosophies of Berger (1967; 1969) and Cornwall (1987, 1989, 1990), and the theories of B. Holzner and J. H. Marx (1979) and Folger and Jones (1994), this chapter discusses in depth the patterns of social interaction outlined in Chapter IV, and offers some possible explanations as to why these social interaction patterns exist in Stout’s interpretive communities. It then discusses in depth the implications of these social interaction patterns as they contribute to the development of Stout’s interpretive communities, bearing in mind that the interpretive strategies that define these communities must also attempt to resolve conflict between personal views and the LDS Church’s view of television. While so doing, it compares Independents’ sense of historical individualism, Traditionals’ historical sense of traditionalism, and Contextuals’ sense of historical paradoxes that surround the social interaction that contributes to the development of these interpretive communities. This chapter also takes the opportunity to take a look at some of the terms Stout used to describe the ways each of his interpretive communities perceive television, such as the term "displacement," which refers to Traditionals’ perception that television displaces more important things. Lastly, it discusses why some of Stout’s findings disagree with the findings of the present study, and offers explanations as to why these disagreements exist both in terms of study design and study limitations.
Possible Explanations for Social Interaction Patterns

The Concept of Anomy

The question might be asked, "Why do Independents and Contextuals, more than Traditionals expand outside of their communities, and Traditionals choose to listen to only those who have their own interpretive strategies for television viewing?" Berger (1967; 1969) said that all social worlds balance precariously between social realities and "irrealities." He said: "Every socially constructed nomos must face the constant possibility of its collapse into anomy" (p. 23).

In the case of the present study, LDS women live in a society primarily populated by other LDS women. It could be that Independents and Contextuals, who do not fit as completely into the social realities of the institutional community, find that they balance precariously between the social realities of their religious community and the irrealities of their own interpretive communities. Such a fear of anomy or disconnection from a social reality that so prevalently surrounds them, may be one reason why women in these interpretive communities seem to be gravitating toward the institutional religiosity of the Traditional interpretive community. Misty, who is a Contextual, comes from a family of Traditionals. Her family often points out to her the negative aspects of the television programs she views. She chooses to align her television programming with their views, and uses their interpretive strategies as an ideal to reach. Melonie's mother and husband have Traditional interpretive strategies, and she tries to align her interpretive strategies with theirs. Cathy, who is also a Contextual, uses television as a means of escape; yet, she also allows herself to be
influenced by LDS Church leaders to help her make decisions about television viewing. Hana, who is an Independent, in general believes that television should be personally evaluated, and doesn't feel that television will ruin the lives of her children. However, she will try and listen to conservative LDS Church members to help her evaluate her own interpretive strategies. Jill, who is an Independent, converted to the LDS Church later on in her life. She watches three to four hours of television a day. Yet, she tends to adhere to traditional LDS views on the influence of television on society, stating that the "box" has negatively influenced the lives of Americans.

Discrete and Shared Social Realities

Holzner and Marx (1979) discussed "discrete" and "shared" social realities, the first defined as disconnected social realities, the second defined as realities that exist due to a shared construction of social realities. The findings of the present study show that Stout's Interpretive Communities maintain discrete and shared social realities in varying degrees. Traditionals tend to maintain discrete social realities with members of other interpretive communities, but remain constant in sharing the construction of the social reality of their own interpretive communities with their interpretive community members. Independents tend to maintain discrete social realities with members of other interpretive communities, as well, but to some degree maintain shared realities with members of other interpretive communities. Contextuals appear to maintain very few discrete social realities in comparison, but maintain extensive shared social realities with members of other interpretive communities.
Susan, a Traditional, talks with her friends about television and tries to maintain a shared social reality with those who believe as she does about television. She said about talking to others, "It has helped to get other peoples' viewpoints on it. See what they were doing, what's working for their families." Yet, Susan said she does associate with those who have the same social reality for, or her same views on television. Hana, while she maintains discrete social realities with members of other interpretive communities by choosing to primarily talk with members of her own interpretive communities about television, also maintains a shared social reality with other interpretive communities. She occasionally listens to these individuals when she feels like she needs a more conservative view on television. Melonie, who is a Contextual, maintains very few discrete social realities, but extensive shared social realities by choosing to associate with members of all interpretive communities. Her friends, whom she chooses to rely on for recommendations for television, have various mores and attitudes, she said.

**Communicative Competency and Self Actualization**

E. T. Hall (1976) discussed the fluidity or ability to move between cultural communities as an indication of communicative competence. Those community members who move more fluidly between communities may in fact have a greater ability to communicate with others and expand their full potential. Stout quotes S. Hall (1990) who said that a woman who takes the opportunity to become aware of the way other women apply values in her life can actually expand her potential. This also coincides with L. G. Koldewyn’s (1993) literature review, which finds that LDS
women interpret religious symbols in order to enlarge themselves. It coincides with Sipes’ (1993) conclusions that LDS women who are faced with conflicts between secular and personal views speak of their conflict resolution strategies in terms of self enlargement. Therefore, those LDS women, such as Contextuals, who watch television and choose to associate with women who do not have their interpretive strategies, may in fact have the opportunity for further growth. Melonie and Misty, who are Contextuals, talk about their attitudes toward television in a way that reflects a pattern of growth in their selection of television programming. Melonie, although she was raised with a very strict mother who allowed no television viewing, has taken the opportunity to talk to others who have a greater tolerance level for television. After evaluation, she sometimes adopts various interpretive strategies from other interpretive communities for her own. Misty, who started with more liberal views on television, or a social reality that perhaps reflects Independent views, has considered the Traditional interpretive strategies of those close to her. She now incorporates these Traditional views into her own interpretive strategies. Traditionals and Independents share social realities with those who have like views and beliefs. As Stout (1993) suggested, Traditionals may limit the realization for their full potential, because they limit their social interaction to members of their own interpretive communities. Although Contextuals tend to exhibit more guilt than other interpretive communities, they may in fact be realizing their full potential, because they are in a more constant state of development. Whereas Stout’s (1993) study showed that Independents may be more self-actualized and self-expressive than Contextuals, the present study suggests
that Contextuals maybe more self-actualized and self expressive than Independents. Additional studies with larger samples might provide further insight.

**Objective Social Reality Versus Subjective Social Reality**

Why do some interpretive communities say that social interaction with others does not influence their interpretive strategies while others adamantly say that they do influence their interpretive strategies? Holzner and Marx (1979) used the philosophies of P. L. Berger and T. Luckmann (1967) to discuss the concept of the objective and the subjective social realities. One of the primary focuses of the present study has been to ascertain whether or not an individual’s social interaction with other social communities influences their social reality or interpretive strategies for television. The results of the present study show that the difficulty in answering this question lies in the difference between the objective social reality and the subjective reality, the former being "a process through which circumstances to be dealt with are increasingly removed from the domain of belief and subjectivity and located in the domain of constructed objects and their systematic observation" (Holzner & Marx, 1979, p. 269), the latter being the sociology of knowledge that concerns itself with what people know as reality in their everyday lives (p. 85). The latter, said Holzner and Marx, can be more easily changed.

Understanding the difference between these concepts helps to add new dimensions in understanding the nature of Stout’s interpretive communities, because each interpretive community deals with interpretive strategies for television viewing based on varying definitions of social realities, both objective and subjective. Each
interpretive community describes how they perceive themselves in terms of the influence they receive from others in the selection and development of their interpretive strategies.

The social realities of Traditionals and Independents tend to be more subjective in that they deny they are influenced by others, but their dialectics and behaviors show they are influenced by others. Their subjective social reality is the world of religiosity they know, whether that world is institutional or personal, and does not necessarily take into account the objective, or real, social reality that is influenced by social interaction. Because their social realities are subjective, they are more difficult to change and tend to remain static. Susan, a Traditional, chooses to only talk about television with members of her own interpretive community, so she does not take into account the social realities of others. Her social reality is subjective in that it does not take into account the interpretive strategies of others.

Contextuals, on the other hand, tend to be more objective in that they recognize they are influenced by others and admit they are influenced by others. Their subjective and objective social realities coincide more closely than those of Traditionals and Independents. Melonie, who is a Contextual, takes into account both the interpretive strategies she was raised with and those of her current friends. She said of her home life growing up, "I do see where not having TV, made me focus on something else which happened to be music. And, I’m grateful for that now, because I put many more hours in front of the piano instead of the TV and it’s helped me to excel." However, she said that she will not limit the television for her children the
way her mother did for her. She said she trusts one of her close friends, who watches a broad variety of television shows to give suggestions for television programs.

Berger (1967; 1969) said that in socialization, which continues throughout one's lifetime, the subjective reality and objective reality are connected, and the subjective reality is maintained by conversation:

The difficulty of keeping a world going expresses itself psychologically in the difficulty of keeping this world subjectively plausible. The world is built up in the consciousness of the individual by conversation with significant others (such as parents, teachers, and peers). The world is maintained as subjective reality by the same sort of conversation, be it with the same or with new significant others (such as spouses, friends or other associates). If such conversation is disrupted (the spouse dies, the friends disappear, or one comes to leave one's original social milieu), the world begins to totter, to lose its subjective plausibility. In other words, the subjective reality of the world hangs on the thin thread of conversation. The reason why most of us are unaware of this precariousness ... is grounded in the continuity of our conversation with significant others. The maintenance of such continuity is one of the most important imperatives of social order (p. 17).

The discourses of the participants in this study, in all interpretive communities, reflect either a maintenance or a construction of social realities in their conversations. Traditionals tend to maintain their shared social realities through conversations. Independents also tend to maintain their shared social realities through conversations.
with others, but also occasionally listen to others to construct new social realities or expand their own social realities. Contextuals tend to construct new social realities through conversations with others. (See the narratives in Chapter IV for examples.)

**Dialectic Versus Behavioral Attitude Distinction**

The present study clearly shows that Contextuals, Traditionals and Independents exhibit a difference between dialectic attitudes and behavioral attitudes. Although Traditionals say they do not believe in watching television, they may watch television to be close to a spouse or child who does believe in watching television. Margaret, a Traditional, said she is not influenced by her family in her interpretive strategies, yet she will sit next to a husband who loves television in order to be close to him. Independents, who may express that they have laxer standards for television viewing may, as Hana does, charge their children $50.00 for watching MTV. As Stout's (1993) study pointed out Contextuals show the greatest difference between dialectic attitudes and behavioral attitudes, expressing in their conversations that television probably should not be watched, but on the other hand watching it and letting their children watch it. In the present study, Joyce and Jeanette, two Contextuals, said they want to control television in their home, but also express that they don't have the "strength" to do so. Cathy said she believes television is "really dangerous," and worries about her teen daughter who watches hours of television while doing crafts. However, she still lets her watch television. Again, this difference between expressed attitudes toward television and television use may also signify an attempt to coordinate or connect objective and subjective social realities. The
qualitative methodology in the present study has perhaps helped to explore the influences of the objective reality and the subjective reality on interpretive communities.

**Shared Metaphors and the Dialectic**

Stout (1993) talked about metaphors as descriptions that community members use to describe their feelings about the symbol of television. Traditionals use metaphors that criticize television or define it as impure. Independents use metaphors that praise television as a source of self-actualization and as a link to the outside world. Contextuals use metaphors that express both positive and negative attitudes toward television and define television in terms of strengthening family relationships. Metaphors are the codes that describe symbols. E. Cassirer (1944) said:

> Man has, as it were, discovered a new method of adapting himself to his environment. Between the receptor system and the effector system ... we find in man a third link which we may describe as the symbolic system. This new acquisition transforms the whole human life. As compared with the other animals man lives not merely in a broader reality; he lives, so to speak, in anew dimension of reality (p. 24).

Thus, man's social reality is a result of his symbolic system, or the metaphors that he uses to describe the symbols that he uses to construct his social reality. Man lives in new dimensions of reality based on the symbols or metaphors that he uses to explain the meaning he has for his social reality. As mentioned above, conversations or dialectics maintain a person’s social reality, and when circumstances cause a
person's conversation with a significant other to become severed, this person's social reality, at least for a time, totters and falls into anomy.

Using the definition of the construction of reality and the construction of a shared social reality, as well as the concept of metaphoric and symbolic interactionism, the present study makes applications to the dialectic of Stout's interpretive communities and finds that these communities exhibit varying degrees the use of shared metaphors or symbols. Traditionals, more than Independents and Contextuals, have fewer shared metaphors for television with other interpretive communities and more shared metaphors with their own interpretive communities. A Traditional will talk about television as "garbage" with significant others. Heather talks about television with her friend in terms of "how bad TV is." Mary said of her conversations with one of her daughters, "We usually discuss the items of the day, what is going on in the world. We both agree that there is a lot of crookedness and falseness."

Contextuals have more shared metaphors than either Traditionals or Independents with other interpretive communities. Yet, these metaphors reflect "tastes" in television, rather than "standards" for television. Melonie said she and her friend both like the "slice-of-life" television programs. These shared metaphors help them to construct a social reality that is both conflictive, but dynamic.

Independents share a few metaphors with other interpretive communities, and as a result have an interpretive community that's social reality has the potential for gravitating toward other interpretive communities, such as the Traditional interpretive
community it moves toward now. Carol’s friend told her the shows she was watching were "garbage," so she tried to watch his educational programs and adopted them into her program selection.

The degree to which interpretive communities open themselves to share metaphors or symbols for television with other interpretive communities will possibly affect the degree to which that community might shift or change its interpretive strategies in the future. The fact that Independents and Contextuals have more shared metaphors and symbols for television with other interpretive communities may be another reason why their communities tend to be in a state of transition, or gravitation toward Traditional interpretive strategies. It is important to remember that, as Berger has said, social realities are maintained by conversations. With the process of secularization (Berger, 1967; 1969), religion was moved to specific social enclaves within the private sphere. Now, interpretive communities must decide what their social realities will be as they choose to move outside of, or remain within, these specific social enclaves that may or not incorporate aspects of the secular world. As these specific social enclaves encounter the secular world, they may experience a cultural shock, as Hall (1976) described. Those communities of individuals who attempt to understand the rhythms, or the nature of the secular community, will most easily be able to communicate with the secular community.

Conflict Resolution or Reconciling Conflicting Social Realities

Chapter II of the present study discusses the conflict resolution theories of Folger and Jones (1994) and Hall (1976) in terms of reconciling the differences
between differing social realities, or communities that maintain differing cultural rhythms. It also discusses Cohen's (1981) philosophy that conflict exists as a natural part of social exchange processes. Given that interpretive community members engage in a range of social exchange processes throughout the course of their everyday experience with friends, family and community authorities, the nature of these social exchange processes demands a range of conflict resolution strategies. The present study finds that patterns of conflict resolution exist that vary between interpretive communities. Each interpretive community finds distinct ways to reconcile their differences, many of these ways reflecting a process of socialization expressed by Berger (1967; 1969) (the unification of the subjective and objective social realities.) Traditionals reconcile their differences by either making small compromises with spouses, or by trying to exert their influence on others. Margaret, a Traditional, compromises on the amount of television she would like her family to see, because she feels that she must conform to the consensus her family. However, she continues to openly state her opinions, and in the past has tried to persuade her mother to reduce the amount of television she watches. Contextuals resolve their differences by listening to others, and while taking a stand on their own interpretive strategies, continue to develop these strategies through conversations with others. Cathy, a Contextual, listens to Church leaders and others who have her own interpretive strategies; yet, she tells her husband that she needs television as a "crutch" and a means of relaxing. Independents resolve conflict by openly stating their right to choose what they watch, but still occasionally listen to others. Jill, an Independent,
watches what she wants to on television, despite the fact her husband constantly berates her for her television viewing habits. She tells him that his job is outside and hers is in the house, so he needs to leave her alone and let her watch what she wants. She does admit, however, that he causes her to think about why she watches so much television. The discovery of these unique patterns of conflict resolution strategies in the midst of social exchange processes further shows that larger media audiences can in generalities be broken down into smaller enclaves of interpretive communities.

The Issue of Gender Power and Social Realities

The present study finds, like Stout's (1993) study, that Traditionals and Contextuals tend to acquiesce more than Independents to the patriarchal order perpetuated by institutional religiosity. Stout partly based this conclusion on the fact that in the homes of Traditionals, the husband usually controls the remote control. The present study additionally finds that some Independents still follow this patriarchal order and Traditionals and Contextuals tend to be more unified with their husbands in their decision-making on television viewing in the home (unity in the home being another emphasis of the LDS Church). Traditionals and Contextuals tend to express the implementation of interpretive strategies in terms of "we" rather than "I." (See the narratives under "Traditionals" in Chapter IV for detailed examples.)

Accommodation Versus Conflict

Traditionals seek out support or accommodation for their interpretive strategies within their own interpretive communities more than Independents and Contextuals. Contextuals seek to understand interpretive strategies different than their own to gain
a better insight into their own interpretive strategies and the direction they would like these to develop. Contextuals seem to want to develop their interpretive strategies, or change their social realities for television through understanding other interpretive strategies, whereas Traditionals seek to maintain their interpretive strategies by seeking accommodation. It is interesting to note that the findings in the present study show that in varying degrees both Contextuals and Independents are open to conflicting interpretive strategies so as to gain a better insight into their own interpretive strategies.

Social Cultural Factors That Affect the Interpretive Community

Many social cultural factors exist that affect the nature of the religious interpretive community, one of the most salient being the impact of religiosity and social networks. According to Cornwall (1987, 1989), one of the factors affecting commitment to institutional religiosity has to do with "in-group ties" or the ties that individuals make with members in their church. Although individuals may be channeled in certain directions by their family (to attend meetings, behave in certain ways), the selection of friends tends to also have an impact on a person's commitment toward institutional religion by reinforcement (Himmelfarb, 1979 as cited in Cornwall, 1989, p. 577). This is interesting to note, because Traditionals, who tend to associate more with members of their own church, also seem to be the most institutionally religious. Independents, who associate more with members outside of their faith than either Contextuals or Traditionals tend to be the least institutionally
religious. These modes of institutional religiosity versus personal religiosity affect the interpretive strategies of these communities.

**Religious Networks and Gravitational Pull**

One of the reasons that Contextuals and Independents may be gravitating toward institutional religiosity could be that participants in the present study live in an area primarily populated by LDS Church members. The findings of the present study do not confirm this to be true, but believe that it is a possibility.

The Implications and Influence of Social Interaction Patterns

**Why are Traditionals Traditional?**

**Historical Traditionalism**

Although, the interpretive strategies of Traditionals do not always directly link to a socialization where institutional religiosity mandate strict rules and patriarchy hierarchy, they can be linked to a socialization of expressed traditionalism. Such traditions as pioneer work ethics, emphasis on moral values that evaluate standards in terms of black and white, and family unification permeate a Traditionals' historical socialization process. These values, not only find roots in home life, but continue to be maintained in the everyday social exchange processes of a Traditionals' life. Conversations with church friends, adherence to institutional religiosity, and a deep sense of right and wrong contribute to the makeup of a Traditionals' interpretive strategies. If Independents cherish independence, Traditionals cherish traditionalism.
Institutional Family Unity

A sense of family unity perhaps keeps Traditionals from becoming a part of the world, and from socially interacting with those who do not believe as they do, (both in relationship to religious beliefs and beliefs connected to religious beliefs, such as those for television viewing). Because Traditionals believe in family unity, they tend to speak about television viewing in terms of maintaining the same standards for all family members. Husbands and wives usually make choices about television viewing for the family together, and wives usually discuss the standards for television viewing in the home in terms of "we" and not "I." Because of their emphasis on family unity and their desire to move through this life and the next as a family unit, they try to influence their family to accept their same moral standards. This goal for unity also causes Traditionals to occasionally seek compromises with spouses who do not believe as they do in regards to television viewing, and hope their children will grow up and accept the same values as they have for television viewing. This also causes them to exert their persuasive and sometimes controlling influence on children in regards to television viewing habits. Whereas Contextuals may retreat in when a conflict arises between family members in regards to television viewing strategies, Traditionals will either seek to exert their persuasive influences on their children or make compromises with their spouses.

A Traditional Sense of Independence and Personal Values

Traditionals exhibit a sense of independence that cannot be explained by a strict adherence to institutional religiosity. Those Traditionals who grew up in homes
that lacked a sense of religious values--institutional or personal--were motivated to break by an inner sense of moral values. Traditionals--although they might listen to what others say about television, even a trusted friend or a church leader--reserve the right to judge for themselves, a judgement that falls on the side of traditional morals. Traditionals exhibit a sense of independence in the way they evaluate their television programming. This sense of independence distinguishes itself from that of Independents in that Traditionals utilize their independence to make choices that go a step further than institutional religiosity, and Independents utilize their independence to make choices that do not align with institutional religiosity. Many Traditionals talk about being able to perceive the negative aspects of television in their homes, by feelings the "Spirit," an inward guide that helps them to choose between right and wrong.

**Traditional Work Ethics**

Traditionals grew up in homes where work ethics maintained a high position. The parents of Traditionals based standards for television viewing on "work first" and then "play." Some Traditionals grew up on farms where the force majeure of nature demanded a sense of duty to work over play. Others grew up in homes where the pioneer heritage of the LDS religion guided their work ethics. Today, they continue to implement these work ethics in their homes, a reason why they often feel that television displaces more important things.
Cultural Backgrounds and Age

The ethnic background of a member of a Traditionals’ immediate family or a Traditionals’ age may affect their interpretive strategies. Husbands that come from different cultural backgrounds may, although they are active members of the religious institution, may not believe in the patriarchal order. Younger Traditionals do not seem to emphasize family unity as much as older Traditionals.

Why are Independents Independent?

Historical Individualism

Independents, who express a sense of independence and individualism that separate them from either Traditionals or Contextuals, develop their sense of liberation from a historical socialization of separation and alienation, both in the cases of home and church. Where Traditionals base their interpretive strategies on a sense of traditional values, and Contextuals base their interpretive strategies on a sense of paradox, Independents base their interpretive strategies on a sense of independence and emancipation. Because they did not grow up with traditional values, their interpretive strategies do not reflect the traditional values of Traditionals and Contextuals.

Independence Versus Traditionalism

Because they did not encounter the same traditional values that emphasize family unity and strong work ethics in their homes growing up, Independents do not feel the need to emphasize family unity in making decisions about television viewing in the home. Nor do they find that television displaces other family activities. Rather,
television often becomes the center of family activity. Whereas Traditionals express television decisions in the home in terms of "we," Independents most often express these decisions in terms of "I." Independents cherish individualism over traditionalism.

**Independence Versus Institutional Religiosity**

The lack of institutional religiosity and sense of individualism that Independents experienced growing up caused them to turn to an inward sense of personal direction and a perception of social reality that encompasses individualism. Independents perceive a sense of individualism in their religious institution, recognizing a diversity in the way church members and church leaders view television. They tend to accept a flexibility in what it means to be religious. Independents say that the moral values, not the institutional religious values, of their parents influenced their strategies. They express a sense of separation from their parents in the development of their own moral standards. It is more important for them to be independent than to cleave to the traditional elements of institutional religiosity.

**Objective Realism Generated from Socialization**

Independents come from homes where parents taught them, either by example or by instruction, to be realistic about life and to embrace both the good and the bad aspects of life. (Cheryl said her family was "honest and realistic.") They pass these same philosophies onto their children, and allow them the opportunity to evaluate television for themselves. Independents objectively evaluate the effects of television
on themselves and others, but do not make decisions on television viewing based on LDS Church leaders' recommendations. If they feel that television has a negative effect, it is because they have seen it in their own lives and the lives of others. This objective realism causes Independents to criticize television for its biased reflection of reality.

**Acceptance of Conflict as Natural**

Because Independents, unlike Contextuals, did not grow up in homes with conflicting view on television or extreme diversity, they accept conflicting views on television in the home and the community as a natural part of life—not as a source of anxiety. They accept individualism in themselves and they allow individualism in others.

**Cultural Backgrounds**

Independents appear to come from backgrounds where either cultural or career choices influenced the habits of television viewing in the home. For example, one Independent came from a history of entertainers that relied on television as a source of knowledge about the entertainment business. Another Independent came from a European background, which she feels genetically influences her independent thinking.

**Why are Contextuals Contextuals?**

**Historical Paradoxes**

Perhaps the name "Contextual" itself reflects the difficulty in analyzing the historical socialization processes of this interpretive community. If anything could be
said about Contextuals and their historical socialization processes, it would have to be in regards to the great paradoxes with which they grew up. Exhibiting conflicting extremes in religiosity and/or television viewing patterns in the homes, Contextuals continue to seek a state of equilibrium in their interpretive strategies for television. Although a Traditional may not have had parents who expressed negative views toward television, they did have parents who expressed unified attitudes toward television. Contextuals, on the other hand, had parents who separately expressed varying degrees of antipathy or love for television viewing. Perhaps this bears reason why there remains in the interpretive strategies of Contextuals a sense of situationalism, or a belief that decisions about television viewing should be based according to the situation. It is probably why Contextuals express a sense of defeatism and desire to be stronger in their decisions on television viewing, and why they experience a continuous inward, personal struggle in regards to television viewing.

The Conflictive Nature of the Original Home

Contextuals grew up in homes where varying opinions about standards and values volleyed between parents or siblings. They grew up in a state of situationalism, where values, particularly in regards to television were often challenged. As a result, they seek the opinions of others who having conflicting interpretive strategies as standards more than Traditionals or Independents.

Like Traditionals, Contextuals grew up with some of the traditional values, such as strong work ethics, and a moral sense of right and wrong. The influence of traditional values on Contextuals, however, distinguish themselves from that of
Traditionals, in that Contextuals did not experience the unified home life that Traditionals did when they were growing up. Their sense of work ethics, perpetuated by one parent, may have been arbitrated by another. Although Contextuals may have had parents who emphasized "homework first" and then "play," because their parents led lives that took them away from their family, they had less parental supervision and fewer enforced standards. Contextuals grew up in homes where parents remained active and busy, but also where either one parent or the other emphasized television viewing in the home. As a result, Contextuals have standards for their children (such as "work first"), but do not enforce these standards like Traditionals do. Contextuals, express a desire for unification with their husbands in regards to television viewing, but do not operationalize this desire to the degree that Traditionals do with their husbands. Because one or more of a Contextuals' parents emphasized television in the home, Contextuals don't want to displace television, but instead seek to find good programming that they can watch.

**Defeatism Versus Moral Behavior**

In the discourses of Contextuals lies a sense of defeatism, perhaps a reflection of some inner struggle and an inability to completely embrace personal values that have been continuously challenged by others. They may wish that their children didn't watch television, but let them do so. Contextuals seek someone who is "spiritual" whom they can trust to make recommendations for them.

**Community Unification**
Because Contextuals grew up in a home of paradoxes, they may seek unification with their community. They see themselves as both the contributor to and recipient of new insights into values. Contextuals and Independents place more emphasis on unity with the community than Traditionals do. This could be because Traditionals find more unification with their religious institution.

**Cultural Backgrounds**

It is interesting to note that one woman who grew up with a strict Japanese mother who limited television believes that television cuts down on the prejudices in the world, and, yet, still feels that television can take the place of more valuable things.

**Stout’s Perception Tendencies and Social Interaction**

**Traditionals**

Stout (1993) talks about some primary perception tendencies that he found among his interpretive communities. Within the Traditional interpretive community he found distraction (the feeling that television displaces more important activities), negative effects (the position that television has a direct negative effect), and control (the felt need to control television in the home). The present study expands on these concepts and finds that Traditionals do have these perception tendencies, which appear to be perpetuated and reinforced by their social interaction with their own interpretive communities. Traditionals have the tendency to fuel their own perception tendencies by discussing in depth their strategies with members of their own interpretive communities. Rather than expanding outside of their interpretive community, they will
choose to converse with those who have their own negative view points of television, and try and gain insight from these individuals on how to better control television in their homes. It also doesn’t’ seem to matter who Traditionals talk to about television, their conversations have the same emphasis.

**Independents**

In Independents Stout found the perception tendencies of expressive outlets (television as an expressive outlet of self) and self actualization (television as a choice at the expense of others to do something for self). The present study expands on these concepts and finds that the social interaction Independents have within their own interpretive community helps them to fuel their own perception tendencies toward television. Two of the Independents in the present study said that television helps them to discover the world of theater to which they belong. They evaluate television objectively and find that they must keep abreast of television (one converses extensively with others in the theater about television) in order to be a part of the theater world. They talk with their families and their friends about the acting, the plot, etc. of a show. Other Independents find that television gives them something to talk about with their friends, some even expressed that their conversations with others on television provide a central part of their social interaction with these other individuals. As Berger (1967; 1969) suggests, Independents' social realities for television are carried out and maintained by their conversations with others. This is perhaps why they, like Traditionals, experience less conflict in matching or coordinating their social realities than Contextuals do.
Contextuals

According to Stout's study, Contextuals have two primary perception tendencies: relationships in the home (using television as a means of building relationships in the home) and passive entertainment (watching television while doing something else). The present study did not find as Stout's study did a noticeable difference between Contextuals and other interpretive communities in the way they use television as a source of unifying the family or a source of passive activity while doing other things.

Why Stout's Study Might Disagree

Elephant Parts and Patchwork Quilts: The Dichotomies of Disagreement

In the course of research, rarely does one complete a study in which all of the findings coincide with its preceding study. This, does not, however, implicate a lack of truth in the preceding study, but rather expands the window of understanding to acknowledge the existence of other factors that may come to bear on the study at hand. J. Kirk and M. L. Miller (1986) in Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research said: "With a theory that the elephant is so large and complex that no single observation can encompass it, the various blind men's reports can be integrated without the necessity of special occult vision" (p. 57). Kirk and Miller quoted J. J. Maquet (1964) who said: "A perspectivist knowledge is not as such nonobjective; it is partial .... Non-objectivity creeps in when the partial aspect is considered as the global one" (p. 57).
Schroeder (1994) used an analogy similar to Kirk and Miller’s analogy of the researcher as a blind man exploring a small part of an elephant in her comparison of interpretive communities to a patchwork quilt. The study of quilt patches, said Schroeder, does not necessarily obfuscate the picture of the whole quilt, but rather helps the researcher to understand bits and pieces of the quilt in order to make macro applications. The researcher of the present study, as a blind man, has focused on only specific parts or patches of the interpretive community to make macro applications. The fact that the researcher’s findings do not coincide with Stout’s in all respects does not invalidate Stout’s conclusions, nor the conclusions of the present study, but rather opens up one more window to understanding the nature of the interpretive communities of LDS women who watch television. Stout (1993) makes provision for the differences that might be found in other studies relating to his with the following statement:

The author recognizes that there is a tendency to reify categories obtained through cluster analysis. Given the nature of the statistical method, it should be pointed out that all respondents will not match clusters descriptions in a pure or fixed sense. In other words, the clusters do not represent universal categories that apply to all situations in the personal and social lives of Mormon women. Notwithstanding the methodological imitation, however, the clusters represent broadly defined interpretive strategies that tell us more than we presently know about how audiences make sense of their television viewing.
when their religious institutions suggests a particular way of thinking about its effects (p. 57).

This statement helps to clarify why dichotomies may exist between the present study and Stout’s, and shows how these dichotomies may be due to the fact the each researcher, as a blind man, has explored different parts of the elephant or the patchwork quilt.

A Comparison of Stout’s Study

Unfixed Interpretive Strategies

The findings of the present study, while they do not always agree with Stout’s (1993) study, support Stout’s conclusion that cluster analysis does not allow for defining fixed interpretive strategies. The findings of the present study show that although members of interpretive communities may exhibit interpretive strategies that would categorize them within one interpretive community, many interpretive community members exhibit strategies that also categorize them in one or more other interpretive communities. For example, one Contextual, who feels guilty when she watches television (a Contextual characteristic) also said she feels that LDS Church leaders try to impose their standards for television viewing on her and believes that television can be used to remove prejudices (Independent characteristics). One Independent said that she will watch a broad spectrum of programs, including soap operas (an Independent characteristic), but recognizes the "doom and gloom" portrayed on television and feels one should be somewhat selective in program viewing (Traditional characteristics). One Traditional finds the need to control
television in her home (a Traditional characteristic), but also expresses the positive ways television might be used and puts the negative aspects of television into perspective (an Independent characteristic).

The Dynamic Nature of the Interpretive Community

Contextual and Independent interpretive community members appear to be in a dynamic state of change, moving toward an acceptance of Traditional interpretive strategies, which rely on institutional religiosity and follow LDS Church leaders’ recommendations for interpreting television. The present study reveals that members of these communities choose to keep an open mind by listening to members of Traditional interpretive communities and Church leaders to evaluate and develop personal interpretive strategies for interpreting television.

The Interpretive Community Member as Chameleon

In agreement with the unfixed nature of the interpretive community, the chameleon-like attributes of some interpretive community members may show the difficulty in pin-pointing the exact nature of an interpretive community. Jill acts as an Independent in that she chooses to watch exorbitant amounts of television; however, when she talks about television, she also talks about its negative effects. Hana acts as an Independent in her home, but at church will sometimes listen to talk on television as a Traditional. Studying an interpretive community member under the provisions of temporality may help to uncover how that member sees television from day to day, or even moment to moment; but studying how the members reveal themselves to one person differently than another contributes to the researchers’ conclusions that
interpretive communities offer only general guidelines of understanding, and not solid, specific parameters.

The Social Constructivist Approach Versus the Ethnographic Study

In the academia of mass media communications, there may be argument that the social constructivist approach, which resists specific enclaves of classifications and relies on generalities more than fixed specificities, cannot bridge to the ethnographic study that utilizes codes and categories as a framework of analysis. This study, however, uses categories only as an infrastructure to explore generalities. As mentioned above, the researcher does not attempt to group fixed interpretive communities; nor does it attempt to say that interpretive community members socially interact with only the communities discussed in the present study. Rather, the researcher draws general conclusions that might provide heuristic value for future studies on interpretive communities in a variety of areas and disciplines.

The value of the codes, categories and groups set up in the present study directly relate to the researchers conclusions about the dynamic nature of the interpretive community. Without the categories of Social Interaction, Personal Views, Times have Changed with Television, and Religious Associations, the researcher would have had difficulty in exploring some of the elements that contribute to this dynamic nature. Without Stout’s group definitions for interpretive communities among LDS women who watch television, the researcher would have had difficulty in exploring the attitudes and strategies of smaller audiences in those communities. Bridging the social constructivist approach (which allows for the construction of
realities based on social interaction and communication behaviors), to an ethnographic study (which incorporates grounded theory procedures of coding and categorizing), the present study easily focused on specific areas of interest without restricting analyses to fixed and static conclusions.

**Qualitative Analysis**

The author of the present study believes that the unfixed nature of these interpretive community members has to do with the fact that Stout’s (1993) original study used primarily quantitative methods to set up broad definitions for interpretive communities among LDS women who watch television. The present study used qualitative methods to give a deeper analysis of these interpretive communities, and reconfirmed Stout’s conclusions that these communities are neither pure nor unfixed. This may be why both the Independent and the Contextual interpretive communities appear to be in a state of gravitational migration toward embracing the interpretive strategies of Traditionals. (An analysis of a trend in the opposite direction does not exhibit the same pattern of gravitational pull. However, it does show that some Traditionals, who have Independent and Contextual spouses, have begun to recognize some of the benefits of the interpretive strategies. For example, Margaret said she recognizes in her husband, who loves television, the ability to discuss certain topics with other individuals where she cannot.)

It is interesting to note that Strauss and Corbin (1990) suggested that by using the Conditional Matrix a researcher can trace conditional paths (the conflictive nature of the interpretive community, or the point where interpretive community members
meet with interpretive strategies that are different than their own) by moving from any level of the Matrix in any direction. The present study shows that by moving in both directions, the researcher was able to discover that all interpretive communities are changing under the influence of differing patterns of social interaction.

The present study finds that qualitative analysis has helped to uncover the dynamic nature of the interpretive community of LDS women who watch television. Although, interpretive community members appear to be members of a set interpretive community, it is apparent through qualitative analysis that interpretive strategies are in a constant state of change, whether it might be by moving more closely to their own interpretive strategies through accommodation of their personal interpretive strategies by members of the same interpretive community (as Traditionals), or by seeking to understand the interpretive strategies of different interpretive communities (as Contextuals). Dynamics are affected by social interaction, primarily through the social exchange processes of conversations and the observance of use.

Study Limitations

Some of the participants, who were pre-qualified and categorized into interpretive communities through a survey, were later found to be better matched to other interpretive communities. The researcher suggests that in future studies a pre-qualifying interview also be included in the study to make sample selections stronger within each interpretive community. Qualitative analysis, as Sipes (1993) and Koldewyn (1993) and Schrøder (1994) suggested, seemed to give the study a greater depth of analysis and understanding and insight. In some cases qualitative analysis in
the present study proved to give the researcher greater control. Other study limitations can be found in the structure of the interview format. Although this study utilized an unstructured interview format, the researcher suggests for future studies a structured interview format be followed to give greater control during data analysis.

Contributions

Summary of Past Contributions

Stout’s (1993) study, and other contributions in interpretive community studies, have established that within larger media audiences, smaller audiences exist that are defined by similar strategies for interpreting the media. Stout’s study established that religious interpretive communities exist among the audience of LDS women who watch television, and the interpretive strategies that define these interpretive communities are conflict resolution strategies. The studies of Cornwall (1987, 1989, 1990), Press (1991), Schröder (1994), Sipes (1993), and Strauss and Corbin (1990), and others established the need to explore the social interaction patterns of interpretive communities in order to fully understand the nature of that interpretive community.

Summary of the Present Study’s Contributions

The present study, using suggested social semiotic approaches, has explored the social interaction patterns of the interpretive communities of LDS women who watch television, and re-established that social interaction does contribute to the development of the interpretive strategies that define interpretive communities. Using qualitative methodology that incorporates ethnographic and grounded theory
procedures, the present study has been able to by-pass traditional quantitative procedures that group communities statistically and show through in-depth analysis how interpretive communities, particularly interpretive communities confronted by differing social realities, are unfixed, dynamic communities that change according to the interpretive strategies of the community members. As members make personal decisions on whether or not to maintain their interpretive strategies or to explore and adopt other interpretive strategies, the potential for changing interpretive strategies remains.

The Passive Versus the Active Audience

The present study contributes to the understanding of why and how LDS women resolve conflict by showing social interaction links between their past and present environments and the way they have chosen to socially interact with those environments. Many studies in mass media communications continue to explore to what degree social interaction, personal values, and external messages impact the development of an audiences' attitudes toward mass media. The present study has shown that a combination of all of these contributes to the development of the dynamic interpretive communities. It has shown that the question of whether an audience acts upon the media or the media acts upon the audience cannot be reduced to a simple, linear answer, but rather that personal decisions by audience members makes this answer different for each individual and each interpretive community member. For example, in the present study, Traditionals choose to not be acted upon by the media by controlling the amount of television viewing in their homes.
Contextuals, on the other hand, want to control the amount of television viewing in their homes, but allow themselves to be acted upon, often expressing a feeling of defeat. This feeling of defeat can perhaps be directly related to the extreme challenges they’ve had in controlling television in their lives, rather than to personal weaknesses. Independents choose to watch television, but do not seem to be acted upon by the media.

**The Understanding of Social Interaction and Social Realities**

Because social interaction contributes to the development of the interpretive community as it maintains its own social reality or exists on the combined interpretive strategies of other interpretive communities, understanding social interaction could perhaps predict the development of future interpretive communities. The social reality theories used in the present study have helped to shape and define how interpretive community members develop their own social realities for the media. They have helped to explain how the social interaction that influences the construction of objective, subjective, discrete, and shared social realities contributes to the overall nature of the individual interpretive community.

**The Study of Social Interaction Under the Conditions of Temporality**

Schroder (1994) has suggested that temporality can be captured to some degree through interviews in which participants reveal the past, the present and potential future. The present study, through interviewing participants, and analyzing the discourse that reveals this past present, and potential future, has further shown how audiences interpret the media in the context of their everyday experience. It has
studied the patches of the quilt (Schroder, 1994) or the parts of the elephant (Kirk & Miller, 1986) in order to make applications to the whole study of interpretive community studies.

Elements of Religiosity

Included in the discovery of the dynamic nature of the interpretive community is the knowledge that meanings for institutional and personal religiosity, and the usage of institutional and personal religiosity, vary from person to person. Although individuals may be outwardly institutionally religious, such as the Traditionals, they may also have deep underlying personal values that go beyond institutional religiosity and direct their decisions in television viewing. The present study showed that although individuals may state that they are not outwardly institutionally religious, such as Independents, they may also have tendencies toward institutional religiosity that do not surface through a quantitative survey.

Theoretical Scope and Generality

Although, the present study concentrates on the interpretive communities among LDS women who watch television, the researcher believes that conclusions made here may also apply to studies of other interpretive communities. Not only must interpretive communities of LDS women who watch television resolve conflict between personal views of television and the LDS Church’s leaders’ recommendations for television, but they must also resolve the conflict that most television audiences experience in their everyday lives, such as the conflict between their own interpretive strategies and those of different interpretive communities. Elements of Stout’s
interpretive communities may be unique in that they espouse certain religious and gender-related beliefs, but their universality remains in that they, like all other human beings in a media society, construct social realities for the media using a complex interconnection of social interaction/communications behaviors in the context of everyday experience. They are universal in that they have been uniquely socialized and integrated into their present society and interpretive community, and bring with them personal values, behaviors, and desires for media use, just as any other member of any other interpretive community. Parsimoniously focusing on one crucial and influential element of the interpretive community—social interaction—has helped the researcher of the present study to further understand the nature of interpretive communities as a whole and offer other researchers the opportunity to apply this study to other demographic areas and interpretive communities, as well as to other interpretive communities with unique characteristics and circumstances.

Suggestions for Future Studies

The researcher would like to look at this study as an analysis of another patch to the quilt, or another part of the elephant, in interpretive community studies. Again, the conclusions here do not attempt to offer single solutions or answers, but rather to elucidate the nature of the interpretive community and offer possible direction for future interpretive community studies.

The results of the present study show that an interpretive community member's social interaction with other communities contributes to the development of the personal interpretive strategies that define their interpretive community. Future studies
on the social interaction of interpretive community members with other interpretive communities may provide additional insights into the nature of interpretive communities. Given the dynamic nature of the interpretive community that the present study reveals, it may also be possible to predict changes in personal interpretive strategies as well as changes in interpretive communities based on the analysis of participants’ discourse. A longitudinal study that analyzes the discourse of a group of participants over time might provide valuable insight into the changing nature of the interpretive community, particularly the religious interpretive community.

Given that some interpretive community members might, chameleon-like, choose to act as members of different interpretive communities at different times, a study that interviews the members that make up an interpretive community member’s total social interaction might also add further light on the nature of the concept of the interpretive community. Additional use of social reality theories, combined with conflict resolution theories and studies in symbolic exchange processes might provide additional insight into interpretive communities where conflict exists. Uses and gratification theory might also be used to show how interpretive strategies are influenced by personal choice in media use.

Because conflict for LDS women also revolves around gender symbols in the media, additional studies may include an analysis of LDS woman’s reaction to television programs that do not reflect traditional LDS role models for women. Sipes’ (1993) and Koldewyn’s (1993) study on LDS women’s strategies for resolving conflict between secular and religious views would provide an excellent resource and
companion in any such future future study. Results and conclusions of the present study might also be used in studies of gender and ethnic minority interpretive communities.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDICES

Appendix A

Profile of Stout's Interpretive Communities

Traditionals

1. They believe the LDS Church is the only true church.
2. They have a high sense of institutional religiosity.
3. They view television as a distraction and a displacement of better things.
4. They emphasize the immoral content of television.
5. They watch 0-2 hours of television a day.
6. They criticize television for its opposition to traditional values taught by the LDS Church.
7. They do not talk about televisions' positive benefits. They are skeptical about the personal benefits of television.
8. They don't talk about television with others.
9. They attend church meetings weekly.
10. They do not see a need for television in terms of entertainment, companionship, social interaction, or escapism.
11. They do not look forward to watching television.
12. They use the rating system for movies.
13. They are highly selective in program choice.
14. They believe children are better off without television.
15. They do not watch soap operas or talk shows.
16. They feel the need to control television viewing in the home.
17. They believe television is responsible for adverse effects in society.
18. They talk about television in terms of its "effects."

19. They feel television competes with the church and family and may cause contention.

**Independents**

1. They have a personal (as opposed to institutional) sense of religiosity.

2. They see television as an expressive outlet of independence and self-actualization.

3. They see television as a personal and private experience.

4. They do not look at television in terms of conflicting world views, but in terms of doing something for self rather than conceding to the view of others.

5. They watch television for 2-5 hours a day.

6. They have a broad program choice: soap operas, talk shows, movies, hour-long dramas, news documentaries, and game shows.

7. They do not attend church meetings on a regular basis. (Again, they place less emphasis on institutional religiosity.)

8. They place less emphasis on the beliefs, behaviors and commitments unique to the LDS Church.

9. They speak positively about television.

10. They don’t feel that children are better off without television.

11. They believe there is too much sex on television, but do not feel guilty watching it.

12. They do not use the rating system for movies.

13. They talk about television in terms of "situational uses," or in other words the way in which television assists them in meeting the challenges of everyday living or how it benefits their everyday experiences.
14. They see themselves as the creator of their television experience.

15. They criticize television, but balance their comments with remarks on television's additional benefits.

16. They filter undesirable messages, but do not overtly criticize television.

Contextuals

1. They have mixed attitudes toward television.

2. They do not look forward to watching television.

3. They will watch television if they feel their family will benefit.

4. They believe that television is a passive activity that occurs while other tasks are being performed.

5. They are personally and institutionally religious.

6. They are willing to watch television.

7. They have a strong sense of beliefs, commitments and behaviors specifically related to the LDS religion.

8. They attend their church meetings.

9. They consider television in the context of escapism and companionship.

10. They do not necessarily believe that television gives them something to talk about with friends.

11. They are moderate in their selection of television programs. (They are not as extreme as Traditionals or Independents in the way they select programs.)

12. They watch 1-3 hours a day of television.

13. They watch television to either promote relationships or while doing other activities.
14. They talk about television in terms of how others feel about television.

15. They are entertainment viewers.

16. They have a high sense of guilt when they watch television.
Appendix B

Glossary of Terms for the Theoretical Framework\textsuperscript{10}

**Interpretive Community** - Says that smaller communities can be found among larger audiences. These audiences are defined by strategies for interpreting the media. It is based on social constructionism and can be studied through social semiotic approaches.

**Social Constructionism** - Says that individuals construct their realities through a complex interconnection of communication that takes place in the context of social interaction. It is based on symbolic interactionism.

**Symbolic Interactionism** - Says that communication takes place through a filtering of symbols in social exchange processes, or social interaction. It is connected with semiotics.

**Semiotics** - Says that signs and/or codes, which are words that are used to refer to symbols in communication. Talk, or styles of talk are systems of codes. Schröder said that each community has its own system of codes, or way of talking about a particular media. (In symbolic interactionism the media, or a type of media would be considered to be a symbol.) The place where each unique system of codes intersects becomes an important focus of study in understanding the social interaction between interpretive communities and other communities. Schröder said it's important to understand this social interaction in order to fully understand the nature and genesis of an interpretive community.
Appendix C
Stout's Survey
(See Stout, 1993, pp. 123-33.)

EXPERIENCE WITH TELEVISION: We would like to know a little about the nature of your television viewing. Place a check next to your answer, or fill in the blank where appropriate.

1. On the average, how many hours per day do you watch television?

   ____ 1 0-1 hour
   ____ 2 1-2 hours
   ____ 3 2-3 hours
   ____ 4 3-4 hours
   ____ 5 4-5 hours
   ____ 6 5 or more hours

2. Which of the following best describes your television viewing pattern? (Check all that apply)

   ____ 1 I watch in the early morning.
   ____ 2 I watch during the day while working around the house.
   ____ 3 I watch in the evenings.
   ____ 4 I watch late at night.
   ____ 5 I watch several times throughout the day.
   ____ 6 Other ____________________________

3. On a typical night of TV viewing with family members, who chooses what is watched?

   ____ 1 I usually do.
   ____ 2 My husband usually does.
   ____ 3 My children usually do.
   ____ 4 It varies from night to night.
   ____ 5 Other. Please explain: ____________________________
   ____ 6 I do not watch television at night.

4. On a typical night of TV viewing with family members, who uses the "remote control" device to change channels?

   ____ 1 I usually do.
   ____ 2 My husband usually does.
   ____ 3 My children usually do.
   ____ 4 The remote control is shared by family members.
   ____ 5 Other. Please explain: ____________________________
   ____ 6 I do not have a remote control device.

5. What are some of your favorite television programs--those you watch regularly or whenever you get a chance?

   ______________________________________
   ______________________________________
   ______________________________________

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6. How often do you watch the following types of television programs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Type</th>
<th>Number of Choices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PBS (shows such as Nature and Masterpiece Theatre)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movies (either regular films or made-for-TV movies)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation Comedies (such as The Cosby Show or Who’s the Boss)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hour-long Dramas (such as L.A. Law and Murder, She Wrote)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News (such as evening news or CNN)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News Documentaries (such as 60 Minutes and 20/20)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime Documentaries (such as America’s Most Wanted and Unsolved Mysteries)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk Shows (such as Phil Donahue and Oprah Winfrey)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game Shows (such as The Price is Right and Jeopardy)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soap Operas (such as The Young and the Restless and General Hospital)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Music Video</strong> (such as MTV or Friday Night Videos)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sports Programs</strong> (such as NFL Football and Pro Tennis)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Variety or Specials</strong> (such as the Miss America Pageant and the Academy Awards)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Late-night human interest/news</strong> (such as A Current Affair or Inside Edition)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. WOMEN ON TELEVISION. Indicate whether you agree or disagree with the statement, "I admire this TV character." (1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree; 3= no opinion; 4= agree; 5= strongly agree)

(Circle number)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I ADMIRE THIS TV CHARACTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murphy Brown (&quot;Murphy Brown&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harriet Nelson (Ozzie and Harriet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roseanne Conner (&quot;Roseanne&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret Anderson (&quot;Father Knows Best&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clair Huxtable (&quot;The Cosby Show&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca Howe (&quot;Cheers&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aunt Bea Taylor (&quot;The Andy Griffith Show&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peg Bundy (&quot;Married With Children&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Richards (&quot;The Mary Tyler Moore Show&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucy Ricardo (&quot;I Love Lucy&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elyse Keaton (&quot;Family Ties&quot;)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. ATTITUDES ABOUT TELEVISION: Circle a number for each of the following to show whether you agree or disagree with the following statements about television (1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree; 3= no opinion; 4= agree; 5= strongly agree).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>No Opinion</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Television viewing is something I look forward to each day.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children are better off without TV.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I watch TV to get away from the ordinary cares and problems of the day.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is too much sex on TV.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would prefer TV without commercials.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If we didn't have TV, our family life would suffer.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television is a consistent part of my daily routine.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV has educational value.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find commercials very helpful in keeping me informed.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV provides me with something to talk about with my friends.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV can be the source of positive family experiences.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is too much violence on TV.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV is an important source of entertainment for me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV keeps me company when alone.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I often feel guilty when watching TV.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV keeps me informed about what is going on in the world.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. In the last 60 days, have you done any of the following? (Check all that apply).

___1  Rented a movie.
___2  Read a book.
___3  Gone to a movie.
___4  Bought a book.

10. How often do you use the movie ratings (G, PG, PG-13, R, NC-17) in making a decision to rent a movie?

___1  Always
___2  Often
___3  Occasionally
___4  Never
___5  I do not rent movies.

11. Which of the following religious publications do you subscribe to? (Check all that apply)

___1  The Ensign
___2  Dialogue
___3  The Church News
___4  Sunstone
___5  The New Era
___6  BYU Studies
___7  Exponent II

12. On the average, how much time would you say that you spend reading a newspaper during a given week?

__________ hours
13. RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT AND ACTIVITY: We now would like to know more about your religious beliefs, activities, and values.

Circle a number for each of the following to indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements (1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree; 3= not sure; 4= agree; 5= strongly agree).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There is life after death.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My relationship with the Lord is an important part of my life.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some doctrines of the LDS Church are hard for me to accept.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Bible is the word of God.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Smith actually saw God the Father and Jesus Christ.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Holy Ghost is an important influence in my life.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't really care about the L.D.S. Church.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the only true church on the earth.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I love God with all my heart.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church programs and activities are an important part of my life.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I am willing to do whatever the Lord wants me to do. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Not sure | Agree | Strongly agree |
---|---|---|---|---|---|
1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
I do not accept some standards of the L.D.S. Church. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Not sure | Agree | Strongly agree |
---|---|---|---|---|---|
1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
Without religious faith, the rest of my life would not have much meaning. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Not sure | Agree | Strongly agree |
---|---|---|---|---|---|
1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
The L.D.S. Church puts too many restrictions on its members. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Not sure | Agree | Strongly agree |
---|---|---|---|---|---|
1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
14. How well do the following statements describe you? (circle number)

(circle number) DESCRIBES ME

| | Not at all | Somewhat | Exactly |
---|---|---|---|
I try hard to carry my religion over into all my other dealings in life. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
I live a Christian life. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
I share what I have with the poor. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
I am honest in my dealings with others. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
I encourage others to believe in Jesus. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
I seek God's guidance when making important decisions in my life. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
I forgive others. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
I admit my sins to God and pray for his forgiveness. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
I am spiritual person. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
RELIGIOUS PARTICIPATION: We would like to know what kinds of religious activities you participate in and find meaningful.

15. How frequently do you and your family do the following things together? (Circle number)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Never a year</th>
<th>Monthly a month</th>
<th>Weekly a week</th>
<th>Daily</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have family prayer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have religious discussions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read the Bible or other scriptures</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. Other than blessing the food, how often do you usually have personal prayer?

- ___1 Never
- ___2 Only during times of special need
- ___3 Monthly
- ___4 A few times a month
- ___5 Weekly
- ___6 A few times a week
- ___7 Daily

17. In the past twelve months, how often have you attended the following L.D.S. Church meetings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting</th>
<th>Never a year</th>
<th>Monthly a month</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sacrament Meeting</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relief Society*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*If you are involved in Primary or the Young Women's Organization, indicate what your Relief Society attendance would be if you were not involved in these organizations.
18. FAMILY, FRIENDS, NEIGHBORS: We are interested in knowing about the people you associate with and those with whom you might discuss issues related to television.

Please list in the first column below all the adults who are important to you in your life. Please use first names or initials that only you can identify. List all family members, friends, neighbors, co-workers who are:

A. People you depend on for help with day to day problems. This includes taking care of your children, helping with work around the house, borrowing tools or equipment, etc.

List the people with whom you associate:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IS THIS PERSON:</th>
<th>TYPE OF RELATIONSHIP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - Female</td>
<td>1 - Depend on for help with day to day problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - Male</td>
<td>2 - See on a regular social basis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 - Talk with about worries or concerns</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Write the appropriate number in the box below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>7</td>
<td></td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td></td>
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<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ALL that apply
**B.** People you see on a regular basis. You may have dinner with them, go to the movies together, or share hobbies or special interests.

**C.** People you talk with about personal worries and concerns, or whose advice you seek before making a decision.

Please list each person only once. Space has been provided for eleven names. Please select the eleven that are most important to you. When you have completed the list, answer the questions in each of the six columns across the page.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOW FREQUENTLY DO YOU DISCUSS WHAT YOU WATCH ON TV WITH THIS PERSON?</th>
<th>IS THIS PERSON A MEMBER OF THE LDS CHURCH?</th>
<th>IS THIS PERSON AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE LDS CHURCH?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - Never</td>
<td>1 - Yes</td>
<td>1 - Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - Seldom</td>
<td>2 - No</td>
<td>2 - No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - Sometimes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - Often</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

165
19. What is your age?
___ years

20. What is your current marital status?
___ 1 single (never married)
___ 2 married
___ 3 widowed
___ 4 separated
___ 5 divorced but not remarried

21. If married, what type of marriage ceremony did you have?
   (for current or most recent marriage)
___ 1 Civil
___ 2 Church
___ 3 Civil or church followed by temple sealing
___ 4 Temple Marriage
___ 5 Never Married

22. Do you have any children?
___ 1 yes
___ 2 no

23. If you do have children, how many?

24. Last week, were you staying at home, employed full-time,
   part-time, going to school or what?
___ 1 employed full-time (either for employer or self-employed)
___ 2 employed part-time
___ 3 in school full-time (or on summer vacation)
___ 4 full-time homemaker
___ 5 unemployed, laid off, looking for work

25. If you have a full or part-time job outside the home, what
    is your occupation or job title?

26. If married, what is your spouse’s occupation?
27. What is your total annual household income? (that is, not just yours if there are others contributing to the family income)

   1  less than $9,999
   2  $10,000 - 19,999
   3  $20,000 - 29,999
   4  $30,000 - 49,999
   5  $50,000 or more

28. Circle the highest grade in school you have completed.

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20+
   Elementary  High School  College, Technical, or Graduate School

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

The things you consider most important about your television viewing and religious life may not have been covered in this questionnaire. Please feel free to make any additional comments in the space provided below (use back of this page if more space is needed).

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP. YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE QUESTIONNAIRE. NOW, PLEASE PLACE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE ENVELOPE PROVIDED AND MAIL IT TODAY. BE SURE TO MAIL THE POSTCARD TOO.
Appendix D

Semi-Structured Final Interview Questions

This interview is completely anonymous. Your name will not be connected with any of this information. When I start the tape I will give you a code number.

1a. When you filled out your pre-screening survey, you mentioned that you watch television from_________. (Summarize their attitudes toward television revealed on the pre-screening survey, questions 1-6.) Can you expand on this?

1b. How do you feel about television?

1c. How do you feel about television in relation to your close friends and family?

2a. You mentioned in your survey that you talked to _______ about television. (Name the individuals, their relationship to the participant, and how often they talk about television with that person, e.g. "sometimes," "often," etc.)

2b. How do each of these individuals talk about television?

2c. Do you find that any of the attitudes of these people toward television are similar to yours? (Go over each individual with whom they speak with about television, and ask how similar this individual's attitude toward television is to the theirs'.)

2d. Does the way these people talk about television influence your attitudes toward television? How?
2e. Tell me a little bit about your home life as you were growing up.

2f. What were your parents (care givers) like?

2g. How did they talk bout television?

2h. Do you feel that the way they talked about television influenced your attitudes toward television?

2i. Tell me a little bit about religion in your home as you were growing up.

2j. Did this influence your attitudes toward television?

2k. Were there set standards for viewing television in your home as you were growing up?

2l. Do you have standards for viewing television in your home? What are they?

2m. Are the standards your parents (care givers) had for television when you were growing up similar to the standards you have for television in your home today? How so?

3a. Beside your parents, are there others beside _____ whom you discuss television with? (List the name of people they mentioned on their survey in section 18.)

3b. How do these people talk about television?

3c. Do you feel these people influence your attitudes toward television?

3d. Do any of these people belong to religious denominations?

3e. Which denominations do they belong to?

3f. Are they devout members?
3g. Do you feel their religious beliefs influence their attitudes toward television?

3h. Do you feel your religious beliefs influence their attitudes toward television?

3i. Do these individuals have set standards for television viewing?

3j. Are these standards similar to yours?

3k. Have they tried to impose their standards for television viewing on you?

4a. Do you feel that your conversations with other individuals influences your attitudes toward television?

4b. How?

4c. Why do you think this is so?

5a. When you set your standards for television viewing in your home, did you talk to any one to help you set these standards?

5b. Who?
Appendix E

Script for Judges’ Panel

I’m doing a study on television viewing in which I am trying to create categories of information by grouping comments I have obtained from interviews. I have pre-sorted these categories and would like you take a look at them.

a. Could you please look at the categories critically?

b. What is your general feedback on these categories?

c. How do you feel about the categories as they are grouped?

d. Are there any other categories you can find beside those I have discovered?

e. Can you think of other ways to name these categories?

f. Do you have any additional comments?
Appendix F

General Biographical Profile of Participants

Traditionals

Susan

Biography

Susan was primarily raised in Colorado. She is 47 years old, married with 9 children. She was married in the LDS temple. She is currently unemployed and works as a full-time homemaker. She has two years of college education. Her husband earns from $30,000 to $49,000 a year.

Personal View on Television

"There are some very good things on it (television), but I think that it is one of those things that is a good thing being used for some very wrong reasons, too. I think it’s something you really need to have a lot of control over or it can control you and the family."
Traditional

Anne

Biography

Anne was primarily raised in England. She is 52 years old, married with six children. She was married in the LDS temple. She is currently unemployed and works as a full-time homemaker. She has one year of college education. Her husband earns $50,000 or more a year.

Personal View on Television

"Oh, yea. It (television) can have an influence for good or for bad. It depends on what you watch, but if my children watched violent shows, I definitely agree that it would influence them .... (My parents') attitude toward television is entirely different from mine .... I wouldn't even dream of watching what they watch."
Traditional
Margaret

Biography

Margaret was primarily raised in Idaho. She is 47 years old, married with nine children. She was married in the LDS temple. She is currently unemployed and works as a full-time homemaker. She has three years of college education. Her husband earns between $30,000 and $49,000 a year.

Personal View on Television

"Generally, I think (television) is a waste of time. I think that the time could be far better spent in visiting or doing an activity. I would far rather, for example, have my children play a board game together than watch television. I have at certain times been quite resentful that my husband and my sons watch television, for example sports and so on. I don't feel nearly that strongly at the present time, because I realize now that it's just their way of relaxing."
Traditional

Heather

Biography

Heather was not raised in one location, because her father was in the Navy. She spent a lot of time in Japan while she was growing up. She is 39 years old, married with four children. She was first married civilly and then in the LDS temple. She is currently unemployed and works as a full-time homemaker. She has three years of college education. Her husband earns $50,000 or more a year.

Personal View on Television

"I think that TV can be a positive thing or a negative thing. I feel that on the commercial stations they have sunk to the lowest common denominator and they will continued to sink to the lowest denominator .... There is a lot of TV... that really doesn't have any redeeming value whatsoever."
Traditional

Mary

**Biography**

Mary was primarily raised in Wyoming. She is 82 years old, married with 13 children. Six of her children survived birth. She was married in the LDS temple. She is currently unemployed and works as a full-time homemaker. She and her husband collect less than $9,999 a year in social security.

**Personal View on Television**

"I feel that it (television) is a wonderful invention, but it is also a tool of the devil. It does a great deal of harm to children, is the way I feel about it. Because, in the first place the media has a tendency to control their minds and keep them in the worldly atmosphere. And, this is not good for children. They grow up thinking that’s the way things are supposed to be and it isn’t good."
Traditional

Angela

Biography

Angela was primarily raised in Utah. She is 70 years old, married with nine children. She was married in the LDS temple. She is currently unemployed and works as a full-time homemaker. She has one year of college education. Her husband earns between $30,000 and $49,999 a year.

Personal View on Television

"I'm not against TV. I think there is so much good that can be and does come from it, but I think the evil is overcoming that which is good for most of the families. .... I'm definitely concerned about the predominance of the mayhem and the type of shows that are being shown .... I learn more from what I read than actually watching, but what little bit I have seen, most of them are just way too violent and I frankly feel like the media are going to have to be held responsible."
Indepedents

Jean

Biography

Jean was primarily raised in Idaho. She is 64 years old, married with four children. She was first married civilly and then in the LDS temple. She is currently unemployed and works as a full-time homemaker. She has six years of college education. Her husband earns between $30,000 and $49,999 a year.

Personal View on Television

"Well, I enjoy television. It's relaxing for me. That's why I watch it mostly in the evening, because that is the time I want to sit down and relax and kind of come down from the day's activities and television is perfect to do that by .... I have the feeling that many people can get on a hobby horse sort of thing and pooh-pooh and bah-bah everything that comes over television, and I disagree. I think they miss a lot if they take that attitude. You will throw the baby out with the bath water if you're not careful .... For sporting events and things of that nature most people tend to feel that television is very helpful because you can sit at home in your nice warm house and see the same action that people see in the stadium or the gyms and they are crowded and it's cold. "

178
Independent

Jill

Biography

Jill was primarily raised in Utah. She is 64 years old, married with three children. She was married in the LDS temple. She is currently unemployed and works as a full-time homemaker. She has five years of college education. Her husband earns $50,000 or more a year.

Personal View on Television

"I enjoy TV and I enjoy the news and the programming. I think adds something to my life. I enjoy and I love to get involved in educational things .... I think it would be better maybe if we would have more high class programming or use it more as a teaching tool, more as a moral tool to teach good behavior in people. I feel like television right now .... almost goes to the lowest denominator .... My (husband) can make me feel guilty because I'm watching it. Then he throws up, 'Why are we watching this much.? Only one program a night or two.' So, yes, he can make me feel guilty about it. But, I tell him, 'Honey, my job is in here and your's is out there .... It just gets awful boring doing the same thing day in and day out.' So, I say, 'Why don't you get me a radio?'"
Independent

Carol

Biography

Carol was primarily raised in Utah. She is 27 years old and has never been married. She is currently employed as a flight attendant. She has two years of college education. She earns from $20,000 to $29,999 a year.

Personal View on Television

"I like watching in the morning. When I’m getting ready I usually turn the TV on. I like to listen to the news at that time. When I come home from work I turn it on—a way to relax, unwind a bit. Then there are times when you can’t go to sleep and you’ll go turn the TV on."
Independent

Hana

Biography

Hana was primarily raised in California. She is 50 years old, married with eight children. She is currently unemployed and works as a full-time homemaker. She has two years of college education. Her husband earns from $20,000 to $29,999 a year.

Personal View on Television

"We all like it (television). We all watch it .... I don’t know any of my friends who have thrown away their TV. Everyone I know watches TV, and I’m not there late at night, so I don’t know everything they (my children) watch, but they watch on a regular basis .... I don’t consider it, like so many people do, that it’s going to ruin your life and your children’s lives and all that kind of stuff .... If you’re involved in the business (theater) at all, you really need to keep up and keep abreast of things, because things do change, acting styles and all kinds of stuff that has to do with your business."
Independent

Cheryl

Biography

Cheryl was raised in California and Utah. She is 29 years old and has never been married. She is currently employed as lawyer. She has at least eight years of college education. She earns $50,000 or more a year.

Personal View on Television

"I love television .... I love television. It’s entertaining. It’s funny. It’s informative. It’s actually pretty good most of the time, however, sometimes it can be boring. I don’t watch boring. I only watch certain nights .... I read the TV guide that comes in the paper on Sunday so I know what’s coming during the week so I can plan my week and see what I want to watch that’s fun .... My friends and I talk a lot about TV shows. My family and I watch a ton of shows together and we watch a ton of TV .... We’re all media junkies, so we all talk a lot (about the media). I watch with my friend. We watch certain shows and we talk about them after."
Independent

Jennifer

Biography

Jennifer was raised in Utah. She is 53 years old, married with five children. She works part time at a school and part time as a volunteer. She has six years of college education. She and her husband earn $50,000 or more a year.

Personal View on Television

"Oh, I think it’s great. I think it really offers an awful lot and opens it up to society to know what’s going on in life. To be introduced a little bit, you know to a certain extent to politicians, to be introduced to what’s going on in the news .... But, at the same time, I feel like it brings a lot of things into the home that I don’t want."
Contextual

Cathy

Biography

Cathy was primarily raised in Nebraska. She is 54 years old, married with 4 children. She was married in the LDS temple. She is currently unemployed and works as a full-time homemaker. She has four years of college education. Her husband earns $50,000 or more a year.

Personal View on Television

"I like television because it calms me down and it kind of makes me think about other things and stop worrying. I worry a lot and so for me it is a real distraction .... So, I really enjoy television and I would watch it .... I have to just totally relax to get prepared for bed or I don't sleep. It is just my personality style .... As to it's influence on (children), I think it is really dangerous. I don't like the influence. I think it has a strong influence like music does and we need to be very careful."
Contextual

Melonie

Biography

Melonie was primarily raised in California. She is 34 years old, married with no children. She was married civilly first and then later married in the LDS temple. She is currently a renown musician and music teacher. She has had six years of college education. She and her husband together earn $50,000 or more a year.

Personal View on Television

"I think it could be a very educational thing. It's an instrument in the world that has actually cut down on prejudices in people, because suddenly you see other cultures and realize that those are normal for them .... So, that you don't have a sense of isolation. I think it's broadening to society."
Contextual

Joyce

Biography

Joyce was primarily raised in Idaho. She is 56 years old, married with 7 children. She was married in the LDS temple. She is currently unemployed and works as a full-time homemaker. She has five years of college education. She did not disclose her household earnings.

Personal View on Television

"My children have a very bad habit of having it on while they study. I try, but it's hard with someone that age. By the time they're nineteen .... Maybe, I'm a defeatist .... Sometimes what I call bad TV, TV I don't like ... opens a window of opportunity to discuss some subjects that may be more difficult to bring up. Sexual relationships and mores."
Contextual

Rose

Biography

Rose was primarily raised in Utah. She is 36 years old and is divorced. She was originally married in the LDS temple. She is currently employed as a corporate executive. She has one year of college education. She earns from $30,000 to $49,999 a year.

Personal View on Television

"I think some television is ‘okay’ and I think there is some good programs on that are very educational. And, I don’t mind my kids watching their favorite little program or something, and watching maybe an hour or so a day. But, that’s it. I don’t like them to just vegetate. There’s, like I said earlier, more important things to do than watch television."
Biography

Jeanette was primarily raised in Arizona. She is 35 years old, married with 5 children. She was married in the LDS temple. She is currently unemployed and works as a full-time homemaker. She has a high school education. Her husband earns from $30,000 to $49,999 a year.

Personal View on Television

"How do I feel about it? I don't like it. I hate it. I do. It's one of those things that I hate, but you can't live without. When we were in Chile, we didn't have one, you know, a TV for a year and a half. And it was wonderful. I never missed it at all. So, when we moved back, I thought, 'We're just not going to have one and so for about maybe six months we didn't have one. But then we ended up getting one, just so the kids could watch Sesame Street or videos. And, then you just get back into the habit of watching it again. But I hate it. I really wished I had the strength to just throw it out."
Contextual

Misty

Biography

Misty was primarily raised in Utah. She is 28 years old, married with no children. She was married in the LDS temple. She is currently works part time as a curator at a local art museum. She has eight years of college education. She and her husband earn from $30,000 to $49,999 a year.

Personal View on Television

"I guess I view it (television) mostly now as my source of news, since we just get a paper on Sundays. I mostly just watch news programs, but my views of TV have really changed. I used to really like the sit-coms and the game shows and the purely entertainment side of it. Now, I feel TV is more for me ... news, education. Except for movies and to be entertained with movies. But, how do I feel about it in general? I think it's sort of going down hill."
Appendix G
Phases of Judges’ Panel Discussions

Session I
1. Analysis of Interpretive Community I (Traditionals) --
   approximately 30-40 minutes
2. Analysis of Interpretive Community II (Contextuals) --
   approximately 30-40 minutes
3. Analysis of Interpretive Community III (Independents) --
   approximately 30-40 minutes

Session II
1. Contrast/Comparative Analysis of all Interpretive Communities (Traditionals,
   Contextuals, Independents) in the Social Interaction category --
   approximately 15 minutes
2. Contrast/Comparative Analysis of All Interpretive Communities (Traditionals,
   Contextuals, Independents) in the Personal View category --
   approximately 15 minutes

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### Table 1

**Profile of Judges in Panel Discussion Session I**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Sex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Homemaker</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Graduate Student/</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Homemaker</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Semi Retired/</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Civil Engineer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Undergraduate Student</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** The judges’ panel in Session II included all of the judges in Session I with the exception of judge number 4.
Table 2

General Categories Formed During Open Coding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Interaction</td>
<td>Types of social interaction and influence (conversations, talk, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal View</td>
<td>Personal views on general and specific topics (television, religion, communities, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Associations</td>
<td>The religious denominations of those that participants associate with.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Times Have Changed With Television</td>
<td>Comments on how television has changed over the years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Categorical</td>
<td>Comments that were non-categorical.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3

Sub-Categories Formed From General Categories During Axial Coding: Personal Views Not Related to Television, (PV = Personal Views, E = Extended Family Community, R = Religion)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Sub-Category/Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PV</td>
<td>Personal Views (comments that are personal views not related to television).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVE</td>
<td>Personal Views on Extended Family Community (comments that are personal views on the extended family community, not related to television).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVRE</td>
<td>Personal Views on Religion in Relation to the Extended Family Community (comments that are personal views on religion in relation to the extended family community, not related to television).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4

Sub-Categories Formed From General Categories During Axial Coding: Personal Views Related to Television. (C = Collective Community, I = Immediate Family, E = Extended Family, R = Religion, SS = Set Standards, IS = Imposed Standards.

Personal Views Related to Television, PVT = Personal Views on Television)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Sub-Category/Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PVT</td>
<td>Personal Views on Television (comments that are personal views on television).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVTC</td>
<td>Personal Views on Television in Relation to the Collective Other Community (General Family, Friends, Acquaintances, Church Leaders, Lecturers, etc.) Relative to Personal Strategies for Interpreting Television.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVTI</td>
<td>Personal Views on Television in Relation to the Immediate Family Community (Husband, Children) Relative to Personal Strategies for Interpreting Television.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVTE</td>
<td>Personal Views on Television in Relation to the Extended Family Community (Parents, Siblings) Relative to Personal Strategies for Interpreting Television.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVRCT</td>
<td>Personal Views on Religion and Television in Relation to the Collective Other Community (General Family, Friends, Acquaintances, Church Leaders, Lecturers, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVRIT</td>
<td>Personal Views on Religion and Television in Relation to the Immediate Family Community (Husband, Children).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(table continues)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Sub-Category/Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PVRET</td>
<td>Personal Views on Television and Religion in Relation to the Extended Family Community (Parents, Siblings).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVSSC</td>
<td>Personal Views on Set Standards for Television Viewing in Relation to the Collective Other Community (General Family, Friends, Acquaintances, Church Leaders, Lecturers, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVSSI</td>
<td>Personal Views on Set Standards for Television Viewing in Relation to the Immediate Family Community (Husband, Children).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVSSE</td>
<td>Personal Views on Set Standards for Television Viewing in Relation to the Extended Family Community (Parents and Siblings).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVISC</td>
<td>Personal Views on Imposed Standards for Television Viewing in Relation to the Collective Community (General Family, Friends, Acquaintances, Church Leaders, Lecturers, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVISI</td>
<td>Personal Views on Imposed Standards for Television Viewing in Relation to the Immediate Family Community (Husband and Children).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVISE</td>
<td>Personal Views on Imposed Standards for Television Viewing in Relation to the Extended Family Community (Parents and Siblings).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5

Sub-Categories Formed From General Categories During Axial Coding: Social Interaction Related to Television (SI = Social Interaction or Influence)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Sub-Category/Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SICT</td>
<td>Social Interaction With or the Influence of the Collective Other Community (General Family, Friends, Acquaintances, Church Leaders, Lecturers, etc.) in Relation to Personal Strategies for Interpreting Television.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIIT</td>
<td>Social Interaction With or the Influence of the Immediate Family Community (Husband, Children) in Relation to Personal Strategies for Interpreting Television.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIET</td>
<td>Social Interaction With or the Influence of the Extended Family Community (Parents, Siblings) in Relation to Personal Strategies for Interpreting Television.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIRCT</td>
<td>Social Interaction With or the Influence of the Collective Other Community (General Family, Friends, Acquaintances, Church Leaders, Lecturers, etc.) in Relation to Personal Strategies for Interpreting Television in the Context of Religion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIRIT</td>
<td>Social Interaction With or the Influence of the Immediate Family Community (Husband, Children) in Relation to Personal Strategies for Interpreting Television in the Context of Religion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIRET</td>
<td>Social Interaction With or the Influence of the Extended Family Community (Parents, Siblings) in Relation to Personal Strategies for Interpreting Television in the Context of Religion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(table continues)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Sub-Category/Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SIISC</td>
<td>Social Interaction With or the Influence of the Collective Family Community (General Family, Friends, Acquaintances, Church Leaders, Lecturers, etc.) in Relation to Imposed Standards for Television Viewing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIISI</td>
<td>Social Interaction With or the Influence of the Immediate Family Community (Husband and Children) in Relation to Imposed Standards for Television Viewing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIISE</td>
<td>Social Interaction With or the Influence of the Extended Family Community (Parents and Siblings) in Relation to Imposed Standards for Television Viewing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6

Sub-Categories Formed From General Categories During Axial Coding: Social Interaction Links (L = Links)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Sub-Category/Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SILC</td>
<td>Social Interaction Link to Conditional Levels—Between Self and the Collective Other Community (General Family, Friends, Acquaintances, Church Leaders, Lecturers, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SILE</td>
<td>Social Interaction Link to Conditional Levels—Between Self and the Extended Family Community (Parents and Siblings).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SILCR</td>
<td>Link to Conditional Levels, Conditional Paths Between Self and the Collective Other Community (General Family, Friends, Acquaintances, Church Leaders, Lecturers, etc.) in the Context of Religion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SILER</td>
<td>Link to Conditional Levels, Conditional Paths Between Self and the Extended Family Community (Parents and Siblings) in the Context of Religion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7

**Sub-Categories Formed From General Categories During Axial Coding: Religious Associations (RA = Religious Associations)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Sub-Category/Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RAC</td>
<td>Religious Association With the Collective Other Community (General Family, Friends, Acquaintances, Church Leaders, Lecturers, etc.) in Relation to Social Interaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAE</td>
<td>Religious Association With the Extended Family Community in Relation to Social Interaction (Parents, Siblings).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Participants' immediate family members are members of the LDS Church.*
Table 8

Sub-Categories Formed From General Categories During Axial Coding: Times Have Changed With Television, Reflecting Modifications that Result From the Judges' Panel Discussion, Session I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Primary Category/ Description</th>
<th>Sub-Categories/ Before</th>
<th>Sub-Categories/ After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TC</td>
<td>Comments on how television has changed over the years.</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>1. Comparison between TV today and TV yesterday.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Comments that were non-categorical.</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>1. Facts 2. List of movies preferred.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Number 1 under "Sub-Categories/After" actually reflects additional labeling.
ENDNOTES

1. "Latter Day Saint" is the name applied to members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

2. The LDS church warns its members against the negative influence of television (Ballard, 1989).

3. "Mormon" is a also name applied to members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

4. The paradigm provided by Schröder (1994) resembles the Conditional Matrix provided by Strauss and Corbin in that it transcends the primary community of study to incorporate the study of other communities. These paradigms offer a means of exploring the social interaction of the interpretive community through social semiotic analysis.

5. Relief Society is a LDS Church meeting for women.

6. Philo T. Farnsworth developed the idea of the image dissector, one of the inventions that led to television. (Barnhart & Barnhart, 1980, p. 51)

7. See Appendix F for a biography of the participants.

8. Brigham Young’s original quotation can be found in the Journal of Discourses in Brigham Young’s dedication of the New Theater in Salt Lake City, March 6, 1862: "The Lord understands the evil and the good; why should we not likewise understand them? We should. Why? To know how to choose the good and refuse the evil; which we cannot do, unless we understand the evil as well as the good. I do not wish to convey the idea that it is necessary to commit evil in order to obtain this knowledge. Upon the stage of a theatre can be represented in character, evil and its consequences, good and its happy results and rewards; the weakness and the follies of man, the magnanimity of virtue and the greatness of truth. The stage can be made to aid the pulpit in impressing upon the minds of a community an enlightened sense of a virtuous life, also a proper horror of the enormity of sin and a just dread of its consequences. The path of sin with its thorns and pitfalls, its gins and snares can be revealed, and how to shun it" (Young, 1862, p. 243.)

9. See the narratives in Chapter IV for detailed examples.

10. See the body of this thesis for reading references to these terms.
A Qualitative Study of
Interpretive Communities Among LDS Women

Oleah Clegg
Department of Communications
M.A. Degree, March 1995

ABSTRACT

Recent studies have shown that a number of researchers have turned to the concept of the interpretive community to explain how audiences interpret the media within the context of their everyday experiences (Biocca, 1989; Gunter, 1989; Lindlof, 1989, 1992; Radway, 1984; Schroder, 1994). D. A. Stout (1993) conducted a study that discovered three interpretive communities among LDS women who watch television, establishing that interpretive communities do exist among religious media audiences.

In 1994, K. Schröder showed that the interpretive community can be further understood by taking a "social semiotic" approach to analyzing interpretive community members' social interaction with other communities. This study explored the nature of the interpretive community by using qualitative methodology and a social semiotic approach to analyze the social interaction patterns of Stout’s (1993) interpretive communities of LDS women who watch television.

COMMITTEE APPROVAL:

Daniel A. Stout, Committee Chair

Dennis G. Martin, Committee Member

Allen W. Palmer, Committee Member

Daniel A. Stout, Graduate Coordinator