

might add that a part of our educational preparation for the profession of teaching might

well include experiences along this line. But that is another story for another day.

The University of Michigan Television Hour

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HOW CAN good education be made into good television? This question is being asked by educators, television station operators, and many others who are intrigued by the possibilities for use by education, and especially adult education, of the methods and techniques of this new mass medium. Some answers resulting from experimentation are already being gathered.

The University of Michigan Television Hour has been one of these experiments. It was presented from November, 1950, to June, 1951, as a public service program of station WWJ-TV, owned by *The Detroit News*. The time, from one to two o'clock on Sunday afternoons, was selected because that was one period that could be guaranteed permanently, whereas others might be subject to commercial pressures.

The University's Committee on Broadcasting was charged

with the responsibility for production of the program and the Extension Service for administration of the educational details. It was agreed that if the experiment was to have validity, the conditions under which it was conducted should include those factors that would be present if the program were to continue and be partially self-supporting.

The original proposal from WWJ-TV, presented during the summer of 1950, suggested that the one-hour program be divided into three 20-minute periods. One period was to present a course of the standard academic type; another, a course of general interest, typifying adult education; and the third, a portrayal of one of the many activities that would assist in interpreting the University to the general public.

Again, to conform to usual educational practices, the program was divided into two se-

mesters of 14 weeks each. Each academic course was to continue for 14 weeks, but each of the adult education courses was scheduled for only seven weeks.

How would students register? Were fees to be charged, and, if so, how much? Would anyone pay to enroll if he could get the entire program just by turning the dial on his television set? Everyone agreed that some registration fee should be charged and that supplementary course material should be sent only to those who enrolled. Moreover, the fee should be small enough to make it possible for all to enroll, even though they might be in the low income group. On the other hand, it was hoped that the amount collected in registration fees would pay a fair portion of the cost of printing and distributing the supplementary materials. The fees finally established were two dollars for the 14-week courses and one dollar for those lasting seven weeks. An examination was to be given to those who enrolled in each course and a certificate of participation was promised to those who wrote the examination. Decisions about all these details had to be completed before public announcements of the program could be made.

The program was promoted by *The Detroit News* through its news columns and in display

advertisements carrying registration information and forms, by radio station WWJ and television station WWJ-TV, by articles in the Extension Service News and other University publications, and by posters and announcements distributed through channels used in the promotion of other Extension programs.

Production

As the Extension Service was working with these developments related to the mechanics of the educational factors, the director of television appointed by the Committee on Broadcasting was organizing a staff and preparing the program. Production is such a technical matter, however, that a detailed description would be too long for inclusion in this report. Major emphasis is therefore on those features in which the adult educator rather than the producer is normally involved.

In production, also, preliminary decisions had to be made with only general adult education experience to serve as a guide. For example, what academic subjects would lend themselves to presentation by television? The 14 separate programs to be presented on successive Sundays would have to have continuity and yet each had to be an entity by itself. Part of

the listening and viewing audience each week would be seeing the program for the first time. For them, that program had to stand alone—it could not be dependent either on what had gone before or on what was to come after.

Even after suitable subjects were suggested, what about the instructor? It was felt that, in addition to academic competence, many of these qualifications would be desirable: easy speaking manner; good presence; ability to use his hands in demonstrations; freedom from distracting mannerisms; experience in teaching adults; cooperative spirit; and an interest in trying to teach by television. This last factor is of utmost importance as long, hot hours are involved in preparing and perfecting each lesson, and not everyone is willing to subject himself to the severe discipline of a weekly program. Also, a weekly supplement had to be prepared for those enrolling and that, too, was the instructor's responsibility. In addition, he had to be willing to prepare an examination that could be checked quickly and easily by the office staff.

Although everything mentioned in the preceding paragraphs was written with the academic courses in mind, it applies almost as well to the

general interest courses. About the only difference was that these presentations were less intensive and more informal.

The third section of each program was used to portray one of the many features of the University as a means of interpreting for the people of the State the function and scope of campus activities. Many of the resources for research were telecast as well as some of the unusual facilities like the hospital, special laboratories, and quarters of the Institute for Human Adjustment. On the lighter side, parts of the opera, "The Magic Flute", and the Michigan Union Opera, with its all-male cast, were presented. This portion of the program originated on the campus one Sunday each month, and WWJ-TV provided a mobile unit for the remote pick-up.

Statistics

According to the summary fact sheet prepared by the director of television, the average studio camera rehearsal time for the 60-minute program was three hours, with full crew, on the day of the telecast. This rehearsal time was naturally limited by the 40 miles between the University in Ann Arbor and the television studio in Detroit. The average of man-hours consumed by University personnel

was 210, computed as follows: production assistance, 80; production supervision, 40; script, 30; rehearsal and performance by instructors and special guest participants, 60. A faculty member appearing as talent was paid the regular University lecture stipend. Art work and script-writing assistants were paid by the hour. Other departments were paid for services rendered, such as cartage, transportation and photography.

The reception by the general public, as indicated by the number of enrollments, exceeded expectations. Courses offered during the first semester and the number of enrollments in each were: Man in His World: Human Biology (14 weeks), 410; Living in the Later Years: Hobbies Put to Work (7 weeks), 251; Photography (7 weeks), 836; total, 1497. Of these, 929 enrollments were made by males and 568 by females. Enrollments during the second semester were: Lands and Peoples of the Far East (14 weeks), 220; Interior Design (7 weeks), 522; Retailing and the Customer (7 weeks), 127; total, 869. Of these, 258 were made by males and 611 by females. Surveys by WWJ-TV indicated a viewing audience of nearly 100,000.

Enrollments for credit toward the Certificate of Participation were not accepted after the fourth session of each course. A survey of the student body showed that the students were serious about their participation. In the 14-week courses, 71 per cent saw 11 or more of the programs and 35 per cent saw all the lessons. In the shorter courses 83 per cent saw five or more, and 45 per cent saw all of them. As many as eight people saw the program on one set, and 55 per cent reported that three or four people usually viewed the program.

Variations in age by percentages were: teens, 9; twenties, 17; thirties, 27; forties, 26; fifties, 16; and sixties, 5. Percentages showing the educational level of all students in all courses were: grade school, 5.7; high school, 51; business school, 2.9; college, 30.6; professional and graduate school, 9.8. Enthusiastic support was voiced by all groups and the request for continuation of the program was unanimous. Suggestions of other subjects were made and are being considered for the future. From the point of view of both the University and WWJ-TV the experiment was a success and the program will be continued indefinitely.