
PRESS & TELEVISION

*TV and
the Elderly*

"How the Elderly Perceive Television Commercials" by Elliot S. Schreiber and Douglas A. Boyd, in *Journal of Communication* (Winter 1980), P.O. Box 13358, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101.

The elderly are not only a large (11 percent) and growing part of the U.S. population—but they watch more television than any other age group, according to the Nielsen ratings. Schreiber and Boyd, communications specialists at the University of Delaware, Newark, report that income, education, and age are good predictors of senior citizens' TV viewing habits.

The authors surveyed 442 persons, age 60 to 91, at senior citizens' centers and apartment houses for the elderly in and around Wilmington, Del. In general, they found that better-educated individuals who had held professional, clerical, and proprietary jobs watched fewer hours of television than their less-educated counterparts who had held lower-status jobs. However, the heaviest viewers in the study were those with between 7 and 12 years of schooling. Fifty-two percent of this group watched at least four hours of TV each day.

Male high-school graduates concentrated their viewing between 6:00 and 8:00 P.M., when evening news programs are broadcast. After 8:00 P.M., most of the men in front of the television set lacked high-school diplomas. One surprise: 47 percent of college-educated women admitted to problems in distinguishing commercials from regular programming, versus only 13 percent of women with 1–6 years of education.

"Younger elderly"—between 60 and 70 years old—were more apt to pick television as the most influential medium for advertising than were their seniors. Respondents over 70 stated that newspaper and magazine ads affected their buying habits more than TV commercials. Schreiber and Boyd suggest that this pattern stems from age differences in the 1950s, when TV first swept into America's homes.

RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY

*Confusion
over Confucius*

"A New Interpretation of Confucius" by Philip Ho Hwang, in *Philosophy East and West* (Jan. 1980), The University Press of Hawaii, 2840 Kolowalu St., Honolulu, Hawaii 96822.

A man of action, the Chinese philosopher Confucius (551–479 B.C.) discussed human conduct far more than human nature. [He saw the philosopher's task as that of identifying the specific duties that rulers and