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## Effects of Television on Rural Minnesota Viewer Attitudes Toward Capital Punishment

Beverly Brown Schulke

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EFFECTS OF TELEVISION ON RURAL MINNESOTA VIEWER  
ATTITUDES TOWARD CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

by

Beverly Brown Schulke

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty

of the

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in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Master of Arts

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August  
1977

This Thesis submitted by Beverly Brown Schulke in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts from the University of North Dakota is hereby approved by the Faculty Advisory Committee under whom the work has been done

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ATTITUDES TOWARD CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

Department Sociology

Degree Master of Arts

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Date July 20, 1977

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the relationship between television viewing and attitudes toward capital punishment by making comparisons between viewers watching Canadian television and viewers receiving United States television. The adult population of three rural Minnesota areas was enumerated providing a sample N of 414. These areas were closely matched in all respects except type of television received. The first area receives only Canadian television signals, the second both United States and Canadian television signals, and the third receives only United States television signals. One adult from each household was interviewed in his/her home. High school youths in corresponding areas were also enumerated with similar interviews in their school classes, N=280.

Pretests and a pilot study were conducted prior to the major research effort. Factor analysis of these data yielded six items forming a scale measuring attitudes toward capital punishment. The independent variable, television viewing, is measured by three single measures of type of television viewed. These are: (1) a geographic factor inherent in the samples, (2) an item requesting respondents to estimate what percentage of total viewing time is spent viewing Canadian television, and (3) an item requesting the type of news program chosen to be viewed.

Data were analyzed using parametric measures of association. Slight but steady correlations were observed. Interestingly, these correlations were as strong or stronger than correlations of attitudes toward capital

punishment with variables suggested as correlates in the literature or with items measuring familiarity with Canada and other media usage.

Partial correlations of attitudes toward capital punishment with television viewing controlling for all such variables singly and simultaneously found the relationship unchanged.

Television viewing is, therefore, found to be an important correlate and probable cause of attitudes toward capital punishment.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

It seems almost intuitively obvious that most human communications are produced with the intent of causing some effect, of shaping the minds and steering the behavior of others. Regardless of how we formulate the goal of any message--to sell a product, change an attitude, educate a child, share our joys or sorrows, elicit a vote, entertain or inform the public, or simply to establish some kind of relationship with another . . . . It is not surprising, then, that one of the more frequent questions voiced by students and observers of human behavior has been, "What are the effects of communications on people"?

(Schramm and Roberts, 1972:391)

With these thoughts Schramm and Roberts introduce a section on mass communication effects in their book, The Process and Effects of Mass Communication. Many other authors in the field of mass communications cite similar feelings, adding that the fundamental power of the media, especially television, lies in its potential for shaping attitudes.

Numerous studies have been conducted concerning television's effect on attitudes. These attitudes range from feelings about political candidates to proper foodstuffs for snacks. In fact, the entire advertising establishment is built around the idea of using media to promote their products and to create favorable impressions in the viewing public. Realizing how influenced the majority of the public is through such overt campaigns, it takes but a short mental leap to wonder if individuals are also influenced, more subtly perhaps, by the covert messages

presented in news reports and other media programming. One such covert message might be socially "acceptable" or "proper" attitudes toward capital punishment.

Television has not previously been cited as a factor in explaining attitudes toward the death penalty. However, television has already been shown to influence various other attitudes. Therefore, it is reasonable to test the relationship between type and amount of television viewed and degree of acceptance of capital punishment. This thesis was designed to test for that relationship and to ascertain whether such a relationship persists when relevant controls are employed.

Chapter II presents a review of the literature used to form the theoretical framework of this study, including a discussion of variables researchers have implemented in the search to explain attitudes toward capital punishment. These variables range from personality types (Boehm, 1968; Rokeach and McLellan, 1970; and Vidmar, 1973) to perceptions of rising crime rates (Thomas and Foster, 1975). In the light of the research conducted on television's effect in people's daily lives, it is concluded that television's influence may well be just as viable as an explanation for favorable attitudes as others previously offered. The chapter ends with a discussion of a series of hypotheses generated from the theoretical framework.

Chapter III describes the method employed in the research, including the sampling frame, types of measurement used (and the reliability and validity of the measurement), and the questionnaire design. The interviewer training and procedures are covered as well as the pre-test and pilot study conducted early in the research.

Chapter IV reports the analysis of the data and discusses the findings. Use of interval level statistical techniques is described and defended. Finally, in Chapter V, tentative conclusions and suggestions for further research are offered.

## CHAPTER II

### THEORY

Despite much research measuring attitudes toward capital punishment and many publications noting the effects of television viewing on various other attitudes, no research about television's effects on attitudes toward capital punishment has been conducted. This chapter reviews the literature currently existing discussing explanations for favorable attitudes toward the death penalty and then constructs a theoretical framework to support the study. A set of associated hypotheses are derived from that framework.

Researchers have attempted to account for attitudes toward capital punishment in several ways: demographic data (Erskine, 1970; Vidmar and Ellsworth, 1974), personality types (Rokeach and McLellan, 1970; Vidmar, 1973), and perceptions of rising crime (Thomas and Foster, 1975). This study takes the unique position of investigating the relationship between television and acceptance of the death penalty.

There are many public opinion polls describing the degree to which the public favors capital punishment (Erskine, 1970). According to poll data, in the United States, attitudes toward capital punishment have followed a U-shaped curve in the years from the mid-1930s to the present. (See Figure 1.) As early as 1936 these polls were attempting to ascertain levels of support for the death penalty. At that time a Gallup poll showed that over 60 percent of the nation's population was in favor of capital punishment. (See Table 1.)



Figure 1

PERCENT OF THE UNITED STATES POPULATION FAVORING  
CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IN THE UNITED STATES

TABLE 1

## U.S. OPINION ON CAPITAL PUNISHMENT FOR MURDER

Polls	Year	Month	For Capital Punishment	Against	No Opinion
Gallup Polls	1936	April	62%	33%	5%
	1936	November	61	39	7
	1937	November	60	33	7
	1953	November	58	35	7
	1960	March	51	36	13
	1965	February	45	43	12
	1966	July	42	47	11
	1969	February	51	40	9
	1971	October	49	40	11
	1972	March	50	41	9
	1972	November	57	32	11
	1976	April	65	28	7
Harris Polls	1966	July	38%	47%	15%
	1973	April	59	32	9
Minnesota Polls	1960	March	20%	73%	7%
	1963	January	31	62	7



For approximately three decades backing for capital punishment gradually declined until finally, in 1966, approval had dropped twenty percentage points to show that only 42 percent of the population still supported capital punishment for murder. Since then the Gallup poll has shown an almost steady increase in percent of the population favoring capital punishment, from that low in 1966 of 42 percent to 65 percent in 1976. Harris polls also support this increase showing in a 1973 poll that 59 percent of a nationwide sample (N>1500) supported capital punishment as compared with only 38 percent in 1966.

Since the present research deals specifically with rural Minnesota residents, the Minnesota poll results were checked (see Table 1). Results, for that state, fit into the curve nicely as in 1960, only 20 percent of the population was found to favor capital punishment while only three years later in 1963, opinion was markedly more favorable with thirty-one percent of the population accepting the death penalty.

Canadian poll results were also investigated since some respondents to our survey have only Canadian television to view. The Canadian people exhibit a highly favorable attitude toward capital punishment extending back for several years. In research conducted in 1970 in which the population of London, Ontario, was enumerated, over 77 percent felt that capital punishment was appropriate for anyone murdering an officer of the law in his duty and over 51 percent approved execution for anyone murdering a private citizen (Boydell and Grindstaff, 1974).

In February, 1972, Gallup released a nationwide poll of Canadian adults indicating that over 63 percent favored the death penalty as an appropriate penalty for murder.

More informal polls taken by various Canadian newspapers and magazines and by Members of Parliament show that the percentage of the population favoring capital punishment may be as high as 90 (Trent, 1972; London Free Press, March 13, 1973).

The Canadian and United States rates of approval for capital punishment have been rising at approximately similar rates since that time, with the Canadian rate of approval always higher than the United States rate.

#### Other Demographic Studies

Vidmar and Ellsworth (1974) also discussed the degree to which the public supports capital punishment. After examining the polls described by Erskine plus those taken since that article was written, they concluded that demographic correlates of attitudes toward the death penalty were basically consistent across the polls.

They report the following:

Generally, people who support the death penalty tend to be older, less educated, male, more wealthy, white, and from urban areas. A greater percentage of white collar workers, manual laborers, and farmers favor capital punishment than do professionals and business persons. Among Catholics there is more support for the death penalty than among Protestants, and Republicans tend to favor capital punishment more than Democrats and Independents. (1974: 1254-1255)

The polls have then shed light on some possible causes of attitudes toward capital punishment. Namely, that certain demographic variables may predispose the individual who possesses them toward a favorable viewpoint about the death penalty (Vidmar and Ellsworth, 1974; Campion, 1967).

Several other studies have been conducted using some of these demographic variables or others like them.

These include studies done among various occupational groups. Campion (as reported in Bedau, 1967) found that a majority of policemen supported capital punishment. Other studies, also reported in Bedau, show relatively high levels of support coming from sheriffs, district attorneys, and prison guards. Roche (1958) has reported on those groups most lacking in support for the death penalty. Psychiatrists, clergymen, and prisoners head the list of those groups opposed to capital punishment.

Demographic variables such as those included in Vidmar and Ellsworth's work (quoted above) form a substantial avenue of research, basically attempting to describe those types of persons who are predisposed toward favorable attitudes about capital punishment.

All other opinion polls would also be cited here, since as Vidmar points out, they merely break the population into subpopulations and quote percentages for each opinion.

In this respect the polls are rather superficial since they merely isolate demographic groups. While they make no attempt to understand why a given individual took the position he did or how he might justify it, other research has attempted to discover answers to these questions. The answers range from Utilitarian (Vidmar, 1974; Sellin, 1967) and Retribution motives (Walker, 1966) through perceptions of rising crime rates (Thomas and Foster, 1975), differing values (as measured on Rokeach value scale) (Rokeach, 1968), and authoritarian-dogmatic personality types (Rokeach and McLellan, 1970).

#### Studies of Other Correlates of Attitudes Toward Capital Punishment

Utilitarian motives for support for capital punishment include reasoning such as, it deters through having an example set of what will

happen if that crime is committed, it ensures that the individual will not repeat such an act, and it saves the taxpayer the amount that would have been expended on keeping the individual in prison (Vidmar, 1974; Sellin, 1967; Hart, 1968; and Walker, 1966).

Another motive for favoring capital punishment is retribution. Vidmar discusses this and concludes that the purpose of this motive is to ensure that the offender atones by suffering. Walker (1966: 7) has pointed out that a pure retributist position would force atonement regardless of whether such action reduced the incidences of the crime in question.

Vidmar and Ellsworth's (1974) survey of polls found two surveys indicating that 44 and 56 percent of the respondents believed in the deterrent efficacy of capital punishment. However, another poll indicated that 73 percent of the people believed that if capital punishment were abolished in the United States it would make no difference in the crime rate. Some of these findings suggest that utilitarian motives play a part in public attitudes toward capital punishment, however utilitarianism is probably not the only reason or even the predominant one for holding favorable attitudes toward capital punishment (Vidmar, 1974).

Several researchers (Thomas, 1976, 1975; Thomas and Foster, 1975; Thomas, Foster and Gage, 1974) feel that neither demographic variables nor basic personality characteristics should be used to account solely for attitudes toward capital punishment. Thomas and Foster (1975) favor another explanation which states that increased crime rates or societal events which are personally threatening increased support for capital punishment as a means of coping with the threat. They conducted a survey

and found support for a complex sociological model which assumes that perception of a rising crime rate results in fears of victimization, which, in turn, results in the increased belief in the effectiveness of capital punishment and a willingness to see it administered. (See also Thomas, Gage, and Foster, 1974.) McIntyre (1967, pp. 40-42) has discussed additional material which supports the Thomas-Foster model.

Similarly, Sorrentino and Vidmar (1974) and Sorrentino, Vidmar, and Goodstadt (1974) found that support for restrictions on basic civil liberties and for capital punishment as a penalty for kidnapping rose during the height of the Quebec kidnapping crisis of 1971. These acceptances decreased as the crisis, and presumably the threat, abated.

Levels of support for capital punishment have also been found to correlate with valuations as measured by several dimensions of the Rokeach value survey (Rokeach, 1968, and Rokeach and Vidmar, 1973) and both authoritarianism and dogmatism (Boehm, 1968; Rokeach and McLellan, 1970; and Vidmar, 1973).

In summary, existing studies give some general information about death penalty attitudes but they often suffer from methodological limitations that prevent us from drawing conclusions about motives behind death penalty attitudes. Most studies have either not considered or controlled for alternative interpretations of the data, or have required inferential reasoning through mediating constructs such as authoritarianism. The authors of these studies have been attempting to describe the major reason for any individual's acceptance of the death penalty, however, from this review, it becomes obvious that they have named many smaller factors which operate together to potentially motivate a person

to favor capital punishment. This study extends the previous research by investigating a hitherto overlooked area of possible effect.

### Theoretical Framework

That people have attitudes toward capital punishment has been established (Erskine, 1970; Vidmar and Ellsworth, 1974). However, these attitudes cannot be completely accounted for by simply studying demographic variables or by stating that perceptions of rising crime rates affect people into becoming more favorable in their attitudes toward capital punishment.

Several studies have suggested that the mass media reinforce existing values and may create popular consent (Lippman, 1922; Bernays, 1947; and Wirth, 1948). It is then reasonable to propose that television has some effect on the attitudes about capital punishment expressed by rural Minnesota viewers, since it has an effect on other similar attitudes.

For example, it has been shown to be related to attitudes toward violence (Leifer, et al., 1974; Surgeon General, 1972; Agee, Ault, and Emery, 1976; Stein, 1973; and Meyer, 1973).<sup>1</sup> Other studies indicate effects of television on pro-social behavior (Friedrich and Stein, 1975; Goldberg and Gorn, 1974; Baran, 1977; and Weiss, 1966)<sup>2</sup> and on political attitudes (Kraus and Davis, 1976; Robinson, 1971; and Powell and Brein, 1971).<sup>3</sup> Although there is some evidence to the contrary (Patterson and McClure, 1974; and Howlitt and Cumberbatch, 1975) the studies finding changes in viewer-audiences' attitudes are more frequent than those finding no effect.<sup>4</sup>

In order to test for such an effect, three closely matched rural areas of Minnesota were chosen as the sample. The northernmost receives

only Canadian television signals, the second area receives both United States and Canadian signals while the southernmost area of our sample receives only United States television.

We have already established that a more favorable attitude toward capital punishment is found in Canada than in the United States. Since, as discussed above, television reinforces existing values, Canadian television reflects this more favorable attitude.

I, therefore, propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1. There is a direct relationship between viewing Canadian television and favorable attitudes toward capital punishment.

Some authors have written descriptions of a 'type' of individual more likely to advocate capital punishment (Vidmar and Ellsworth, 1974). Others, as Thomas and Foster (1975), find Vidmar and Ellsworth's arguments unconvincing. I have included as controls those variables Vidmar and Ellsworth discussed (i.e., age, sex, education, income, race, occupation, religion, and political affiliation). While there may indeed be a relationship between certain demographic variables and favorable attitudes toward capital punishment, I am hypothesizing that these controls will not detract from the relationship between amount and type of television viewed and attitudes toward capital punishment. Other controls, frequency of travel to Canada, relatives or friends living in Canada, and exposure to Canadian media were added because we felt that these people would be more familiar with Canadian television and opinion through closer contact with them and that this familiarity might act to influence their opinions. Therefore, I hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 2. The direct relationship between viewing Canadian television and favorable attitudes toward capital punishment will not be affected by the addition of controls as age, sex, education, income, race, occupation, religion, political affiliation, travel to Canada, exposure to other Canadian media and friends and relatives in Canada.

The next chapter will discuss the method used to empirically test these hypotheses.



## CHAPTER III

### METHODS

The function of a research design is to organize the procedures of a study so that minimal error occurs, effort is economized, and sufficient relevant information is obtained (Lastrucci, 1963: 105). The objective of this research is to examine, with the use of an interview schedule, one possible correlate of favorable attitudes toward capital punishment. In order to obtain this objective while meeting Lastrucci's criteria, we first developed a theoretical framework (as discussed in Chapter II). Next we must determine whether or not the relationship that we theoretically expect is empirically present. We must also ascertain whether the hypothesized relationship is a spurious result of other variables.

This chapter is concerned with these latter points. Specifically, it discusses the methods employed to empirically validate the hypothesized relationships. The degree of association between the independent variable (type and amount of television viewed) and the dependent variable (attitudes toward capital punishment) is examined in order to ascertain the degree of the relationship. This is done by making comparisons between those viewers receiving only Canadian television, those receiving both Canadian and United States television, and those receiving only United States television on favorableness of attitudes toward capital punishment.

Included in the chapter are discussions of the pretest and pilot study conducted prior to the major research effort as well as an examination of the interview schedule. The items used to operationalize the theoretical constructs are discussed in terms of validity and reliability, since to obtain accurate precise descriptions the instrument used to operationalize the theoretical concepts must be both valid and reliable.

The sampling method is examined for representativeness and lack of bias. Because the geographic regions where the sample populations were located were rural and low in population density, a census of the areas was necessary to obtain a sufficiently large number of cases, therefore no sampling procedures were employed. While included in the analysis, statistical tests of significance are not strictly meaningful. Interviewer training and procedures are examined as are the methods of data analysis chosen to be employed.

#### Pretest and Pilot Study

Thomas and Foster (1975) used an index of Likert items to describe individual's attitudes toward capital punishment. The items were selected from their initial item pool by computing a Pearsonian correlation between item responses and an initial scale score calculated from the summated responses to all of the attitude items in the initial pool of statements. Any item which did not yield an item-to-scale correlation that was equal to or greater than .50 was automatically deleted (Thomas, et al., 1974). The 18 items finally chosen by Thomas and Foster were pretested in the present research on 87 introductory sociology students in February, 1977. Analysis was performed using principal factor method with iterations and varimax rotation (Nie, et al., 1975). The items loaded primarily onto

two factors. The first was attitudes toward capital punishment while the second involved general attitudes toward punishment. Four items, two from each of the two factors were chosen to be placed on the interview schedule to be used in the pilot study.

The pilot study was conducted in Humboldt, Minnesota in late February, 1977. This location was chosen as it is closely akin to the sample areas. Three interviewers were trained (see section on Interviewer Training). Interviews were collected from one adult in each household to a predetermined N of thirty. This allowed the interview schedule to be tested for understandability, ease of comprehension and question quality and substantive omission. The validity and reliability of the items was assessed as was the efficiency of the planned coding process. In the light of the pilot study findings, two items were added as additional measures of attitudes toward capital punishment.

#### Interview Schedule Construction and Measurement

The interview schedule consisted of 12 pages of items, taking approximately 40 minutes to administer. Two forms of this schedule were used: one for the adult population and the other for the youth population. These are attached in Appendix A. The schedule contains both open-ended and forced-choice, including Likert items, rating scales, and paired comparisons. Several of these questions dealt with usage of the various media: television, radio, newspapers, and magazines. The data includes usage of both Canadian and United States media. Other items measure political awareness and obtain demographic data.

The dependent variable of this research, attitudes toward capital punishment, is measured by an index constructed from six Likert statements.

(Questions 31, 33, 35, 37, 39 and 40 on the schedule.) Maranell (1974: 231-272) and Thomas, Nelson, and Williams (1974) discuss Likert scaling in general. Tittle and Hill (1967: 199-213) examine the greater reliability and specificity that Likert has over other question styles. Tittle and Hill also discuss the fact that the Likert technique provides an intensity factor. Not only can subjects be ranked according to favorable/unfavorableness but also according to degree of either feeling. They feel Likert technique is superior to other scaling methods.

The six items were chosen from an initial item pool developed by Thomas and Foster (1975) through a pretest and a pilot study (as discussed earlier in this chapter). Four of the six items making up the index deal directly with capital punishment:

1. I think we should have a mandatory death penalty for some types of very serious criminal offenses.
2. Regardless of whether we actually use the death penalty, I think our laws should allow us to put someone to death should the need ever arise.
3. Whether we like it or not, we must use the death penalty in some cases if we are ever to control crime.
4. No offense is so serious that it deserves to be punished by death.

The other two items do not deal directly with capital punishment but rather lead up to it by measuring general attitudes toward punishment:

5. A firm response to those who break the law would soon reduce the crime rate in our society.
6. Regardless of whether prison sentences keep the person who received the sentence from breaking the law again, they show others in our society that crime doesn't pay.

Measurement is noted as a procedure for carefully classifying cases and putting them into previously defined categories of some variable

(Loether and McTavish, 1974: 14). It is a device for standardization and makes possible more subtle discriminations and correspondingly more precise descriptions (Kaplan, 1964: 173). To obtain accurate precise descriptions the instrument used to operationalize the theoretical concepts must be both valid and reliable.

Validity is usually taken to mean the extent to which a measurement process is able to make distinctions based on the variable one wants to measure. In other words, validity is based on the following question: "Are we measuring what we think we're measuring"?

The six items used to operationalize the dependent variable, attitudes toward capital punishment, have several kinds of validity. Face validity is rather obviously present as reading through the items leads one to think that they do discern various degrees of attitude.

Construct validity is evidenced by the literature review and theoretical framework discussed in Chapter II. Other researchers (Thomas and Foster, 1975) have found the same items differentiate among attitudes toward capital punishment.

Cronback says there are three parts to construct validation: suggesting what constructs possibly account for test performance, deriving hypotheses from the theory involving the construct, and testing the hypotheses empirically. (Kelinger, 1964: 449)

Construct validity was met in part by using as items Likert sentences that had already been shown in previous research to be good predictors. A pretest and a pilot study were also conducted in order to help determine that items with high convergent validity were chosen by factoring the results (as discussed previously) and choosing those with the highest factor loadings. (See Appendix B.)

It has been hypothesized that television viewing affects attitudes toward capital punishment. One way to test this hypothesis' validity is to empirically evaluate it. Some authors (Bornstedt, 1970: 96; Kelinger, 1964: 454) suggest that factor analysis is an important tool of convergent validity also. Factor analysis was used to examine the manner in which the items of the dependent variable index correlate in order to test the validity of the assumptions underlying the theoretical construct, "attitudes toward capital punishment."

Social desirability and response set may influence reliability so several measures were taken to overcome these problems, e.g., open-ended questions, mixing of the capital punishment attitudes index with other Likert items, inverted wording of some Likert items, and interviewer training to recognize and prevent this from happening. I conclude that the items operationalizing the dependent variable are reasonably valid.

The problem of reliability refers to the stability of the measurement process itself when applied under standard conditions (Loether and McTavish, 1974: 30). Reliability is concerned with accuracy (consistency and stability) of a measuring instrument. Phillips has said a measurement is reliable to the degree to which it does not vary over time (stability) and to the degree that the same basic measurement procedure employed in different contexts at the same time yields the same results (equivalence) (Phillips, 1976: 141). Reliability refers to how much variation in scores is due to measurement inconsistencies and how much to random error. (For further discussion of reliability see Kelinger, 1964: 427-441.)

Cronback's alpha was computed from the SPSS subroutine 'reliable' (Nie, et al., 1975) for the six items forming the capital punishment

attitude index. Alpha was .80 and standardized alpha was .79. The independent variable, television viewing, was measured both by (1) amount of viewing, and (2) type of television viewed. Three single measures were used to obtain this latter, e.g., (a) the geographic factor inherent in the sample, (b) respondents were asked to estimate what percentage of the total time spent viewing television is spent viewing Canadian television and (c) an item requesting the nationality of news viewed most frequently was included. Items 4, 5, 6, 7a, 7b, 7c, 7d, and 7e operationalize these concepts on the interview schedule.

Construct validity is again supported by the literature review and theoretical framework developed for the research. The geographic location factor inherent in the sample provides a valid and reliable check against the other items used to operationalize the independent variable. The interview schedules were numbered in such a fashion that a "1" prefix denotes the area receiving only Canadian television, a "2" the area receiving both types of television, and a "3" the area receiving only United States television. These can be checked against the information given by respondents on the percent of their viewing time spent watching Canadian television. For two of the three areas, the answers must correspond to 0 or 100, so reliability can be absolutely established for over three-fourths of the sample.

Not only are there the three distinct sample groups to compare among, but by including the item asking the percent of viewing time spent on Canadian television we have been able to increase variation by expanding the middle category so that this item is a continuum, increasing the precision of statistical work computed.

The item asking what national news was chosen to be viewed can also be cross-checked against the geography item to provide further

validity and reliability, again absolutely against over three-fourths of the sample ( $r=.79$ ).

Another factor which adds to the reliability of the study (for both independent and dependent variable measures) is the fact that rural Minnesota has a low migration level, especially in terms of in-migration. This, then, means that most respondents have lived in these areas for a number of years, viewing the same types of television so that their attitudes are based on material they have noted over a relatively long time span. Less than five respondents mentioned moving into these areas within the last year.

#### Sampling-Enumeration

Since the research design called for three distinct groups getting differing television reception, it was necessary to find an area receiving only Canadian television and then find two matching areas, one receiving both United States and Canadian television, the other only United States. As the adult and youth populations were sampled and interviewed differently they will be treated separately in this discussion, beginning with the adult sample.

The adult population universe consisted of all occupied households within the sample areas while the sampling unit was an adult member of each household. The area from Roosevelt, Minnesota to Birchdale, Minnesota following along and North of Minnesota Highway 11 was chosen because that area receives only Canadian television (except the city of Baudette which has installed cable television. (See map in Appendix C for locations of the sample area.) Every home in the Canadian television viewing area was enumerated until we reached our preselected N of 200



(actual usable N=199). To obtain this N we attempted to question persons from 217 households. Three respondents refused to complete the interview and 14 homes were unoccupied after a minimum of three visits. (Canadian television viewing area had a return rate of 92 percent.) A ratio of half male- half female respondents was attempted through interviewing a man when home (as mealtimes and evenings); otherwise an adult female was requested to answer the questions.

Two matching areas were needed to complete the adult sample: one receiving only United States television and one receiving both United States and Canadian television. The sites were matched to the "Canadian television only" sample in community size, types of farming (small grains) and industry, relative prosperity levels, predominant ethnic backgrounds, and relative age levels of prospective respondents. (See Table 2.)

The 'United States television only' sample area was comprised of all households in the towns of Borup, Beltrami, and Harold, Minnesota plus households along these highways: Minnesota 102 from Harold north to U.S. 2 and Minnesota 102 from Melvin to Minnesota 32 and Minnesota 32 between Fertile and Flaming, Minnesota. 90.0 percent of the sample population of 129 homes completed usable interview schedules. Five persons refused to finish the interview and eight households were unoccupied, leaving a final N=115 for this sample section. (See map in Appendix C for clarification and location.)

The sample receiving both United States and Canadian television was all households in the towns of Halma, Wannaska, Eriksburg, and Ray plus households along these highways: south of Halma on County Road 20 to junction with Minnesota 11, Minnesota 53 between Eriksburg and Ray

TABLE 2  
SIMILARITIES AMONG ENUMERATED SUB-POPULATIONS\*

Variable	Only Canadian Television	Both	United States Only
Age			
Under 20	4%	5%	4%
20-29	19	14	16
30-39	17	17	23
40-49	16	12	13
50-59	16	16	16
60 & up	27	36	29
Education			
Grades 1-8 or less	26	21	21
Some high school	19	16	17
High school diploma	30	35	37
Some college/training	20	22	17
4 years college	5	1	5
Graduate work	3	4	3
Ethnic Background			
English	14	10	15
Scandinavian	40	55	58
German	16	18	15
Other or mixed	27	13	13
Religious Denomination			
Catholic	9	12	11
Lutheran	56	60	63
Other Protestant	23	24	6
Other Christian	6	4	20
Non-Christian	5	0	1
Occupation			
Farmer	33	31	22
Laborer--outside	14	10	17
Laborer--factory	17	26	25
White collar	11	14	11
Professional	6	4	8
Other	20	15	18
Income			
\$5,000	20	30	28
\$5,000-9,999	28	13	23
10,000-14,999	24	25	19
15,000-24,999	14	23	12
25,000-50,000	7	3	12
over \$50,000	7	6	4

\*Computed for adults since youth population comes from these families.

and Minnesota 11 between Badger and the Twin Lake Wildlife Area (except the town of Greenbush).

Of the 111 households in this sample area, four were unoccupied and seven refused to complete the interview, leaving an N=100 or 90.7 percent of the population who completed usable interview schedules. The total of completed adult interview schedules (N=414) represents 92.6 percent of the sampling universe.

While all adults were interviewed singly in their homes or their places of business, the youth sample respondents were interviewed during the school day in small groups. The population universe of the youth sample was all students in grades 9, 10, and 11 in attendance on the day of the interviewing at the high schools in Indus, Baudette,\* Humboldt, and Borup. (N=280)

All freshmen, sophomores, and juniors in attendance the day the interviewers covered the various schools were interviewed in Indus (all Canadian television), Humboldt (mixed), and Borup (all United States television). Baudette has students from several towns in the area so some students receive only Canadian television while others receive both United States and Canadian television.

Of the total population of these schools attending on the day these interviews were given, our sample represents 88 percent. The total N=280 can be broken down according to the criteria "type of television received" yielding 132 students receiving only Canadian television (47 percent of the sample), 47 students receiving only United States television (16 percent of the sample) and 101 students receiving both types of television (36 percent of the sample).

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\*Only part of the sophomores were interviewed due to a band concert.

### Interviewer Training and Procedures

In addition to the training received prior to the pretest and pilot study the ten interviewers (5 male, 5 female) were given a set of *interviewing instructions* by the research director. (See Appendix D.) They spent several hours together discussing these instructions, going through the interview schedule together and "mock" interviewing prior to going into the field. While at their locations, the interviewers met daily with the project director to discuss the previous day's results and ask any questions.

During the census of households for the adult sample, the interviewer was instructed to return at different times on different days, until the residence had been visited three times. At that point, the residence was classified not at home. When questions needed to be clarified, interviewers were to first simply try repeating the question more slowly and then, if necessary, to rephrase the question as closely as possible to the original form.

As discussed previously, adults were interviewed individually in their homes or places of business. Questions were read to them and the interviewer marked responses. The youth sample however was interviewed during the school day in small groups, each respondent marking answers as the interviewer read the questions aloud.

### Data Collection and Analysis

Before discussing the processing and analysis of data, the data collection procedures is briefly discussed. Again, a questionnaire was constructed to be used as an interview schedule. Ten interviewers administered this schedule to 414 adults and 280 youths. Much of the

interview schedule was precoded, however, the researchers later devised a code for some open-ended questions.

After the questionnaires were coded, the data was transferred to IBM cards and then to magnetic tape. The computer at the University of North Dakota was used in the processing of the data. The data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) (Nie, et al., 1975). An option utilizing pairwise deletion of missing data was employed throughout the research.

Processing and analysis of data involved several steps. The first step was to look at one-way frequency distributions with all available descriptive statistics. The second step involved testing the reliability of the measures using the SPSS subroutine "Reliable." The third step involved investigating the relationships between the independent and dependent variables. These were established through the use of Pearsonian product-moment correlation coefficients ( $r$ 's) showing the degree of linear association and Correlation Ratios ( $\eta$ 's) testing for curvilinearity. The fourth step involved controlling for several variables discussed earlier by partial correlations to test whether or not the strength of the relationship was maintained.

The use of parametric statistics is defended in the Analysis chapter and is mentioned here. The consensus of opinion in recent research (Kim, 1975: 261-298); Labovitz, 1970: 515-524) is that parametric statistical procedures can be properly used on ordimetric data.

The next chapter will discuss this in more detail and examine the findings of the analytical procedures previewed here.

samples are discussed briefly as the findings are presented. A more detailed discussion is presented in the final chapter with tentative conclusions. The analysis of the data collected from the adult sample is presented first.

Within the discipline of Sociology there is currently a dilemma concerning the use of parametric statistics with certain ordinal data. As Kim (1975) points out, there are two strategies currently in use-- ordinal and parametric. The ordinal strategy is used by those clinging to Steven's definitions of measurement levels. The parametric strategy, however, is adopted by those relying on measures of associations as Pearson's  $r$  and its extensions to path analysis and multiple regression on the grounds that the practical advantages of multivariate controls outweigh the compromises made in violating certain measurement assumptions. Labovitz (1967, 1970) has discussed various justifications for employing the parametric strategy. He feels that we are losing knowledge by reverting to ordinal measures for 'almost-interval' data. He reminds us that many more manipulations can be performed and stronger, more 'powerful' statistics can be employed leading to more precision when using interval statistics rather than ordinal. Labovitz (1970) has

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS

Since the data collection and analysis were performed separately for the adult and youth populations, these analyses are discussed separately in this chapter. Comparisons of the findings for the two

also pointed out that certain interval statistics can be used interchangeably with ordinal statistics and interpreted as ordinal. Some interval statistics can be computed and interpreted with accuracy where no ordinal equivalent exists. Labovitz found that certain interval statistics could be given their interval interpretations because the scoring systems are close to those measured by  $r$  and  $r^2$ . Blalock also takes this position.

Since these data apparently conform to the specification outlined by these authors, parametric statistics are presented in this chapter when discussing the analysis performed on the data.

To establish the degree and direction of the relationship, Pearsonian product-moment correlation coefficients were computed between the scale value of the six item scale operationalizing the dependent variable (attitudes toward capital punishment) and the three aspects of the independent variable (geographic region, percent of total television viewing time that is spent viewing Canadian television, and the nationality of the news program chosen to be viewed).

Table 3 shows  $r$ 's and  $\eta$ 's and levels of significance computed for the variables (Nie, et al., 1975). Since  $r$  values denote the degree to which a linear relationship exists, while  $\eta$  values denote curvilinearity, the higher  $\eta$  values shown in Table 3 provide evidence for some slight curvilinearity between our measures of the independent variable and attitudes toward capital punishment.

Because these correlations are rather low, attitudes toward capital punishment were also correlated with the demographic variables which have been previously found related to these attitudes. (See Table 4.) It can be noted that these correlations for the most part are similar or



TABLE 3

PEARSONIAN CORRELATIONS OF  
ATTITUDES TOWARD CAPITAL PUNISHMENT  
WITH TELEVISION VIEWING (ADULT RESPONDENTS)

Independent Variables	r	s	eta
Geographic Region	.06	.03	.13
Percent of Total Viewing Hrs.-Canadian	.08	.05	.12
Nationality of News Chosen to be Viewed	.06	.19	.04

TABLE 4

ZERO ORDER CORRELATIONS BETWEEN ATTITUDES  
TOWARD CAPITAL PUNISHMENT AND DEMOGRAPHIC  
VARIABLES EMPLOYED AS CONTROLS (ADULT RESPONDENTS)

Variable	Q**	r	S	N
Age	45a	.01	.38	409
Sex	45b	.13*	.003	408
Marital Status	45c	.04	.23	410
Ethnic Background	45d	.05	.15	400
Education	54	.08*	.05	409
Religious Denomination	55a	.009	.42	387
Frequency of Church Attendance	55b	.08*	.04	406
Occupation	56	.02	.32	405
Income	58	.0001	.50	389

\*Refers to discussions in text.

\*\*Refers to item operationalizing this in the interview schedule.

weaker than those found in the hypothesized relationship. Indeed only three of these variables approach or surpass the hypothesized relationship's correlations. These are: sex, education, and frequency of church attendance. The last of these, frequency of church attendance, is usually not asked as 'religious denomination' is considered sufficient knowledge. While membership in any of the various denominations seems not to have a particularly high correlation with attitudes toward capital punishment, frequency of church attendance, which perhaps differentiates the more fervent from the less does correlate more highly than most other suggested variables. The more frequently the individual attends church services, the more favorable his attitude toward capital punishment, it should be noted that the less education an individual has, the more favorable will be his attitude toward capital punishment. The highest correlation is between sex and attitudes toward capital punishment. More males favor capital punishment than do females.

Therefore, we find that demographic variables as cited by several authors do indeed correlate with given individual's attitudes toward capital punishment, thus agreeing with previous research in the area. However, we find only three such correlations that are as strong or stronger than those between attitudes toward capital punishment and the various measures of type of television viewed.

The next step was to look for other possible correlates of attitudes toward capital punishment. Two categories of such possible correlates are shown in Tables 5 and 6. Table 5 shows correlations between other media usage and attitudes toward capital punishment, while Table 6 incorporates several measures of being more familiar with Canada. Interestingly enough, we again find few of these variables show particularly

TABLE 5

ZERO-ORDER CORRELATIONS BETWEEN ATTITUDES TOWARD  
CAPITAL PUNISHMENT AND USAGE OF MEDIA OTHER THAN TELEVISION  
(ADULT RESPONDENTS)

Variable	Q**	r	s	N
Frequency of:				
Reading daily newspaper	1a	.05	.12	408
Listening to radio	3a	.01	.36	411
Listening to Canadian radio	3c	.08*	.04	388
Reading news magazines	8a	.05	.14	411
Watching national news	7a	.02	.33	404
Reading Canadian magazines	7d	.07	.09	344

\*Refers to discussion in text.

\*\*Refers to item operationalizing this variable in the interview schedule.

TABLE 6

ZERO-ORDER CORRELATIONS BETWEEN ATTITUDES  
TOWARD CAPITAL PUNISHMENT AND FAMILIARITY WITH CANADA  
(ADULT RESPONDENTS)

Variable	Q**	r	s	N
Family in Canada	41	.04	.23	411
Frequency of visits to Canada	44a	.05	.13	406
Relatives in Canada	42	.09*	.03	410
Friends in Canada	43	.01	.39	411

\*Refers to discussion in text.

\*\*Refers to item operationalizing this variable in the interview schedule.

strong correlations with attitudes toward capital punishment. High frequencies of listening to Canadian radio and having relatives in Canada seem to promote favorable attitudes toward capital punishment. These are the only two variables that show correlations as strong as those of the hypothesized relationship. These are expected since they are other avenues of becoming familiar with Canadian opinion about capital punishment.

Having shown that several other possible correlates substantiated in the literature show relationships in this research similar in degree to that of the hypothesized relationship, the next step in the analysis is to control for these variables by partial correlation (Nie, et al., 1975) to see if they affect the hypothesized relationship between Canadian television viewing and favorable attitudes toward capital punishment. (See Table 7.)

Looking at the correlations shown in Table 7 we find that when controlling for frequency of church attendance and frequency of visits to Canada the degree of association drops slightly. Of all the variables employed as controls only these two cause any drop in the correlation and the weakening in the presence of either of these two variables is meager. An interesting find is that several of the controls strengthen the hypothesized relationship when controlled for. These are having relatives in Canada, reading news magazines frequently and listening to Canadian radio frequently.

Thus, while some other variables may correlate just as highly, they are separate relationships and do not function as intervening variables as the hypothesized relationship does not decrease in the presence of these variables as controls.

TABLE 7

PARTIAL CORRELATIONS OF ATTITUDES TOWARD  
CAPITAL PUNISHMENT WITH TELEVISION VIEWING  
(ADULT RESPONDENTS)

	Geographic Region	Percent of Total Viewing Hrs.- Canadian	Nationality of Chosen News Program
Zero-order Correlation	.06	.08	.06
Controlling for:			
Age	.06	.08	.06
Sex			
Marital Status	.06	.08	.06
Ethnic Background	.06	.08	.06
Education	.06	.08	.06
Religious Denomination	.06	.08	.06
Frequency of Church Attendance*	.05	.06	.05
Occupation	.06	.08	.06
Income	.06	.08	.06
Frequency of reading daily paper	.06	.08	.06
Frequency of listening to radio	.06	.08	.07
Frequency of listening to Canadian radio**	.10	.10	.08
Frequency of watching national news	.06	.08	.06
Frequency of reading news magazines**	.07	.08	.07
Frequency of reading Canadian magazines	.06	.08	.06
Family in Canada	.06	.08	.06
Frequency of visits to Canada*	.05	.07	.06
Relatives in Canada**	.07	.08	.07
Friends in Canada	.06	.08	.06

\*Controls weakening the relationship.

\*\*Controls strengthening the relationship.

The findings of the analysis of the adult data tend to support both hypotheses. There is a more favorable attitude toward capital punishment advocated by those viewers watching Canadian television. At the same time, while other correlates with attitudes toward capital punishment may produce correlations of the same magnitude, they do not decrease the hypothesized relationship when controlled for.

The findings of the analyses of the youth data are presented next. In the analyses conducted on these data, we again find that slightly more evidence for a curvilinear relationship is denoted than for a linear relationship. (See Table 8.) The difference is, however, minimal.

TABLE 8

PEARSONIAN CORRELATIONS OF  
ATTITUDES TOWARD CAPITAL PUNISHMENT  
WITH TELEVISION VIEWING (YOUTH RESPONDENTS)

Independent Variables	r	s	eta
Geographic Region	.06	.15	.063
Percent of Total Viewing Hrs.-Canadian	.07	.13	.112
Nationality of News Programs Chosen	.08	.10	.093

Attitudes toward capital punishment were again correlated with demographic variables. (See Table 9.) The findings were quite similar to those for the adult respondents. Sex was again the only demographic variable to correlate more highly with capital punishment attitudes than did television viewing. All other demographic variables, which have been cited previously by other authors, maintained weaker correlations with attitudes toward capital punishment than did the hypothesized relationship, just as for the adult data. This seems to indicate that television

viewing is certainly as viable a correlate of attitudes toward capital punishment as variables previously cited.

TABLE 9  
ZERO-ORDER CORRELATIONS BETWEEN ATTITUDES  
TOWARD CAPITAL PUNISHMENT AND DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES  
(YOUTH RESPONDENTS)

Variables	Q**	r	s	N
Grade	47	.05	.19	278
Sex*	48	.26	.001	278
Father's Education	52	.02	.34	275
Religious Denomination	53	.04	.27	248
Frequency of Church Attendance	53	.04	.26	276
Father's Occupation	54	.02	.38	275
Family Income	55	.03	.34	230

\*Refers to discussion in text.

\*\*Refers to item on interview schedule operationalizing the variable.

Just as for the adult respondents, the youth data on attitudes toward capital punishment were also correlated with other media usage and items indicating familiarity with Canada. (See Tables 10 and 11.) Here the findings were somewhat different than for the adult data, since listening to Canadian radio had only a meager relationship with attitudes toward capital punishment, and frequency of reading news magazines correlated more strongly than the hypothesized relationship. This difference in results could possibly be the result of use of the school library and/or inclusion of the news magazines in the social science

TABLE 10

ZERO-ORDER CORRELATION BETWEEN ATTITUDES TOWARD  
CAPITAL PUNISHMENT AND USAGE OF MEDIA OTHER THAN TELEVISION  
(YOUTH RESPONDENTS)

Variable	Q**	r	s	N
Frequency of:				
Reading daily newspaper	1a	.06	.11	271
Listening to radio	3a	.06	.12	276
Listening to Canadian radio	3c	.03	.27	273
Reading news magazines*	8a	.19	.001	277
Watching national news	7a	.06	.13	278
Reading Canadian magazines	7d	.004	.47	278

\*Refers to description in text.

\*\*Refers to item on interview schedule operationalizing the variable.

TABLE 11

ZERO-ORDER CORRELATIONS BETWEEN ATTITUDES  
TOWARD CAPITAL PUNISHMENT AND FAMILIARITY WITH CANADA  
(YOUTH RESPONDENTS)

Variable	Q**	r	s	N
Family in Canada	41	.05	.20	277
Frequency of visits to Canada*	44a	.10	.05	276
Relatives in Canada	42	.03	.33	276
Friends in Canada*	43	.09	.05	278

\*Refers to description in text.

\*\*Refers to item on interview schedule operationalizing the variable.



curriculum. Many respondents in the study reported listening to their radio during the day and viewing television at night. Since the youths are in school during the day, they may have less exposure to radio.

Other variables correlating moderately with attitudes toward capital punishment were frequency of visits to Canada and friends in Canada. (See Table 11.) The more frequent the visits to Canada and the more friends living in Canada, the more favorable the attitude toward capital punishment. Sports and other school activities might be responsible for these variations from the results of the adult data analysis.

The next step in the analysis was to compute partial correlations between attitudes toward capital punishment and television viewing while controlling for all these possible spurious causes to ascertain whether or not the relationship remains stable. In the analysis of the adult respondents data it will be remembered that the relationship did prove stable. Looking at Table 12, we again see the controls failing to appreciably diminish the hypothesized relationship. Two controls weakened the relationship slightly. These were grades in school and friends in Canada but the reductions they imposed on the correlation were quite small. More interestingly the correlations between attitudes toward capital punishment and television viewing was strengthened somewhat by the addition of frequency of church attendance as a control and by controlling for frequency of reading news magazines. The adult respondents also showed higher correlations in the hypothesized relationship when reading of news magazines was controlled for. This may be due to the fact that most respondents from both groups reported reading United States magazines rather than Canadian magazines. Frequency of church attendance as a control caused the correlation between attitudes toward capital punishment and

Canadian television viewing to drop slightly, however, the correlation strengthened again slightly, in the youth sample, when the same control was applied. This could be the result of many factors. For example,

TABLE 12

PARTIAL CORRELATIONS OF ATTITUDES TOWARD  
CAPITAL PUNISHMENT WITH TELEVISION VIEWING  
(YOUTH RESPONDENTS)

	Geographic Region	Percent of Total View- ing Time- Canadian	Nationality of News Chosen
Zero-Order Correlations:	.06	.07	.08
Controlling for:			
Grade*	.05	.06	.07
Sex	.06	.07	.09
Father's Education	.06	.07	.08
Religious Denomination	.06	.07	.08
Frequency of Church Atten- dance**	.07	.08	.09
Father's Occupation	.06	.07	.08
Family Income	.06	.07	.08
Frequency of reading daily newspaper	.06	.06	.07
Frequency of listening to radio	.07	.07	.08
Frequency of listening to Canadian radio	.06	.06	.08
Frequency of reading news magazines**	.08	.08	.08
Frequency of watching national news	.06	.07	.08
Frequency of reading Canadian magazines	.06	.07	.08
Family in Canada	.06	.07	.08
Frequency of visits to Canada	.08	.07	.07
Relatives in Canada	.06	.07	.08
Friends in Canada*	.05	.06	.07

\*Correlation weakened slightly.

\*\*Correlation strengthened.

the high school youth data on frequency of church attendance may not reflect religious values, but rather, simply, shows that these youth accompany their parents to church, at their parent's request.

After having examined the relationship between attitudes toward capital punishment and Canadian television viewing while controlling separately for each of the demographic correlates cited in the literature, other forms of media usage, and familiarity with Canada, partial correlations of the relationship were next examined while controlling for all these variables simultaneously for both the youth and the adult data. (See Table 13.) Even with all controls imposed simultaneously,

TABLE 13

PARTIAL CORRELATIONS OF ATTITUDES TOWARD CAPITAL PUNISHMENT  
WITH TELEVISION VIEWING SIMULTANEOUSLY CONTROLLING FOR ALL  
DEMOGRAPHIC, MEDIA USAGE, AND FAMILIARITY WITH CANADA VARIABLES

	Geographic Region	Percent of Viewing-Canadian	Nationality of News Chosen
Adult Respondents	.08	.075	.058
(Zero-Order)	(.06)	(.08)	(.06)
Youth Respondents	.09	.07	.08
(Zero-Order)	(.06)	(.07)	(.08)

the relationship between capital punishment attitudes and television viewing remains virtually unchanged, and indeed, we note a rise in the correlation between geographic region and attitudes toward capital punishment.

From this discussion it appears that the findings from both adult and youth data support the hypotheses. The final chapter presents

more discussion of the findings. It also suggests tentative conclusions and offers suggestions and recommendations for future research.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings of the analyses were presented in a prior chapter. The implications of these findings are discussed here. Referring back to Table 3 we note that the independent variable measure 'percent of total viewing time spent watching Canadian television' correlates more highly with attitudes toward capital punishment than do the other two measures of the independent variable (geographic region and nationality of news programs viewed) for the adult population. This could mean that how much Canadian television an individual views has more effect on attitudes than the national origin of the news program they choose to view or the part of Minnesota they live in. Actually, however, since the correlations remain so close, we might interpret the slightly higher correlation to be a result of the fact that while geographic region is coded into three distinct groups and national origin of chosen news program is coded into only two groups, the percent of total viewing time spent on Canadian television represents a continuum from zero percent (for the United States only group) to 100 percent (for the Canadian only group) allowing more precise measurement.

Looking at the findings of the analyses of the youth population at this point (refer back to Table 8), while geographic region again correlates lower than percent of total viewing time spent on Canadian television, it is the nationality of chosen news programs that correlates most highly. This finding might be explained by the use of news material

in the social science curriculum.

Attitudes toward capital punishment were also correlated with demographic variables cited in the literature as having been found to correlate with these attitudes (refer back to Table 4 for Adult findings; Table 9 for Youth findings). These correlations are similar for the adult and youth populations and quite low for almost all of the variables. Sex was found to correlate quite highly, a fact to be expected since the literature points to men as being more favorable toward capital punishment than women. Age (grade for youth) produced a low correlation as did occupation (father's occupation) and family income. It was interesting to note such low correlations since the literature (Rokeach, 1968, 1973; Sample, 1973) discusses demographic variables as correlating quite highly with most attitudes.

While the standard question asking religious denomination correlated only very slightly for adults, a stronger correlation was produced when they were questioned about the frequency of their religious activity. For the youth sample religious denomination and religious activity correlated identically with attitudes toward capital punishment. The fact that the more religiously active adults favored capital punishment can be explained by a discussion of dogmatic personality types as discussed in the literature (Rokeach and McLellan, 1970; Vidmar, 1973). They found that individuals who felt the need for very structured worship services were usually also very rigid in their other beliefs and in their values. The difference in findings for the youth population can perhaps be explained through the knowledge that many youth attend church because of requests of their parents not because of firmly developed religious commitments of their own. This then would be similar to the 'nominal' members which in the adult sample are differentiated from the more fervent believers.

This might also reflect rebellion against the religious standards of the parents by the youth. We see, then, that, as expected from the literature, correlations are observed. However, the findings of the present research show correlations of greater magnitude than those discussed by other authors, showing television to be an important correlate and possible cause of attitudes toward capital punishment.

Attitudes toward capital punishment were also correlated with the control variables. These were several items designed to measure usage of media other than television and several items measuring familiarity with Canada by means other than the media (i.e., relatives, friends, frequent visits). Referring back to Tables 5 and 6 for the adult population; and Tables 10 and 11 for the youths, we find some sharp differences in results. Listening to Canadian radio correlates as highly as viewing Canadian television for adults, while for the youth sample, the only association with any magnitude is that with the item measuring frequency of reading news magazines. These findings were to some extent anticipated since, while many adults reported listening to the radio 'all day' and viewing television at night, most youth are in school most of the morning and afternoon and cannot listen to radio. Also most youth reported only listening to music on their radios. News magazines are often required reading in the social science classes, so the youth have more occasion to read these magazines than do their parents.

As for the items measuring familiarity with Canada, having family members in Canada didn't correlate highly for either population. Neither did frequency of visits to Canada or having friends in Canada for the adult population, however, for the youth population, these correlations with attitudes toward capital punishment were somewhat higher than the correlation of the hypothesized relationship. Again, the schools could

be cited as a possible intervening facility by sponsoring field trips and extra-curricular educational activities that would increase the youngsters' familiarity with Canada. Thus we find that, as expected, some of these variables also correlate with attitudes toward capital punishment. It is extremely interesting to note that television viewing is a stronger factor in transmitting attitudes toward capital punishment to U.S. citizens than are family members, other relatives or friends in Canada or personal knowledge gained from visiting the country.

Having seen that there are some other correlates of attitudes toward capital punishment which show the same degree of association as the independent variable (television viewing), the next step of the analysis as reported in prior chapters was to control for these variables in partial correlations of attitudes toward capital punishment and television viewing. (Refer back to Table 7 and 12.)

As can be seen most of these controls do not change the association between attitudes toward capital punishment and television viewing in any way. This means, then, that while these variables also correlated (to differing degrees) with capital punishment attitudes, their effects are separate from those of television. As can be seen in Table 7 frequency of church attendance and frequency of visits to Canada are related slightly to attitudes toward capital punishment.

In the youth population (Table 12) the same type of slight variations are to be found. Grade in school and having friends in Canada affect the correlation by lowering it slightly while church attendance and frequency of reading news magazines strengthen the correlation slightly when controlled for. None of these changes are of significant



magnitude, therefore, we can say that while these variables also correlate with attitudes toward capital punishment their effects on these attitudes are separate from those imposed by television, with the exception of very slight overlaps in a few cases.

The final step of the analyses of the data on the adult and the youth population (as detailed in previous chapters) was to control for all these variables simultaneously to ascertain what effects if any were created in the correlations between attitudes toward capital punishment and the three measures of the independent variable. As can be seen from Table 13, the correlations remained steady and even rose slightly in some cases. This strengthens the conclusion that the association between attitudes toward capital punishment and television viewing is separate from other influences and is a strong relationship in itself.

This study is seen as a valuable addition to the literature examining television and attitudes. As discussed in Chapter I of this work, many professionals in the field of mass communications have expressed the idea that television's potential for shaping attitudes is its power base. While the correlations between the measures of attitudes toward capital punishment and television viewing were relatively small, it was interesting to note that television viewing correlates more strongly with capital punishment attitudes than do the demographic variables cited in the literature (Vidmar and Ellsworth, 1974) or the other variables, as authoritarianism and dogmatism (Rokeach and McLellan, 1970; Vidmar, 1973). Television viewing and capital punishment attitudes also correlate more strongly together than items measuring either other media usage or familiarity with Canada correlate with attitudes toward capital punishment. That this study is also an addition to the literature discuss-

ing possible correlates of capital punishment attitudes is shown by the fact that television viewing is at least as important a factor as are the factors cited in the literature and discussed previously.

It was especially interesting since, in actual fact, the law concerning capital punishment remains similar in the two countries. Had the two countries possessed vastly dissimilar legal codes, the study reported here might have resulted in extremely strong correlations. As it is, the results of this work point up the importance of television as a factor since some correlations still showed even in the face of such similarities.

#### Summary

This research has been concerned with the relationship between attitudes toward capital punishment and television viewing. In order to test for such a relationship, three rural Minnesota areas were enumerated. While the areas were closely matched as to ethnicity, relative age of respondents, average prosperity levels, types of agriculture and industry, they differed in one major way. One area was able to receive only Canadian television signals, another both United States and Canadian television signals, and the third only United States television signals. An adult population was composed of an adult member of each household while youth from grades nine, ten and eleven of area high schools were also enumerated providing a youth population.

An interview schedule was carefully constructed and tested in a pretest and then in a pilot study. Interviewers were trained before beginning data collection at any phase of the project. The final interview schedule contained queries on television usage, attitudes toward capital punishment, political attitude items, and personal statistics.

The data were analyzed for each population using measures of association. Parametric statistics were provided in discussing the analysis and findings and this usage was defended. The hypothesized relationship between viewing Canadian television and favorable attitudes toward capital punishment was derived from the literature. In testing this relationship empirically, Pearsonian correlation coefficients were derived to measure the association between the three measures of the independent variable and the six item Likert index measuring the dependent variable. Slight but consistent correlations were found.

We correlated attitudes toward capital punishment with other variables suggested in the literature (i.e., sex, ethnic background, religious denomination, occupation, and income). In the case of religious denomination, another measure was added asking for religious activity. This latter and sex were the only two of those variables which correlated as highly or higher than the hypothesized relationship. Attitudes toward capital punishment were also correlated with items measuring other media usage and familiarity with Canada. Again most correlations were lower than that of the hypothesized relationship.

Partial correlations between attitudes toward capital punishment and television viewing were next derived while controlling for each of these measures in turn. The hypothesized relationship was not appreciably affected in any case. As a final test, all controls were employed simultaneously. The relationship not only held under these conditions but rose slightly in each case (adult and youth).

Therefore, I conclude that there is a relationship between viewing Canadian television and favorable attitudes toward capital

punishment. This relationship is separate from and not diminished by other suggested correlates of attitudes toward capital punishment found in the literature.

As in most research projects, there are limitations, and qualifications must be attached to the findings. There was no content analysis of the various television networks performed, but rather the idea that Canadian television is more favorable toward capital punishment than United States television was based on poll data showing Canadians as having been more favorable over the past several years. This coupled with studies showing that the media reflected public opinion served as a basis for hypothesizing as was done. It was, therefore, most gratifying that the results were in agreement with this theorizing.

Generalizing to other populations is difficult, since the conditions of the research are specific to the areas enumerated. There are few areas where the only television signals received are those of another culture and there are no urban areas where this is the case. In order to better discuss rural-urban differences one might conduct research of an experimental design by manipulating the content of the television subjects would view. This would be quite costly even for a short-term design and certainly not as effective as using residents of an area constantly exposed for over ten years to only the types of television being examined.

Thus, we find that, in spite of these few limitations (which for the most part are compensated for) the research has proven valuable. Future discussion and research of findings in this area might discuss the result of a "take over" of the media (subtly) by some extremist group. The messages presented through the media might then not be so much covert as overt with probable drastic results.

The question of censorship leaps to mind and we question how free from coercion the major networks are. Future research on effects of television on attitudes should attempt to answer how much television does effect our attitudes, not only attitude toward capital punishment, but others as well. To find television having such a relationship with attitude toward capital punishment leads one to wonder whether television might not have marked effects on other attitudes.

This thesis is thus seen as a valuable stepping stone to research of television's possible effects on individuals. It is also, in itself, a breakthrough, in the study of how attitudes toward capital punishment may be created.

## NOTES

1. Leifer, et al., 1974, claimed that television socializes children, not just entertains them. This was generalized to adults by the Surgeon General's Scientific Advisory Committee on Television and Social Behavior (1972) which discussed the relationship between aggression and the viewing of televised violence. The Surgeon General felt that the relationship was "sufficiently proved to warrant immediate remedial action.

Agee, Ault, and Emery (1976) discuss the effects of violence viewed on television, not only on children but also on adult viewers and conclude, that while the effect may be minor on most people there is a definite affect.

Stein (1973) argues that television as it currently exists presents moral content and values of the society. She feels it emphasizes violence and illegal action and perpetuates a system of devaluation of certain groups of individuals (i.e., women, racial minority members, the aged, and individuals who work at some occupations).

Stein feels that there is reason to believe that this type of television content has a lasting effect on children's moral behavior. She notes that these effects can be either good or bad depending on the message conveyed.

Meyer (1973), in discussing children and television presents more evidence that television can affect the behavior of children

on some occasions. Meyer also touches upon the idea that if presented in the right content violence viewed on television can lead the viewer toward being less aggressive instead of more so. However, he feels that most televised violence is of the harmful type rather than the beneficial.

2. Friedrich and Stein (1975) conducted a study to ascertain whether a television program "designed to enhance personal, social and emotional behavior" can do so and what elements produced the most positive effects. They found that the effects depended upon a pro-social setting and the context in which the material was received.

Goldberg and Gorn (1974) studied pro-social effects of television among English-Canadian children with interesting results. They inserted segments showing inter-ethnic play into Sesame Street with the result being that more favorable attitudes toward French-Canadian children following those viewings.

Baran (1977) has reported that television programming has significantly changed attitudes toward mental retardation. Of the 80 subjects (40 having seen the program and 40 not) in the study nearly seventy percent were female. The "viewers" subjects were better educated than the non-retarded persons, the groups were closely matched. Over 50 percent of the sample reported knowing a retarded individual. Baran concluded that television can be a "powerful instrument" in removing misconceptions and stereotypes about the retarded. He also states "television might even be a more effective means of affecting attitudes than actual contact since it can confer 'status' of the material being broadcast."

Weiss (1966) in discussing effects of mass media noted that the mass media affect their audiences in several ways. They may generate changes in cognition and comprehension; affect emotional arousal, sex, and behavior identification. They may also affect aggression levels but only when violence is presented as permissible .

3. Robinson (1971) has shown that educational television combined with organized post-viewing discussion and study materials is effective in changing expressed opinions about issues such as people, poverty, pollution, politics, and miscellaneous opinion statements.

Powell and Brein (1971) present several interesting ideas about the contribution of television as perceived by college students. The students felt that television encouraged and stimulated interest in public problems but criticized commercials as stumbling blocks, encouraging false standards of social behavior by creating needs for unnecessary products.

Over the last 20 years, a successful election campaign has come to depend in large part how 'themes' and images have replaced issues under the techniques of mass persuasion.

Kraus and Davis (1976) concentrate on the effects of mass communication on political behavior in their book by that name. They cite recent studies by such scholars as Jennings, McCombs, Robinson, Johnson and Chaffee as evidence that media are important causal variables in political behavior.

4. A familiar generalization is that the mass media reinforce existing values and may be employed to create popular consent for actions of public officials (Lippman, 1922; Bernays, 1947). This generalization



has led to fears that the media may occasionally produce socially disfunctional agreement (Wirth, 1948; Key, 1961). Other analyses suggest that modern communication systems may reduce consensus and increase conflict (Childs, 1964). Still other analyses indicate that emphasis on consensus may vary sharply among media, being inversely proportional to size of the medium and the community where it originates (Janowitz, 1952; Olien et al., 1968).

Roberts (see Schramm and Roberts, 1972) presents some thought provoking ideas about the effects of mass media. In his view, the structuring of social reality by mediated information is probably greatest where the audience has the least amount of reality experience by which to evaluate media images.

Wade (1973) reports that the relation of media selection and effects normally found in the literature tends toward the maintenance of a status quo. That is, people usually select those items of information, those images of reality within media with which they already agree--or think that they will agree with. We have scant evidence on the nature of reality images changed by the mass media--or even on image changes indirectly attributable to information disseminated by mass media.

APPENDIX A  
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

## INTERVIEW SCHEDULE - ADULT FORM

THE FIRST FEW QUESTIONS DEAL WITH THE USE OF TV, RADIO, NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES.

1. a. How often do you read a daily newspaper?

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ daily
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_ several days a week
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_ once a week
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_ less than once a week

b. Which daily newspaper do you read most often?

\_\_\_\_\_

c. Do you read any other daily newspapers regularly?

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ yes
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_ no

IF YES, GO TO 1d.

d. Are any of these Canadian?

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ yes
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_ no

2. a. About how much time each day do you spend reading the newspapers?

\_\_\_\_\_

b. How much of this is reading Canadian newspapers?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. a. On the average day, about how much time do you listen to the radio?

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ rarely listen
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_ less than 15 minutes a day
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_ 15 minutes to 1 hour a day
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_ 1 hour to 3 hours a day
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_ more than 3 hours a day

b. Which radio station do you listen to most often? \_\_\_\_\_

c. How often do you listen to Canadian radio?

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ daily
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_ several times a week
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_ once a week
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_ less than once a week

4. About how much television do you watch on the average weekday? \_\_\_ hrs.  
On the weekend (Saturday and Sunday)? \_\_\_ hrs. This would be about  
\_\_\_ hrs. for the average week. Does this sound about right?

\_\_\_ yes                      \_\_\_ no

5. About what percent of this time do you watch Canadian TV? \_\_\_\_\_

6. TV has many different kinds of programs. For each of the following types of information, indicate how important a source TV is for you. (10 very important, 1 not at all important)

\_\_\_ news about your home area  
\_\_\_ entertainment and relaxation  
\_\_\_ news about events across the United States  
\_\_\_ information about world affairs  
\_\_\_ excitement and adventure  
\_\_\_ understanding of important public issues and problems  
\_\_\_ understanding about political affairs  
\_\_\_ culture and the fine arts  
\_\_\_ understanding about interesting historical and scientific matters

7. a. How often do you watch a national network newscast?

1) \_\_\_ daily  
2) \_\_\_ several days a week  
3) \_\_\_ once a week  
4) \_\_\_ less than once a week

- b. Which national newscast do you view most often? (choose one)

1) \_\_\_ CBS, Walter Cronkite                      4) \_\_\_ Educational  
2) \_\_\_ NBC, David Brinkley                      5) \_\_\_ CBC, Peter Kent  
3) \_\_\_ ABC, Reasoner and Walters              6) \_\_\_ CTV, Lloyd Robertson

- c. Do you watch any other national newscasts regularly?

\_\_\_ yes                      \_\_\_ no

IF YES, GO TO 7d.

- d. Are any of these Canadian?

\_\_\_ yes                      \_\_\_ no

IF YES, GO TO 7e.

- e. How often do you watch this program?

1) \_\_\_ daily  
2) \_\_\_ several days a week  
3) \_\_\_ once a week  
4) \_\_\_ less than once a week

8. a. How often do you read news magazines like Time, Newsweek, or U.S. News and World Report?

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ every week  
 2) \_\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
 3) \_\_\_\_\_ rarely

b. How much time do you spend during an average week reading news magazines?

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ no time  
 2) \_\_\_\_\_ less than 15 minutes  
 3) \_\_\_\_\_ 15 minutes to 1 hour  
 4) \_\_\_\_\_ more than 1 hour

c. Do you read other magazines which give you information about Canada?

\_\_\_\_\_ yes                      \_\_\_\_\_ no

IF YES, GO TO 8d.

d. How much time do you spend in an average week reading in these magazines about Canada? \_\_\_\_\_

9. a. Generally speaking, how interested are you in news about political issues in your area?

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ very interested  
 2) \_\_\_\_\_ slightly interested  
 3) \_\_\_\_\_ moderately interested  
 4) \_\_\_\_\_ not interested

b. What would you consider to be your most important source of local news?

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ newspaper  
 2) \_\_\_\_\_ radio  
 3) \_\_\_\_\_ TV  
 4) \_\_\_\_\_ magazines  
 5) \_\_\_\_\_ talking with others

10. a. How interested generally are you in news about the rest of the United States?

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ very interested                      3) \_\_\_\_\_ moderately interested  
 2) \_\_\_\_\_ slightly interested                      4) \_\_\_\_\_ not interested

10. b. What would you consider to be your most important source of national news?

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ newspaper
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_ radio
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_ TV
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_ magazines
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_ talking with others

11. a. How interested are you in news of other countries?

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ very interested
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_ slightly interested
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_ moderately interested
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_ not interested

b. What would you consider to be your most important source of international news?

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ newspaper
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_ radio
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_ TV
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_ magazines
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_ talking with others

12. a. What do you personally consider to be the most important issues facing the United States today?

b. Which one would you consider to be the most important?

c. What has been your primary source of information on \_\_\_\_\_ (issue of first importance)?

d. What is this issue about? Could you summarize the main facts?

e. Who are some of the people involved with this issue?

f. What proposals have you heard or read about for dealing with the issue?

13. a. What do you personally consider to be the most important issues facing Canada today?
- b. Which one would you consider to be the most important?
- c. What has been your primary source of information on this issue?
- d. What is the issue about? Could you summarize the main facts?
- e. Who are some of the people involved with this issue?
- f. What proposals have you heard or read about for dealing with the issue?
14. a. What are some of the issues of controversy between Canada and the United States these days?
- b. Which one could you consider to be the most important?
- c. What has been your primary source of information on \_\_\_\_\_ (issue of first importance)?
15. I would like to get your opinion of the relative importance of some issues. I will name two issues at a time. As I name each pair, please tell me which one you personally think is the most important issue in the United States today.

Economic Recovery  
 International Peace  
 Pollution  
 Energy

Taxes  
 Energy  
 International Peace  
 Pollution

Economic Recovery  
 Energy  
 Taxes  
 International Peace  
 Taxes  
 Pollution

Energy  
 Taxes  
 Pollution  
 Economic Recovery  
 International Peace  
 Economic Recovery

16. What are the American equivalents of:

- 1) chesterfield \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) grey cup \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) BNA Act \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) Servette \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) Premier \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) Back bacon \_\_\_\_\_
- 7) Paks or Paki \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) Dominion Day \_\_\_\_\_

WE WOULD NOW LIKE TO ASK YOU A FEW QUESTIONS ON YOUR FEELINGS ABOUT THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA.

17. Canada has good government.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

18. Canada is a safe country.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

19. Canada is a world leader.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

20. In general, Canada is a good country.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

21. Canadians are pretty well informed about the United States.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5



22. The United States has good government.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

23. The United States is a safe country.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

24. The United States is a world leader.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

25. In general, the United States is a good country.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

26. Americans are pretty well informed about Canada.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

NOW USING THE SAME FORM, WE WANT TO ASK YOU HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT CANADIAN AND AMERICAN PEOPLE.

27. How would you describe French-speaking Canadians?

Hard working	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5

Intelligent	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5

Practical	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5

Generous	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5

## 28. How would you describe English-speaking Canadians?

Hard working	Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Undecided 3	Disagree 4	Strongly Disagree 5
Intelligent	Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Undecided 3	Disagree 4	Strongly Disagree 5
Practical	Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Undecided 3	Disagree 4	Strongly Disagree 5
Generous	Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Undecided 3	Disagree 4	Strongly Disagree 5

## 29. How would you describe American whites?

Hard working	Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Undecided 3	Disagree 4	Strongly Disagree 5
Intelligent	Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Undecided 3	Disagree 4	Strongly Disagree 5
Practical	Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Undecided 3	Disagree 4	Strongly Disagree 5
Generous	Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Undecided 3	Disagree 4	Strongly Disagree 5

## 30. How would you describe American blacks?

Hard working	Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Undecided 3	Disagree 4	Strongly Disagree 5
Intelligent	Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Undecided 3	Disagree 4	Strongly Disagree 5
Practical	Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Undecided 3	Disagree 4	Strongly Disagree 5
Generous	Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Undecided 3	Disagree 4	Strongly Disagree 5

31. I think we should have a mandatory death penalty for some types of very serious criminal offenses.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Strongly Disagree  
 1                    2                    3                    4                    5

32. Canadian TV has much or more nudity than U.S. TV.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Strongly Disagree  
 1                    2                    3                    4                    5

33. A firm response to those who violate the law would soon reduce the crime rate in our society.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Strongly Disagree  
 1                    2                    3                    4                    5

34. Nudity on TV is more acceptable than violence.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Strongly Disagree  
 1                    2                    3                    4                    5

35. Regardless of whether we actually use the death penalty, I think our laws should allow us to put someone to death should the need ever arise.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Strongly Disagree  
 1                    2                    3                    4                    5

36. The government should provide low cost housing for low income groups.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Strongly Disagree  
 1                    2                    3                    4                    5

37. No offense is so serious that it deserves to be punished by death.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Strongly Disagree  
 1                    2                    3                    4                    5

38. The government should see to it that people never have to worry about how they will pay their medical bills.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Strongly Disagree  
 1                    2                    3                    4                    5

39. Regardless of whether prison sentences keep the person who received the sentences from breaking the law again, they show the others in our society that crime doesn't pay.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Strongly Disagree  
 1                    2                    3                    4                    5





49. a. Do you have children? 1) \_\_\_ yes 2) \_\_\_ no
- b. We would appreciate you giving us the ages of all your children.  
(Use one blank for each child. Begin with your youngest on left.)
- \_\_\_\_\_

50. Have any of your children left home to marry or live on their own?
- 1) \_\_\_ yes 2) \_\_\_ no

51. In the family in which you grew up were you:

- 1) \_\_\_ an only child  
2) \_\_\_ the oldest child  
3) \_\_\_ a middle child  
4) \_\_\_ the youngest child

52. In the family in which your spouse (husband/wife) grew up was he/she:

- 1) \_\_\_ an only child  
2) \_\_\_ the oldest child  
3) \_\_\_ a middle child  
4) \_\_\_ the youngest child

53. Answer only if you have been married before: Did your last marriage end because of:

- 1) \_\_\_ widowhood  
2) \_\_\_ divorce

54. Education:

- 1) \_\_\_ grade school (grades 1-8) or less  
2) \_\_\_ some high school (grades 9-12)  
3) \_\_\_ high school diploma (or equivalent)  
4) \_\_\_ some college, junior college, or vocational training  
5) \_\_\_ four year college  
6) \_\_\_ graduate work

55. Religion: What religious denomination do you belong to?

---

How often have you been to a church service during the last month?

- 1) \_\_\_ not at all  
2) \_\_\_ once  
3) \_\_\_ more than once this month, but not more often than once a week  
4) \_\_\_ more often than once a week

56. Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

57. Are you retired? 1) \_\_\_\_\_ yes 2) \_\_\_\_\_ no

58. What was your family's total gross income last year?

1) \_\_\_\_\_ less than \$5,000

2) \_\_\_\_\_ \$5,000 to 9,999

3) \_\_\_\_\_ 10,000 to 14,999

4) \_\_\_\_\_ 15,000 to 19,999

5) \_\_\_\_\_ 20,000 to 24,999

6) \_\_\_\_\_ 25,000 to 34,999

7) \_\_\_\_\_ 35,000 to 50,000

8) \_\_\_\_\_ More than \$50,000





51. In your family are you:

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ an only child
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_ the oldest child
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_ a middle child
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_ the youngest child

52. Education of your father:

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ grade school (grades 1-8) or less
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_ some high school (grades 9-12)
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_ high school diploma (or equivalent)
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_ some college, junior college or vocational training
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_ four year college
- 6) \_\_\_\_\_ graduate work

53. Religion:

What religious denomination do you belong to? \_\_\_\_\_

How often have you been to a church service during the last month?

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ not at all
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_ once
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_ more than once this month, but not more often than once a week
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_ more often than once a week

54. Occupation of your father: \_\_\_\_\_

55. What was your family's total gross income last year?

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ less than \$5,000
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_ \$5,000 to 9,999
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_ 10,000 to 14,999
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_ 15,000 to 19,999
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_ 20,000 to 24,999
- 6) \_\_\_\_\_ 25,000 to 34,999
- 7) \_\_\_\_\_ 35,000 to 50,000
- 8) \_\_\_\_\_ More than \$50,000

APPENDIX B

FACTOR SCORE COEFFICIENTS OF THE SIX ITEMS  
MEASURING ATTITUDES TOWARD CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

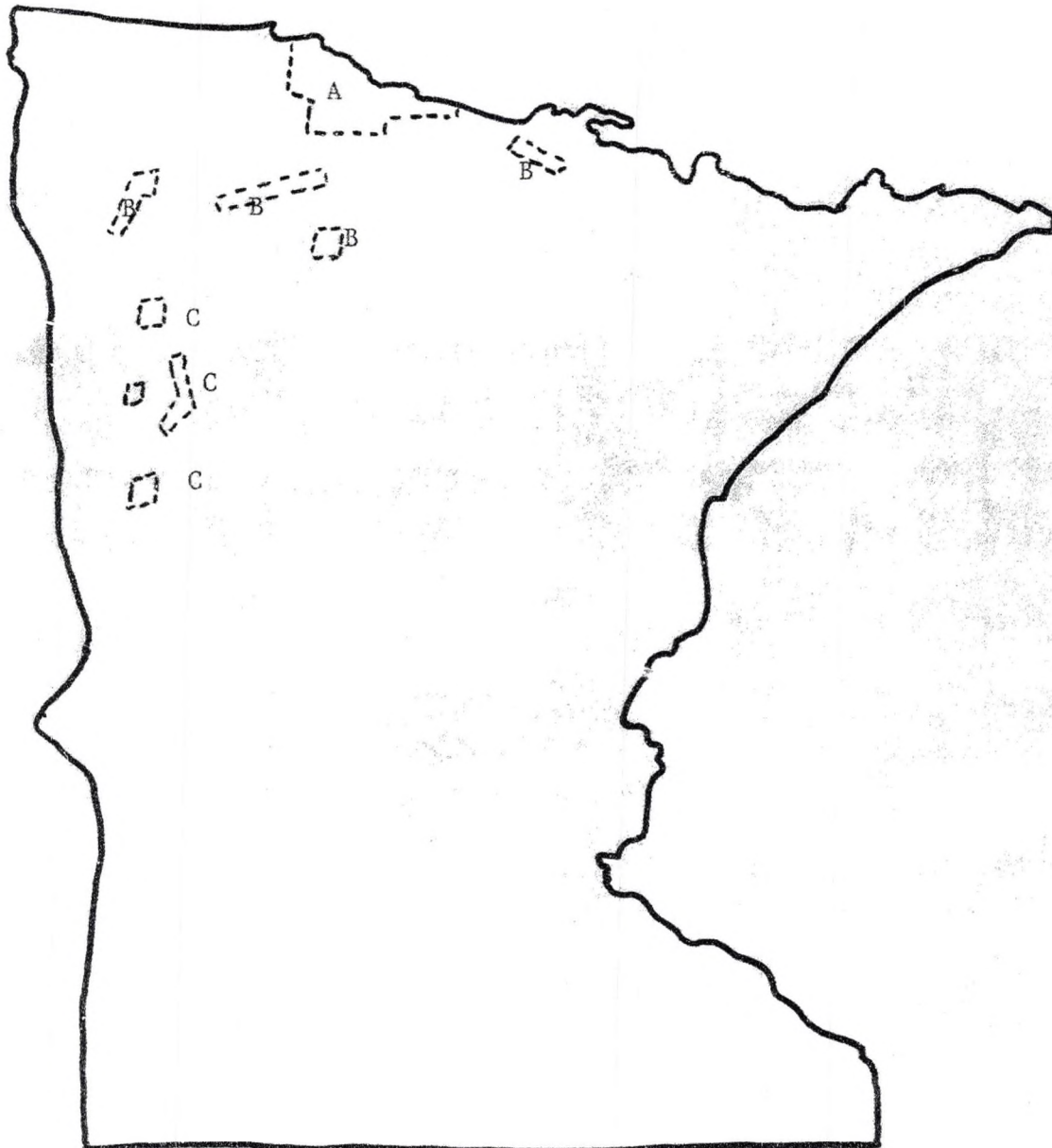
FACTOR SCORE COEFFICIENTS OF THE SIX ITEMS  
MEASURING ATTITUDES TOWARD CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

<u>Item</u>	<u>Factor Score Coefficients</u>	
	<u>Adult</u>	<u>Youth</u>
1. I think we should have a mandatory death penalty for some types of very serious criminal offenses.	.80891	.77760
2. Regardless of whether we actually use the death penalty, I think our laws should allow us to put someone to death should the need ever arise.	.76265	.67801
3. Whether we like it or not, we must use the death penalty in some cases if we are ever to control crime.	.84866	.80168
4. No offense is so serious that it deserves to be punished by death.	.70923	.74848
5. A firm response to those who break the law would soon reduce the crime rate in our society.	.47906	.37195
6. Regardless of whether prison sentences keep the person who received the sentence from breaking the law again, they show others in our society that crime doesn't pay.	.17235	.24343

APPENDIX C

MAP SHOWING LOCATION OF ENUMERATED POPULATIONS

LOCATION OF ENUMERATED POPULATIONS



- A - Receive only Canadian television
- B - Receive both United States and Canadian television
- C - Receive only United States television

APPENDIX D  
INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTIONS

## INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTIONS

## I. The Interviewing Process

## A. Initial Contact - The door step

## 1. Introduction

- a. The intro should be just long enough to get you in the door. Example: Hi. My name is Bev Schulke and I'm working on a research project supported by the University of North Dakota and Syracuse University. This study is concerned with mass media usage in Minnesota. I would like to come in and talk with you about this.
- b. The interviewer should state the course of action rather than ask permission. A statement such as "May I come in" is much easier to say No to than a statement of action such as "I would like to come in and talk with you about this."

## 2. Refusals

- a. If a person absolutely refuses to be interviewed, make note of which household it is and go on to the next home.

## 3. No one home

- a. Make note of which household it is, and try to get back to it later. If in 3 visits there is still no one home, mark it as such on your map.

## B. Securing the interview - inside the home

1. Once inside the home the interviewer may be questioned further on the purpose of the visit. Here are some examples:

a. Q: How did you happen to pick me? Who gave you our name?

A: You see, in trying to find out what people in this area think we are trying to talk to one member of each household.

b. Q: I really don't know anything about this.

A: We are interested in your opinions, not in information you may or may not have about the topics in the survey. I really think you will find the interview interesting and enjoyable. In a study such as this there are no right and wrong answers; we simply

are interested in learning about your experiences and how you feel about things.

c. Q: Why don't you go next door? Why don't you talk to my wife; she knows more about this than I do.

A: It would be nice if we could just interview the people we catch at home when we call, but that wouldn't give us the ratio of male to female responses that we need.

d. Q: What's this all about anyway?

A: An expansion of the introductory remarks should be adequate if you think that this question means just what it says. If, however, the respondent is voicing suspicion about the legitimacy of your visit, you might suggest that he call a local official with whom you are registered who can vouch for the fact that you are from a recognized organization known to be working on a survey in the area.

e. Q: What good will this do?

A: This is perhaps one of the most difficult questions to answer. While a survey which adds to our knowledge about problems and concerns in society is valuable, a particular study will probably have little or no direct effect on individual respondents. (This is a good time to bring out clippings from past studies, taken from both newspapers and periodicals such as Time, Newsweek, The Wall Street Journal, etc., and show the respondent how the information is used.)

2. Now you must explain the purpose of the questionnaire and explain how the respondents name will not be used in any way. Also that the interview will take about 40 minutes.

### C. Using the Questionnaire

#### 1. Asking the questions

a. You should avoid creating the impression that the interview is a quiz or cross-examination; be careful that nothing in your words or manner implies criticism, surprise, approval or disapproval either of the questions you ask or of the respondent's answers.



- b. If you have a normal tone of voice, an attentive way of listening, and a non-judgemental manner, you will maintain and increase the respondent's interest. Study the questionnaire carefully and practice reading the questions aloud.
- c. Ask the questions exactly as they are worded in the questionnaire.
- d. Read each question very slowly.
- e. Ask the questions in the order in which they are presented in the questionnaire.
- f. Ask every question specified in the questionnaire. The respondent may ask, "Just put me down as 'yes' to all of them." In these cases, you may wonder whether you should skip the questions which are apparently answered. You should not. It is your responsibility to make certain, wherever possible, that the respondent is fully exposed to each question specified in the questionnaire.
- g. Repeat questions which are misunderstood or misinterpreted.
- h. Keep track of changes you make in the questionnaire.
- i. Gathering personal data. If the respondent asks you why you want to know his age, religion, income, or other personal information, you might say something such as: "Well, as I was saying earlier, we are talking with people of different ages and various occupations in several parts of the state. We put all of the interviews together, and then count them up to see whether men feel differently from women, whether young people feel differently from older people, and so on. To do this we need to know a few things about the people we talk to. So, I have just a few questions on that type of thing." If there seems to be a need for further reassurance, you may add: "As I mentioned, the interview is completely confidential. The survey report is a summary of all the interviews, without, of course, identifying anyone." Occasionally, a respondent will feel strongly about telling you his income or his religion. In these cases, you should proceed to the next question without further probing.
- j. Reinforce the respondent by giving him positive feedback in the form of neutral comments such as, "Yes," "OK," "I see," "Uh, huh," and even just a nod of the head, which indicates that you have heard and understood the

response and that he is being a good respondent. At the same time you must be careful not to give leading or unacceptable feedback or to reinforce bad behavior.

#### D. Probing

If your respondent gives you an incomplete or irrelevant answer, misunderstands the questions, if you do not understand his answer, or if he loses track of the question and gets off on another topic, it is your responsibility to get him back on the track through careful, neutral techniques. The quality of the interview depends a great deal on the interviewer's ability to probe and use these techniques successfully.

##### 1. Probing has two major functions:

- a. It motivates the respondent to communicate more fully so that he enlarges on, clarifies, or explains the reasons behind what he has said.
- b. It helps the respondent focus on the specific content of the interview so that irrelevant and unnecessary information can be avoided.

##### 2. Probes must perform their two functions without introducing bias. Obtaining specific, complete responses which satisfy the objectives of the questions can be the most difficult part of the interview. Even the best questionnaire may elicit first responses which are inadequate. An answer may be inadequate because it is only a partial answer and therefore incomplete; it may also be irrelevant, about something other than the subject of the question, or it may be unclear. In the following examples, note how the inadequate replies fail to answer the question:

Q: Do you think it will make a lot of difference to the country whether the Democrats or Republicans win the November elections, or that it won't make much difference which side wins?

A: Yes, I do. (Unclear answer.)

Q: Considering the country as a whole, do you think we'll have good times, or bad times, or what, between now and a year from now?

A: I hope we'll have good times. (Irrelevant answer.)

The interviewer cannot accept these replies because they do not adequately fulfill the question objectives. Obviously, some method of returning the respondent's mind to the topic of the question is needed so that clear, complete, and relevant

answers are obtained. This does not mean that the interviewer should openly question a respondent's answer, since the respondent probably thought he was answering the question correctly. Rather, by probing, the interviewer can encourage the respondent to clarify and expand his answer.

### 3. Kinds of Probes

- a. Repeating the question. Many respondents, hearing it for a second time, realize what kind of answer is needed.
- b. An expectant pause.
- c. Repeating the respondent's reply.
- d. Neutral questions or comments. The following are examples of the most commonly used probes and their "key words" phrases or abbreviations:

Interviewer's Probe	Standard Abbreviation
Repeat Question	RQ
Anything else?	AE or Else?
Any others?	Other?
Could you tell me more about your thinking on that?	Tell more
What do you mean?	What mean?
Why do you feel that way?	Why?

- e. Asking for further clarification. In probing, it will sometimes be useful for you to appear slightly bewildered by the respondent's answer and intimate with your probe that it might be you who failed to understand. For example: "I'm not quite sure I know what you mean by that--could you tell me a little more?"

### 4. Nondirective Probing

Consider the question: "How do you think things are going in the world today--I mean our relations with other countries?" The respondent's first answer might be: "Well, I don't know, in some ways they are going well and in some ways they are going poorly." The respondent has not answered the question but has indicated some thoughts on the subjects. How might the interviewer handle this situation? A neutral probe might be: "I see; well, would you tell me what you have in mind?" or "There are no right or wrong answers on things like this, of course. I'd just like to get your thinking about it."

It is important not to change the content of the question. The following example illustrates a directive probe which violates this rule: "Well, what about our relations with China?" The respondent will then consider any answer in terms of our relations with China--a subject that neither the questionnaire nor the respondent had mentioned and that was introduced solely by the interviewer.

## 5. Examples of Probes

The primary question is: "Considering the country as a whole, do you think we will have good times during the next year, or what?"

ANSWER 1: Yes, I do. (What does the respondent mean? "Yes, we will have good times," and "Yes, we will have bad times," are both possible interpretations.)

POSSIBLE PROBES: Let me make sure I understand you. Do you think we will have good times during the next year, bad times, or what?

Repeat answer, "You said yes . . ." (pause) . . . (repeat question). What did you mean?

ANSWER 2: I hope we have good times. (This answer is irrelevant. The question asked what his expectations were, not what his wishes and hopes were.)

POSSIBLE PROBES: We all hope we will have good times, but what do you think will happen? Let me just read this question again . . . (repeat question).

ANSWER 3: Well we're all getting along better these days. (This answer is irrelevant. The question asked for an expectation in absolute terms, not a statement of how things are now, or a relative answer comparing next year to this year.)

POSSIBLE PROBES: I see, but would you say . . . (repeat question). Yes, and think only about next year . . . (repeat alternatives emphasizing the words "good times" and "bad times").

ANSWER 4: It will be good; my husband just got a promotion. (This answer is irrelevant. The question asked about the country as a whole, not the respondent and her family.)

POSSIBLE PROBES: That's nice, now . . . (repeat question, stressing the words "country as a whole").

ANSWER 5: Maybe good, maybe bad. It all depends. (The respondent may be saying that he just cannot tell, but he has not made that clear. Be careful not to misdirect the respondent by focusing on the word "depends.")

POSSIBLE PROBES: What do you expect will happen? Which would be closer to the way you feel? (Repeat alternatives)  
Can you tell me more about what you expect will happen?

## E. Recording and Editing

### 1. Rules for recording responses

- a. Record responses during the interview.
- b. Use the respondent's own words.
- c. Do not summarize or paraphrase the respondent's answers.
- d. Include everything that pertains to the question objectives.
- e. Include all of your probes.
- f. Hold the respondent's interest. A good technique for holding the respondent's interest and taking verbatim notes is to start repeating the response, as you are writing it down.

### 2. Tips on note taking

- a. When starting the interview, try to find a place where you will be able to write comfortably.
- b. When the respondent starts to talk, begin to write immediately.
- c. Abbreviate sentences. You can do this by leaving out articles and prepositions, by entering only key words, and so on. Then later, while you are editing the interview, put these in along with punctuation so that the coders can read the responses as they are actually given.

### 3. Mechanics of recording and editing interviews

- a. Use a pencil to record.
- b. Writing must be legible.
- c. Use parentheses to indicate the interviewer's words or observations.

- d. Do not put anything the respondent says in parentheses.
- e. Cross reference relevant material in the interview.
- f. Account for each question in the questionnaire.
- g. Identify each interview.

4. Summary tips on editing

When you edit, please remember that someone who was not present when you took the interview will be examining it. Please be sure that:

- a. All entries are legible.
- b. Inappropriate questions are clearly marked "Inap."
- c. All probes, and any other of your remarks during the interview, are indicated in parentheses.
- d. All unclear responses are clarified by your parenthetical notes.

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