1979 NIELSEN REPORT ON TELEVISION



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## 1979 NIELSEN REPORT ON TELEVISION

Television today is available virtually everywhere. Events in a seemingly remote area are relayed instantly by earth satellite around the world. And in the U. S., TV stations are now using satellites to beam their signals across the country for pickup by cable systems.
Use of satellites plus other technological advances such as computerized station operations and home video recorders provide new and exciting opportunities for the television industry.
A. C. Nielsen Company has been proud to have a role in such a dynamic medium, chronicling TV's growth and providing continuous, essential audience research for advertisers, their agencies,
broadcasters, and program producers.
Annually, we have provided a summary of the television year for our clients and others interested in the medium. We trust you will find our 24th report as informative as its predecessors.

The Nielsen data in this booklet are estimates of the audiences and other characteristics of television usage as derived from Nielsen Television Index and Nielsen Station Index measurements. The use of mathematical terms herein should not be regarded as a representation by Nielsen that such measurements are exact to precise mathematical values.


James D. Lyons
President
Media Research Services Group

## Viewers Have a Choice of Many Stations

As of January 1, 1978, there were 727 commercial and 259 public television stations or a total of 986 stations in the U. S., according to the Federal Communications Commission.

Ninety-six percent of all the country's TV households can receive four or more stations, $66 \%$ can receive seven or more stations, and $38 \%$ can receive ten or more stations as reported in the accompanying chart based on a special Nielsen analysis.

STATIONS RECEIVABLE PER TV HOUSEHOLD
(\% SHARE OF TV HOUSEHOLDS)


SOURCE: NTI SAMPLE

## 98\% of U. S. Households Own TV's

Nielsen's annual September update of television ownership shows that 74.5 million households or $98 \%$ of all households in the U.S. own at least one television set. This is an increase of over 14 million homes since 1970.

An estimated $48 \%$ have two or more TV sets and $81 \%$ have at least one color set.


## TV Population Characteristics Continue to Change

Not only has the average size of the nation's TV households declined over the past ten years (from 3.23 persons to 2.75 persons), but there have been other changes worth noting. Household composition by people's ages has shifted, so now there is a larger percentage of older and younger adults and a smaller percentage of mid-aged adults and children ages 2-11. There has also been a slight shift of the population from " $A$ " metro counties to " $C$ \& $D$ " rural counties. Today only $36 \%$ of the households report earnings of $\$ 10,000$ or less compared to $63 \%$ in 1968


## Household TV Usage Almost 6 1/4 Hours a Day

TV households, on the average, viewed an estimated 6 hours and 13 minutes of television a day during the 1977-'78 TV season. This is similar to that of recent seasons, but considerably higher than 12 years ago and 12 minutes more than 7 years ago

In February, 1978, TV usage averaged 7 hours a day compared to just over 5 1/2 hours in July

AVERAGE HOURS OF HOUSEHOLD TV USAGE PER DAY HOURS : MINUTES


NIELSEN ESTIMATES
BASED ON TOTAL U.S. TV HOUSEHOLDS
EXCLUDING UNUSUAL DAYS
SEPT.-AUG AVERAGE



Women View the Most TV and Female Teens the Least

As a general rule, women view more television than men, and older men and women view more
than younger age groups. Also, younger chidree than younger age groups. Also, younger children
view more than older children and teenagers. The viewing actually is distributed disproportionThe viewing actually is distributed disproportion-
ately throughout the day, taking place mainly during
each age groun's availability For exin each age group's availability, For example, prime
time (Monday-Saturday, 8:00-11:00 p.m. \& Sunda) time (Monday-Saturday, 8:00-11:00 p.m. \& Sunday
$7: 00-11: 00$ p.m.) makes up only $13 \%$ of the week total hours, yet with the exception of children 2-5,

Sunday Still the Most Popular Night for Watching TV

Year after year, Sunday night continues to attract the largest TV audience during the viewing week.
Friday evening continues to o the least viewed by Friday evening continues to be the least viewed by
adults and teens, but one of the highest viewed for children. On the average, during November 1978,
when these figures were compiled, nearly 90 million when these ifgures were compiled, nearly 90 million
people were watching TV between 8:00 and 11:00
p.m. EST on the average night. p.m. EST on the average night.

The composition of the audience changes from
8:00 to 11:00 p.m. as the children, teens and finally


TV Usage Affected by Family Size and Presence of Children Even though all types of households view television regularly, certain types view more than
others. As shown here, households with five or m persons watch television substantially more than the average U. S. TV household. Those viewing the leas are one and two person households and households TV usage varied levels ongly varied very slightly by household income annual income viewed under the average for the total



## "Specials" Now a Television Standard

Over the years TV "specials" have played a major role in the networks' programming. Since the 1971-'72 TV season, the hours of "specials"' have increased $73 \%$. Of the four seasons reported, informational type "specials" accounted for the largest share of hours, until the 1977-'78 season


## Nielsen Top Ten "'Specials"

The elite group of all-time top ten "specials" from 1960-1968, consists of five Roots telecasts, three Super Bowl football games and two Bob Hope Christmas Shows.

The 50th Annual Academy Awards and Holocaust Part IV, were the only two non-sports "specials" in the top ten for the 1978 calendar year

## NTI TOP TEN "SPECIALS'" JULY 1960-DECEMBER 1978

## PROGRAM

AVERAGE AUDIENCE \%
SHARE

ROOTS (PART VIII)

| 51.1 | 71 |
| :--- | :--- |
| 47.2 | 67 |
| 46.6 | 64 |
| 45.9 | 66 |
| 45.7 | 71 |
| 45.0 | 61 |
| 44.8 | 68 |
| 44.4 | 73 |
| 44.2 | 74 |
| 44.1 | 62 |

TOP TEN "SPECIALS" (15 MIN. OR LONGER) JANUARY-DECEMBER 1978
SUPER BOWL XII GAME

| 47.2 | 67 |
| :--- | :--- |
| 42.1 | 69 |
| 37.3 | 61 |
| 37.1 | 54 |
| 36.3 | 68 |
| 35.9 | 54 |
| 35.6 | 69 |
| 35.0 | 58 |
| 34.9 | 54 |
| 34.4 | 51 |

WBA WORID HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP
SUPER BOWL XII POST GAME SHOW
50TH ANNUAL ACADEMY AWARDS
WORLD SERIES GAME \#6
NBC NFL CHAMPIONSHIP
CBS NFL CHAMPIONSHIP
BIG EVENT (HOLOCAUST PART IV)
34.4

## Top 15 Syndicated Programs

Currently there are well over 300 different programs which independent distributing organizations offer for sale to individual local stations, including network affiliates as well as independent stations. Many of these programs were at one time on network schedules, and many have never been seen on TV as other than "syndicated" programs. As a result individual stations can supplement network offerings, provide diverse regional programs, and offer national programs attuned to the preferences of the local area

The top 15 syndicated programs among different segments of our population are listed here. The programs are ranked on the basis of their average quarter-hour rating in the Designated Market Area in which they were aired during November 1978


## Nielsen Top 15 Programs

Many different programs rank in television's top 15 in the course of the year. Those shown here were the regular programs that ranked highest during prime time in Nielsen Television Index measurements from mid-September through December, 1978.

The size of a program's audience is but one of a number of ways to assess its worth or success. For example, many programs below the top 15 or 20 are successful because they appeal to a specific target audience that an advertiser or a broadcaster wishes to reach.


## Cable in 18\% of U. S. TV Homes

Over the last year cable has grown by over 10\%, bringing current penetration estimates to approximately $18 \%$ of U. S. TV households November 1978 estimates show that about $13,400,000$ TV households subscribed to a cable service.

Individual market data from our May 1978 all-market measurement indicates that cable penetration (cable households as a percentage of all

- TV households) continues to be higher, generally, in the less urban markets. Fifty-four percent of cable homes are located in the smaller $C$ and $D$ size counties.

** The November 1978 estimate includes Hawaii.
May 1978 estimates extude Alaska and


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MEDIA RESEARCH GROUP
Measurement of national and local television audiences and identification of audience composition for advertisers, advertising agencies, networks, stations, program producers and others.

MARKETING RESEARCH GROUP
Continuous in-store measurement of consumer sales and other sales-influencing factors in grocery, drug and other retail outlets. Also, test marketing services, new product planning and product pickup.

## CLEARING HOUSE GROUP

Processing of merchandise coupons for retailers and manufacturers; inquiry services for advertisers and magazine publishers;consumer promotion and other related services for advertisers

## NEODATA SERVICES

Maintenance of computerized circulation lists for magazine publishers and other organizations magazine subscription promotion services; vitally needed statistical information for publishers.

PETROLEUM INFORMATION CORPORATION Statistical services which make oil and gas exploration more efficient, including computerized systems permitting the more practical retrieval of vitally important subsurface geological information.


## Nielsen Television Services

IN THE UNITED STATES.
Nielsen Television Index Mi provides continuing estimates of TV viewing and national sponsored network program audiences, including national ratings 52 weeks per year. Data regularly reported include persons audiences and household audiences by market sections, Daily Ratings, Fast National and Multi-Network Area Ratings, Cost//1000 Estimates and Program and Brand Cumulative Audiences. In addition, the National Audience Demographics Report provides estimates of audiences by persons categories within household demographics. NTI's DATA COMMAND multiphase time-sharing computer systems offer clients direct access to a wide range of network program analyses.
Nielsen Station Index 영 (3) measures television station audiences in over 200 local markets and provides season-to-season reports (up to eight per market per year), on viewing by time periods and programs. NSI measurements include Metro Area and Designated Market Area (DMA) ratings, Station Total audiences, program pre-emptions, cumulative audiences and "times viewed," and estimates of viewing over a wide range of demographic categories.

Metered Market Service provides daily and weekly reports on television audiences in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago and San Francisco via a sample of households with Audimeter ${ }^{\text {® }}$ instruments linked directly to Nielsen computers.

IN CANADA
Nielsen Broadcast Index (NBI) is the Canadian counterpart of the Nielsen Station Index in the United States. NBI measures television station audiences in the 40 DMA's that comprise the total Canadian national market. NBI report frequency varies from 3-16 weeks depending on market size. Report book features include demographics, special vs. regular time period listings, trends, cumes, week-by-week ratings and metro area ratings for major reports.

Nielsen Television Index (NTI) publishes network television audience measurement reports for 37 weeks of the year. These reports cover all programs carried on Canadian networks: CBC, CTV, Global, Radio-Canada and TVA.

## IN JAPAN

Nielsen Station Index was established there in 1960 and produces Metered Market measurements for the Tokyo, Osaka and Nagoya areas and diary measurements for 7 other markets

## OTHER COUNTRIES.

Nielsen also provides television audience research services in Italy and Belgium.

