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CHARLA M. YINGLING

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of the requirements for

~~MASTER OF ARTS~~ degree in TELECOMMUNICATION


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**WHEN I GROW UP: PRE-PRODUCTION RESEARCH FOR PILOT
TREATMENT DEVELOPMENT FOR A TELEVISION SERIES ON
CAREERS**

By

Charla M. Yingling

A THESIS

**Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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ABSTRACT

WHEN I GROW UP: PRE-PRODUCTION RESEARCH FOR PILOT TREATMENT DEVELOPMENT FOR A TELEVISION SERIES ON CAREERS

By

Charla M. Yingling

This manuscript describes the need for audience participation when creating a television concept, treatment, script or pilot. It illustrates how pre-production audience research can lead to the development of a television series that communicates effectively with its audience. The audience participation-based method used in this project was created by Dr. Bella Mody. The pilot treatment created in this thesis is for an educational television program about careers. The target audience is eight to ten year old, low income, African-American girls.

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This manuscript is dedicated to my husband, Jeffrey, my parents, Frank and Marie, and to my sister and her family, Adrienne, Michael, Samantha, Daniel, Deborah and the one on they way.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis focuses on audience research and pilot treatment development for a series called *When I Grow Up*. The objective of the series is to help eight to ten year old, low income, African-American girls to become aware of the range of occupational opportunities available to them. The series will present occupations that are attainable and realistic to the target audience. Based upon the analysis done in this project, the presentation of the series will cater to the entertainment preferences and the educational needs of this audience.

Generally, creators of commercial television do not consult the target audience on its likes, dislikes or needs until after the program has been produced. These programs are created by professionals who rely on their personal experiences or gut feelings (Ettema 48). It is not surprising that the majority of prime time programs aired on television run one season or less (Gitlin 31). This low success rate suggests that experience and gut feelings need additional input in order to create hit television programs.

An interview with a children's television producer revealed the profession's perception that media productions are works of individual genius and artistry that do not need prior systematic steps to achieve communication : "If you have to go to research to find out what children

like, then there is something wrong with you. You should not be on the job" (Ettema 49). Obviously, research is low on the priority list.

Chapter 1

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the project presented in this thesis was to develop a pilot treatment for an educational television program using an audience participation-based message design procedure. The procedure used in this project was created by Bella Mody in Designing Messages for Development Communication (1991). In this procedure, the importance of audience-producer communication in the pre-production design stage is emphasized because it ensures audience attention and comprehension after transmission. The project described in this thesis is unique because it illustrates how pre-production audience research (using the Mody process) can lead to the development of a television series that communicates effectively with its audience.

Mody's procedure requires those who want to communicate (namely, media producers) with audiences which they cannot see or hear to listen to the audiences before drafting a concept, treatment, script or pilot in order to understand what words and images to use. This pre-production audience research includes data collection on the topic (in this case, occupations and favorite television formats).

In the United States (US), telecommunication is a private profit making business. The structure of the industry (producers, networks, advertising agencies and regulators) and a host of other factors influence children's educational television (Ettema 39). In an attempt to deal with industry and social pressures, Congress passed the Children's Television Act in 1990. The original definition of children's educational television in the 1990 Act read: " any television programming that furthers the

educational and informational needs of children 16 years and under in any respect, including children's intellectual/cognitive or social/emotional needs" (Center for Media Education 1).

Since the Act of 1990, the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) has clarified both the definition of and the air time requirements for children's television. The new rule expands upon the original definition by requiring programming which is specifically designed to educate children. It is defined as having a clearly-stated written educational objective, and a target age group of children. The programs will be at least thirty minutes in length, regularly scheduled and air between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. Each station must air a minimum of three hours of educational programming per week if it wishes to receive automatic renewal of its television license. These changes will affect all broadcast license renewal applications after September 1, 1997 (Center for Media Education 1-3).

Prior to changes in the definition of educational programming for children, the networks defined The Jetsons and The Flintstones as "educational programs." Kunkel's 1992 study of license renewal forms from forty-eight commercial stations revealed that two out of every ten stations did not illustrate which shows were created to meet the educational needs of children. Three out of ten stations did not even provide basic program information (Ettema 41).

Sesame Street was the first major user of audience participation-based research (Mody 84). The goal of Sesame Street is to teach preschoolers some basic cognitive skills, such as recognition of letters and simple counting (Lesser xv). Producers used systematic pre-production and mid-production research in all stages of the Sesame Street project. They performed continuous self-correction based on the observations of

the children (Lesser 253). Impact evaluative research found that the more children watched Sesame Street, the more they learned (Lesser 220).

SUMMARY

This chapter explained the objective of the project presented in this thesis. The purpose is to develop a pilot treatment for When I Grow Up, an educational television program about careers. The method used to develop this treatment is Mody's audience participation-based message design procedure. Mody's procedure demands that media producers listen to the audience before deciding how and what to communicate to them. Sesame Street successfully used audience participation-based message design.

US telecommunication is a private profit making business. Therefore, producers' creative decisions are based on money, not on the needs of the audience (Ettema 39). The FCC, through legislation, is encouraging the media industry to handle children's television in a responsible manner (Center for Media Education 1-3).

Chapter 2

RATIONALE

This chapter explains why this particular target audience (eight to ten year old, low-income, African-American girls) and program topic (occupations) were chosen to illustrate the application of pre-production audience research by media producers.

WHY AFRICAN-AMERICAN?, WHY LOW INCOME?

In US society, eight to ten year old African-American girls in low-income situations have very limited information available on employment options. The following studies suggest that exposure to employment options may be helpful in increasing the interest about and understanding of employment options for the target audience.

Many kids living in low income areas are exposed to illegal ways of making a living on a regular basis. The combination of joblessness, underemployment and the flight of successful African-American individuals from inner-city communities have left inner-city, low-income children with few positive role models. The visible role models very often make their living as drug dealers, pimps and thugs (Sheley 160).

Greenberg shows that during the 1970s, about 10% of the characters on television were African-American, which was close to the proportion of African-Americans in the population (12%) (Greenberg 179-90). The characters portrayed held either low status jobs or no job at all. In the 1950s, few African-Americans were shown on television, and those portrayed stereotypes, such as Amos and Andy, or criminals (Lowery 369).

WHY OCCUPATIONAL CHOICES?

Research shows that children in low-income and/or non-traditional family situations believe that they have no choices in terms of occupational opportunities. A study by Trice found that, as a child moves from a two-parent home to levels such as a one parent home, nonparent care or possibly a foster home, his or her occupational aspirations move toward a "no choice" answer (316-17). In a two-parent home, 5% of girls gave "no choice" answers, as compared to 13% in a single parent home, 21% in nonparent homes and 30% in foster care (Trice 316-17).

Unfortunately, even if children are aware of a particular occupation and would like to pursue it, they may limit themselves because of sex-role stereotyping. A study by Hageman and Gladding found that when elementary school girls were asked to choose an occupation for themselves, they chose sex-role stereotyped occupations (284-85). This study found that the girls placed males in positions like doctors, engineers, chefs, school principals, scientists and astronauts. While women were placed in positions like secretaries, nurses, librarians and phone operators (Hageman 284-85). Gregg and Dobson show that if a child sees or knows a person working in a particular occupation that does not fit the sex-role stereotype, the child is more likely to accept that he or she may be able to work in that position if he or she is of the same sex (71-72). The proposed television series will illustrate alternative ways of making a living that are legal, interesting and also will provide role models for the target audience.

WHY TELEVISION?, WHY GIRLS?

Jason and Hanaway show that 25% of American children are spending 4.5 to 11.5 hours in front of the television daily in 1996 (1) . This reflects a steady increase of child viewing from the two to three hours per day in the 1970s. Some children begin watching television as early as two years old. By age eighteen, an American child has spent more time watching television than participating in any other activity, except sleeping (Jason 1).

There are other behaviors and learning patterns specific to the target audience that suggest television is an appropriate medium to reach it. Low-income, African-American children watch more television and believe it is a more reliable source of information than their white counterparts (Berry 81). Programs aimed toward boys dominate children's television (Ettema 55). Women occupy between 1/4 and 1/3 of the entertainment roles on television, often portraying weak and passive characters (Liebert 191).

Television can have a powerful effect on children when they do not have direct contact with a particular experience (e.g. scuba diving or attending an opera) (Berry 83). It is "'a special medium for a special audience' which transcends the boundaries of time and space" (qtd. in Berry and Asamen 17). It has the ability to serve as a socializing agent for minority children, by showing values, appropriate roles and ethnic identification. Consequently, it may lead children to form attitudes about themselves and the world around them (Berry 87, 122).

Jeffries-Fox and Signorielli's three year panel study (1979) revealed that television is an important source of occupational information for children (21-8). As occupations are sex-role stereotyped in real life, they are often presented that way on television. Fortunately, counter-

stereotypical portrayals of individuals on television can influence a child's perception of sex appropriateness of various occupations (Signorielli 73, 75).

Much of the research done on children and television points to the fact that children learn from watching television (Signorielli 135). This learning is incidental, not intended.

WHY EIGHT TO TEN YEAR OLDS?

Prior to the age of seven, children don't understand that steps need to be taken to get a job. Seven-to-eleven-year-olds are considered to be in the period of concrete operations, in accordance with Piaget's Theory of Intellectual Development (Sturm 17). Children in this age group begin to understand different view points and follow sequences in action (Sturm 17). In essence, they can understand cause and effect .

SUMMARY

This chapter provides the rationale for choosing the target audience (eight to ten year old, low-income, African-American girls) on which to conduct pre-production research for a television series on occupational choices which will be specially designed for that audiences needs. It also reviewed published literature in which the authors determine that children can and do learn from entertainment television.

Chapter 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews published research relevant to format and content (occupations) for the intended audience of When I Grow Up, namely African-American, low income girls, aged eight to ten years old.

CONTENT

Children's occupational decisions are made with limited and sometimes inaccurate information. Phipps found that less than 1/3 of third graders could articulate what education was necessary for particular occupations (29). The rest of the third graders and about 1/3 of both fourth and fifth graders gave general answers about educational or behavioral and personality factors required to obtain a specific occupation, (e.g. one needs to stay in school, one must work hard, or one must be honest to get a job) (Phipps 29).

Socioeconomic status (SES) can guide children's occupational choices either positively or negatively. African-American children generally aspire to higher level occupations than either white or Hispanic children, but the social and economic support needed to get them there is often not in place. Phipps suggests that children from a low SES aspire to make money or to be like their role models, while children from a higher SES aspire to jobs where they can help others (27).

Miller and Stanford's 1987 research shows that, African-American children are becoming more like other children as far as the quantity and range of occupational preferences (120). The choice of extra-curricular activities can play a role in children's occupational preferences (Phipps 20).

Gender can play a role in the level of education needed for an occupational choice. Girls, in general, chose occupations requiring at least a bachelor's degree. These occupations are concentrated in two areas, artistic and investigative (Phipps 23).

FORMAT

Liebert found African-American children will be favorably disposed to an African-American individual on television regardless of his or her character portrayal (e.g. inept versus competent, lazy versus hardworking) (167). Children respond to seeing others like themselves (Huston 14). A study done by the CBS Research Department found that African-American children liked Fat Albert, an African-American cartoon character, significantly more than their white counterparts (42). In addition to race, Newcomb and Collins found that children reacted more positively to individuals of the same SES (417-22). This research implies that a television series on occupational choices for African-American girls must use African-American characters.

In general, children are more likely to watch a program that is humorous, that they can understand, and that has audio and visual special effects (Signorielli 26, 37). In particular, girls are less attracted to sports and adventure (Huston 19). Specific characteristics that maintain attention are female characters; women's, children's and peculiar voices; laughter; applause; activity or movement and camera cuts (Signorielli 25). Characteristics that had negative effects were male voices, animals, still pictures and extended zooms (Signorielli 25).

The most important element of a program is making children feel like they are a part of it. Two ways of making them a part of the program

are involving them in question and answer sessions and audience polls (Hays 47).

Children can remember about three ideas per show (Frederick). Those three ideas should be very clear. The program must not send mixed messages, if it does it will leave children confused and disillusioned (Maibach 115).

There are several developmental characteristics that will effect a child's response to a television program. After the age of seven, children listen to their peers more than to their parents (Maibach 119). They tend to better understand environments and characters that seem familiar to them (Maibach 128). Children at this age are explorers, they ask lots of questions, and they are becoming more self-reliant (Barron 49).

Between the ages of eight and ten, children have lots of energy and are eager to learn new things (Barron 49). One way to encourage this in the program is to make the children think before giving them the answers. Debates are also a good way to discuss important issues (Hays 47).

Previous television shows that have addressed occupational goals for African-American girls are few. Freestyle is the best researched of these shows. The problem that put this project in motion was the recognition of an "over-representation of women and minorities in a narrow range of low status occupations" (Johnston 1). The National Institute of Education conceived of Freestyle in the fall of 1975, and the project became known as the TV Career Awareness Project (TV CAP). KCET-TV, a public television station in Southern California, was responsible for producing the project whose goal was to "expand career awareness of fourth through sixth graders by making ethnicity and sex less significant predictors of pre-occupational (or occupational) knowledge, interest and preferences"

(Johnston 1). Freestyle was created in four phases: curriculum development; production of three experimental pilot television programs and supporting materials; revision of the curriculum; and production of the television series (Johnston 9). Television program topics featured girls as mechanics, boys in nurturing situations and individuals in non-traditional family roles. These program topics only produced a modest change in educational outcomes (Johnston 171).

Freestyle did not successfully transmit complex messages such as : "Children will recognize that taking reasonable risks and learning how to cope with success and/or failure that results from taking risks are necessary for educational progress and career development" (Johnston 226). Based on these lessons, When I Grow Up also will not be able to address complex issues in the program. Instead, it will focus on sharing information about occupations that interest the girls.

Two programs that have had a positive effect on majority attitudes toward specific groups are the Cosby Show for African-Americans and Golden Girls for the elderly (Huston 34). Sesame Street changed children's attitudes favorably toward ethnic minorities and international persons (Liebert 205). Along with changing attitudes, programs can reinforce prosocial messages: this was the case with Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids (Office 11).

Stanford psychologist Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1963) explains how children learn aggression vicariously from watching characters similar to themselves on television (Liebert 64-7). The best way to teach children is to have role models show them behavior that (1) they can perform in their social contexts (2) in a way that motivates imitation (Liebert 64-7). Those behaviors that are positively rewarded in the child's

context (e.g. higher grades if you study hard) will have a better chance of being repeated by the child, and becoming a part of her repertoire (Liebert 64-7).

Self-efficacy, a component of Bandura's theory, is the amount of ability children believe they have to perform a task (Rice 297). The children's self-efficacy will determine which portrayed occupations they will perceive they can perform. The audience will learn about occupations through the modeling that occurs in the program. Modeling shows persons like those in the audience performing in occupations successfully. One of the featured modeling skills in this program include African-American girls studying hard in math, science, English or simply staying in school, since these are prerequisites for many occupations. The ultimate tasks modeled in this program are professional African-American women in various occupations performing their designated duties. This will encourage the target audience to know that girls and women like them can prepare for these careers and excel in them.

SUMMARY

The target audience for this study does not have the information needed to prepare for conventional occupations (Phipps 29). Gender, SES and ethnicity negatively affect this population's occupational choices (Phipps 23, 27; Miller 120). Fortunately, through modeling, television programs have been successful in countering both sex-role stereotyping of occupations and attitudes about ethnicity (Huston 34; Office 11; Liebert 64-7, 205). Programs that kids enjoy most provide participation opportunities (e.g. audience poll), lots of movement and peculiar or high-pitched sounds (Signorielli 25-7). Bandura's Social Learning Theory explains how

children can learn certain behaviors by watching characters similar to themselves on television.

Chapter 4

PRE-PRODUCTION RESEARCH

Effectiveness of a television program depends upon how it communicates as well as what is communicated. Media producers need to find out what is important to their audience: what it wants to know, and what it needs to know. Media producers also need to find out the best way to package the message (e.g. to facilitate understanding and acceptance of the message, the dialogue used must reflect the words and images of the audience) (Mody 47-61).

Focus groups are the best method for gathering information on audience attitudes and behavior pertaining to program preferences and occupational knowledge (Wimmer 148). For this project, a group interview guide was pretested on girls during the Take our Daughters to Work forum held at Michigan State University on April 24, 1997. During the introduction to the forum, the When I Grow Up researcher explained the project to parents and professionals participating in the program. After the introduction, permission slips were passed out to parents and guardians of the girls who wanted to participate in the project. Along with visits to job locations, the girls visited a job information room, which was set up in the Student Union at Michigan State University. Businesses participating in Take Our Daughters to Work set up tables. Each table had an attendant to speak with the girls and to pass out information pertinent to the career or occupations represented.

The researcher of When I Grow Up also had a table, labeled When I Grow Up. Permission slips in various colors -- red, blue, orange, fuchsia -- were spread out on the table to attract attention. An educational tape

called A Girl's World was also playing on a television placed alongside of the (When I Grow Up) table. A Girl's World presented three women in different occupations (Pilot, Equestrian Veterinarian, Glass Blower), each discussing what her job responsibilities were with a different girl.

As individuals passed by the table, they inquired about the purpose of the table. The researcher explained the purpose of the research. If individuals were still interested, the researcher asked the girls to answer some questions. The questions listed in the Interview Guide were asked of the girls individually or in groups of up to six people. The group size was contingent upon the number of girls at the table at any given time. A total of twenty-one girls were interviewed. The girls who participated were between seven and fifteen years of age. Regrettably, only nine of the girls were African-American. While the girls were answering questions, parents filled out self-administered questionnaires. A total of eight questionnaires were completed by parents. The parent's questionnaire follows the girl's interview guide.

Interview Guide

- 1) What kinds of things do you like to do?
- 2) Do you watch television?
 - a) Do you watch it in the morning?
 - b) Do you watch it when you get home from school?
 - c) Do you watch it at night?
- 3) Does anybody watch television with you (mom, dad, brother or sister)?
- 4) What are your favorite toys?
- 5) What are your favorite television programs and why?
- 6) Who are your favorite music groups and why?

- 7) What types of music do you like and why?
- 8) What two people do you want to be like (sports figure, television personality)?
- 9) What types of clothes do you like to wear and why?
- 10) What do you want to do when you grow up?
- 11) What is cool, fun, or interesting about being a (lawyer, doctor, basketball player, biologist, teacher, veterinarian, model)?
- 12) What do you know about being a (lawyer, doctor, basketball player, biologist, teacher, veterinarian, model)?
- 13) How did you hear about being a (lawyer, doctor, basketball player, biologist, teacher, veterinarian, model)?
- 14) Do you know anyone who is a (lawyer, doctor, basketball player, biologist, teacher, veterinarian, model)?
- 15) Are you worried about what you will do when you grow up?

Parent Questionnaire

- 1) Has your daughter(s) expressed concern about what she will do when she grows up?
- 2) What would you like your daughter(s) to do when she grows up?
- 3) What two people do you want your daughter(s) to be like?
- 4) Do you know what your daughter(s) wants to do when she grows up?
- 5) What does your daughter(s) know about that job (lawyer, doctor, basketball player, biologist, teacher, veterinarian, model)?
- 6) Do you talk to your daughter(s) about what she will do when she grows up?
- 7) Who does your daughter(s) admire most among her friends?

- 8) Does your daughter(s) know anyone who does that job (lawyer, doctor, basketball player, biologist, teacher, veterinarian, model)?
- 9) What are your daughter's favorite television programs?
 - a) Do you know what she likes about these programs?
- 10) When does your daughter(s) watch television?
- 11) Do you watch television with your daughter(s)?
 - a) What types of programs do you watch with her?
- 12) What kinds of things does your daughter(s) like to do ?
- 13) What types of music does your daughter(s) listen to?
 - a) Do you know why she likes that type of music (words, beat)
- 14) What music groups does your daughter(s) like?
 - a) Do you know why she likes that group?
- 15) What type of clothes does your daughter(s) like to wear?
 - a) Do you know why she likes to wear those types of clothes?

Pretesting the questions allowed the moderator to see which questions provided the desired information and which ones did not. All of the questions used in the pretest interview guide remained in the interview guide later used for When I Grow Up group interviews.

For the actual research, two group interviews were conducted on a total of thirteen girls. The girls who participated were between eight and ten years of age. Girls were recruited from the Boys and Girls Club of Lansing (Boys and Girls Club) and Wainwright Elementary School. The sessions were held in available rooms at their respective locations.

It was difficult to find a large number of girls of the type needed for the target audience in one location. Parents were reluctant to allow their

daughters to participate in a research project. Ideally, several rounds of such interviews should be conducted.

GROUP ONE INTERVIEW

The first group interview took place at the Boys and Girls Club. Over fifty percent of the children who attend this center are African-American. Over thirty percent of them come from single parent homes with incomes at or below fifteen thousand dollars per year. Two one-hour sessions were conducted. The staff recruited nine African-American girls. Each girl's parent had to sign a consent form. Additionally, the girls also had to verbally agree to participate in the research project.

The researcher was introduced to the girls by one of the Boys and Girls Club staff members. The girls were told that they could leave at any time during the group interview session. They were also given the option of not answering certain questions if they did not want to. The two main categories of questions that were asked were: *What do you like to watch on television* and *what do you want to do when you grow up*. Additional questions that spontaneously probed television preferences and occupational choice followed. Audience reaction to a video on careers for girls was tested last. A staff member was present during the entire first one-hour session but was not during the second hour session. The researcher asked the questions, took notes and tape recorded the session.

The questions pre-tested earlier were used in the group interview session but in a different sequence. The session began with the question (1) *what kind of things do you like to do?* This ice-breaker question initiated the interview. It was also used to get the girls to feel comfortable with the researcher.

Next, the girls were shown different products and makeshift tools that represented various occupations. This show and tell session provided entertainment and encouraged the girls to think about future occupations, but, most importantly, it provided a segue into the discussion. The products shown were a tennis shoe, a VCR remote and a flower. The tools shown included makeshift carpentry, doctor, and dentist tools, along with a few books. The specific questions asked about the items were, *what are they, who uses them and what does one do with them..* The next set of questions were:

- 2) Do you watch television?
 - a) Do you watch it in the morning?
 - b) Do you watch it when you get home from school?
 - c) Do you watch it at night?
- 3) Does anybody watch television with you?
- 4) What are your favorite toys? (only asked to Wainwright girls)
- 5) What are your favorite television programs and why?

After discussion of these questions, the researcher played a compact disc (CD) called The Violin Player. The featured musician was Vanessa Mae, an Asian girl who plays the electric violin. At age fifteen she recorded the album The Violin Player. This was another example of what the girls could do as a profession. The CD also provided an opportunity to expose the girls to music that they would not traditionally purchase or hear on the radio. The questions that followed began with the girls' music preferences:

- 6) What kinds of music do you like?
- 7) Who are your favorite music groups and why?
- 8) What two people do you want to be like?
- 9) What type of clothes do you like to wear?

This group of questions concluded the first hour at the Boys and Girls Club. The second one hour session explored questions pertaining to occupations. This session opened with the girls being told that they could leave at any time during the focus group session. They were also given the option of not answering certain questions if they did not want to. The researcher brought in a toy boat to facilitate the discussion of what occupations one does on a cruise ship. Questions related to occupational preferences follow:

- 10) What do you want to do when you grow up ?
- 11) What is cool, fun or interesting about that job?
- 12) What do you know about that job?
- 13) How did you hear about that job?
- 14) Do you know anyone who does that job?
- 15) Are you worried about what you will do when you grow up ?

Items pertaining to educational accomplishments were presented upon completion of the discussion of these questions. The items included a high school diploma, a bachelor's degree, a master's graduation robe, hat, hood and tassel. An empty master's graduation folder was presented to show the girls that the researcher is still working to get the diploma that

goes in the folder and also to show the girls the important role that they are playing in the researcher getting her diploma. It was also used to inspire them to think about furthering their education when the time comes, as well as to encourage them to share more information pertaining to the project.

Next, one segment of A Girl's World, a video on careers, was shown to test for appeal. The following questions were asked:

- 1) How well did you like the program?
- 2) How well did you like the little girl?
- 3) How well did you like the adult in the program?
- 4) How much did you learn from the adult?
- 5) Did you have more questions for the adult?
- 6) How well did you like the adult and the little girl together?

To thank the girls for their cooperation, a video called Love at First Flight was screened after the girls completed the question and answer sessions. This program was produced by an amateur writer/producer using a Cleveland Heights, Ohio cable station's public access facility. Love at First Flight is a funny, light-hearted story about a boy trying to get a love note to a girl, but his little sister gets in the way. The actors for the program were children from the Greater Cleveland community. This program, which ran for about twenty minutes, was presented to show the girls an activity that they could pursue at their current ages. At a later date eight of the girls visited WLNS TV-6 for a tour of the television station. While at the television station, the girls had an opportunity to meet an

African-American female who is a weekend news anchor and the Public Affairs Director.

Questionnaires were sent home with the girls for their parents. Caregivers at the Boys and Girls Club also filled out questionnaires. Both sets of questionnaires were picked up about two weeks later. The caregiver questionnaire follows.

Caregiver Questionnaire

- 1) What type of games or lessons do the girls enjoy most?
- 2) Who do the girls admire most among their friends?
- 3) What two people do the girls look up to or want to be like?
- 4) Do you know what the girls want to be when they grow up?
- 5) Do the girls express an interest or concern about what they will do when they get older?
- 6) What do the girls know about jobs?
- 7) What are the girls favorite television shows?
 - a) Do you know why?
- 8) What types of music do the girls like?
 - a) Do you know why?
- 9) What music groups do the girls like?
 - a) Do you know why?
- 10) What type of clothes do the girls like?
 - a) Do you know why?
- 11) Do you have an idea how much television the girls watch?
 - a) Do you know when they watch television?
- 12) Do you discuss career goals with the girls?

a) When and how?

GROUP INTERVIEW TWO

The interview with the second group took place at Wainwright Elementary School. Recruitment for this session consisted of a short presentation by the researcher to the parents and teachers who attended a PTA meeting. The four girls who participated in this project simply returned their permission slips to the Principal. The session took approximately 30 minutes.

This group session at Wainwright used the same questions as the Boys and Girls Club session with a few exceptions. Because of time constraints, no CD was played and no graduation items or video tapes were shown. Questionnaires were not passed out to parents or caregivers because it was the end of the school year. These girls were asked the additional question *what are your favorite toys*. This researcher acknowledges that the different procedures used to administer the same questions could have led to different results.

SUMMARY

This chapter began with a description of how the interview guide was pretested before the actual research began. The pretest was performed at the Take Our Daughters to Work forum at Michigan State University. The subsequent actual research was conducted at The Boys and Girls Club of Lansing and at Wainwright Elementary School.

The researcher tape recorded, took notes and conducted the group interviews. In addition to asking questions, the researcher used props to

entertain the girls and to encourage them to think about both education and occupations.

Chapter 5

FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter presents the information from the group interview sessions that helped this media producer/researcher to make the content (i.e. career guidance) and format decisions for When I Grow Up.

CONTENT

Literature Review

This is a compilation of information from the Literature Review pertaining to content. Children have inaccurate and limited information on careers. African-American girls had high occupational aspirations but the economic support to achieve these goals is non-existent (Phipps 29). Most of the careers for which girls aspire require a bachelor's degree (Phipps 23). Low income children choose jobs where they can make lots of money. Extra-curricular activities play a role in occupational preferences (Phipps 20).

Some implications from these findings for this program are that it needs to provide information detailing the education, skills, salary and responsibilities for a wide range of occupations. The girls also should be encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities.

Interviews with the Intended Audience

Since girls were the intended audience of the of the series, they were asked to *name two people who they would want to be like* and to specify why they wanted to be like these individuals. They were unsure about who they wanted to be like. The most common answers were mom, dad or a

cousin. Other answers were: Mariah Carey, singer; Lil' Kim, rap artist; Lisa Leslie, professional basketball player. Personality traits listed for role models included: positive person, high self-esteem, nice, helpful, does well in school and dresses nice.

There are a variety of implications from this for the pilot treatment. There is a big need for a wide variety of career information about realistic aspirations. The girls need to be exposed to individuals in everyday occupations (e.g. insurance agent, bank teller). These individuals then can serve as role models in attainable and realistic occupations.

The personality traits listed (positive person, high self-esteem, helpful), as well as other traits that can help one be successful at a job, should be portrayed in the characters featured in the program. Since the girls are predisposed to the recognition of personality traits of successful individuals (positive, helpful), those traits will be modeled in the program.

What do you want to do when you grow up was the next question asked from the interview guide. The answers were: doctor, singer, dancer, nurse, beautician, basketball player and work for the Internal Revenue Service. The girls answers were limited in terms of attainable and realistic occupations. Since the goal of the program is to present attainable and realistic occupational choices, the implication is that appropriate professions need to be presented. The information presented in the program must include a wide variety of occupational choices. Tying the girl's current activities (e.g. reading, swimming, shopping) to occupations will be helpful in directing the girl's attention to something that they may like to do or that they have a natural talent for. Occupations that would be considered unattainable or unrealistic are professional basketball player, singer and professional dancer. These jobs can be shown on a special

episode entitled fantasy or dream occupations. To help the girls understand why these jobs are categorized as fantasy or dream occupations, the program will illustrate how few people actually obtain these positions.

Having fun, making lots of money and helping others were the reasons stated for most of the girls' occupational choices. The implications from this for media production are that the program must show what makes the featured occupation fun, discuss salaries and show professionals helping others. This can be accomplished, for example, by identifying a responsibility of a professional (e.g. retail buyer purchases clothing for her department in the department store) and relating it to an activity that the girls enjoy (e.g. shopping). The producer also could ask the professional what interested her about the occupation initially and then explore that avenue. To address the girls' desire to make lots of money, the salary ranges of the occupations presented will be included in the information shared. Education, skills and responsibility for each occupation will also be presented, which may help the girls to base their occupational decisions on more than just the earning potential. The girls also expressed a desire to help others. Presenting a nurse in one of many situations (e.g. home health care, a hospital, doctor's office) would show the girls a professional helping others.

The girls did not seem to have much knowledge about the responsibilities of, skills of or education needed to obtain the occupations that they chose. The definition given by the girls for an obstetrician was inaccurate. The girls said that an obstetrician would wash a baby, put a baby in a towel and get the baby from nursery. In actuality, an obstetrician delivers babies, along with several other demanding duties. The information shared in the program must discuss the educational and skill

requirements for as well as the responsibilities of the occupations presented.

The girls hear about occupations from personal relationships or from the media. In almost every case, the girls know of someone who holds the job that they want. This suggests that the girls are more likely to desire an occupation when they can identify a person who holds the job. The implication from this information is that the child must be able to relate to the characters featured on the program in order to be able to learn about an occupation. Interaction between the characters is crucial in creating a relationship type of feeling for the audience.

Although the girls could articulate an occupational choice, they are not particularly concerned about what they will do when they grow up. Thus, this may be a good time to expose the girls to the subject matter (occupations), as opposed to later in their lives when the decision is made for them, by limited awareness of occupations and limited education (no high school diploma or college degree).

Information was gathered about the content of A Girl's World. The girls enjoyed the topic discussed (Equestrian Veterinarian), and since they had no further questions for the Equestrian Veterinarian, it appears that the program A Girl's World supplied sufficient information concerning her occupation. This experience with A Girl's World suggest that it can be used to gauge the amount of information shared about an occupation. Testing a television program similar to the one that a media producer would like to create seems to be an ideal way to evaluate the successfulness of various elements (e.g. set, characters, location) pertaining to a particular topic.

Parent and Caregiver Questionnaires

The parents' and caregivers' responses are combined. Three parents and three caregivers returned their questionnaires.

Two of the parents answered that their daughters expressed concern about what they will do when they grow up. Caregivers at the Boys and Girls Club, also answered that the girls expressed an interest or concern about what they will do when they grow up. The caregivers also noted that the girls were concerned about making enough money. The implications are that the girls may be interested in a program like this because they have concerns about making enough money (which you get from working). The program must show that obtaining an occupation is the most practical way to make money.

Occupations that the parents would like their daughters to pursue are nurse and lawyer. One parent knows that her daughter wants to be a nurse. The other two parents did not know what their daughters wanted to do. The caregivers listed doctor, teacher, singer, dancer, nurse, someone who makes money, someone who helps others and someone who is famous, as occupations that the girls desire. These answers indicate that the program should present several occupational opportunities which are realistic and attainable. Some form of encouragement for the parent and the child to discuss the child's occupational choice also should be incorporated into the program. This encouragement may be in the form of a set of questions that appear on the screen at the end of the show. The girls can write down these questions to ask or to research with a parent, guardian or role model at a later date. This may provide the impetus for the parent to seek out avenues to educate the child further on a chosen topic (occupational choice).

Two characteristics that parents would like to use to describe their daughters, when they grow up, are maturity and successfulness. Parents wanted their daughters to be like their grandmother, mother, father or said they did not know. Caregivers said that the girls admire those individuals who show leadership qualities, are outspoken, or possess other qualities that the girls desire (e.g. attractiveness, nice clothes)

In the program, some of the characteristics described by the caregivers can be highlighted in the characters featured in the program. Through the story line, the program can use modeling to show the girls how to acquire these characteristics (e.g. leadership). One example of modeling leadership is as follows: one of the characters is encouraged to answer a math question in class, she gets it right, and throughout the rest of the program her math aptitude increases and she begins to help others.

The question *what does your daughter/the girls know about that job* received two very different answers. The parent of girl who wants to be a nurse stated that her daughter knows someone who is nurse and she also knows that the job includes caring for people. The caregivers said that the girls know that money comes with a job and that their parents work, but not much more. The implications are that the program must include the salary received, education, skill and responsibilities required to obtain and keep a particular job.

Parents say they rarely speak to their daughters about what they will do when they grow up. The parents say they only discuss "basic things" (issues pertaining to career choice). The caregivers at the Boys and Girls Club explained that they have a career program called "Me and My Job" where they discuss occupational opportunities with the girls. The caregivers stated that they also talk about jobs and careers informally with

the girls at other times too. Career awareness, however, is not an emphasis at the Boys and Girls Club. Caregivers said when at the Boys and Girls Club, the girls say they want to be what their friends want to be (e.g. singer, doctor, teacher). The caregivers also expressed that the girls' occupational choices change from day to day, sometimes the girls want to hold two jobs at one time (e.g. teacher and doctor). When the girls do talk about what they will do in the future, one of the Boys and Girls Club caregivers tells them "That's why you should get good grades in school and then go to college."

The implications from these findings are that parents and other support services need to work together to educate girls about occupations. The girls should ask questions to involve their parents and others in their education about occupations (interests). The program (When I Grow Up) can supply the girls with a question list at the end of program about occupations which they can discuss with adults or caregivers. There can also be a reading list of books that the girls can get from the library about various occupations supplied at the end of the program. A newsletter can be created and mailed to community centers and homes that discuss the four occupations presented on When I Grow Up during the month (weekly). The newsletter will also express the need for children to be exposed to occupational choices early. The program When I Grow Up can become part of a regular lesson at community centers.

SPECIFIC MEASURABLE GOALS

After watching the program, eight out of ten African-American girls, aged eight to ten, will be able to complete the following tasks:

- name the occupation discussed in the program
- list one subject to study in school that will help them to
prepare for that occupation
- list one responsibility or product of the featured occupation

The measurable goals for this pre-production project are realistic and obtainable. Through the experiences of the characters in the program, the target audience will understand what the next step is after the "Aha! experience" (deciding what occupation to pursue when they grow up).

FORMAT**Literature Review**

This information is gathered from the Literature Review pertaining to format. African-American children react favorably to African-American individuals on television (Liebert 167), and, children in general react favorably to those of the same SES (Newcomb 417-22). The characters in the program should be African-American girls of the same age and SES as the target audience. Girls at this age (eight to ten) are curious motivated explorers (Barron 49). The girls in the program should project an energetic, inquisitive and self-reliant attitude.

Freestyle was not able to communicate complex messages with its program (Johnston 171). The program therefore will focus on sharing simple and relevant information about careers with the girls.

The learning that will happen through the program is based on Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory and his concept of modeling. This theory suggests that, in addition to making the girls aware of a wide variety of occupations, the program must model the appropriate behavior to obtain these positions (Liebert 64-7). This will be accomplished in the program through the story, the behavior of the characters and highlighting specific qualities or skills of the professionals featured in the program.

To activate the self-efficacy (perceived ability) of the girls, the characters' actions need to be both believable and relevant to the audience (Rice 297). The characters' behavior will be crucial in activating the self-efficacy of the girls. Other relevant factors affecting self-efficacy are the girl's past experiences and their current activities.

This television program may be more successful if various elements are included. Stories, actions and environments that the girls are familiar with can be incorporated into the program (Signorielli 26, 37). Visual special effects, including movement, camera cuts and activity, may aid in holding the girls' attention. Audio effects including laughter, peculiar voices, or high pitched voices can also be used to maintain the girls' attention.

Girls at this age have lots of energy and are eager to learn (Barron 49). Overall, the program will provide a generous amount of information for the girls to acquire. To accommodate the girls' desire to learn, some of the dialogue can be written in question form. Time will be allotted to allow the girls to formulate an answer before the correct answer is given. A question list (given at the end of the show) can encourage the girls to acquire knowledge about next weeks program. This question list (given

ahead of time) will give the girls plenty of time to find the answers, motivation to do a little research and curiosity about next weeks program.

On average, the girls will be able to retain three pieces of information per show (Frederick). This information should be easy to understand. An example of the types of information the girls may retain are: what occupation is discussed, one subject to concentrate on in school in order to achieve that occupation, and one product of the occupation.

Interviews with the Intended Audience

The questions *what kinds of things do you like to do* and *what are your favorite toys* are closely related. The question pertaining to toys was asked to the Wainwright group only. When asked about toys, most of the girls stated that they were too old for toys. The few toys that were mentioned are Barbie, a teddy bear and a CD player. The girls like being active as opposed to focusing their attention on an item (except television). They enjoy riding bikes, swimming, playing games, shopping, ballet class, reading, writing stories, sleep-overs and eating. The implications from these results for the program are that the characters' behavior should reflect the activeness of the girls in the target audience. Lots of activity should be incorporated into the program (e.g. riding bikes to get around, shopping with mom).

The girls often watched television with a parent, sibling or relative, but the program choice was up to the child. There was no discussion of the program after viewing. The implication of this finding is that the girls must be able to understand the information presented without input from others. The girls view television most on weekends and after school. Sundays at 8:00 p.m. is an appropriate time to air When I Grow Up.

The list of programs watched by the girls is extensive. The programs are :Rugrats; Simpsons; All That!; The Secret World of Alex Mack; Kenan and Kel; Kablam; Hey Arnold; Angry Beavers; Family Matters; Sister, Sister; Arthur; Alvin & Chipmunks; Touched by an Angel; Funniest Home Videos; Doug; Ren and Stimpy; Living Single; Martin; King of the Hill; Happily Ever After; and The Wayans Brothers. The two programs that were mentioned the most are Rugrats and The Secret World of Alex Mack (Alex Mack).

Rugrats is an animated cartoon about four families interacting with their relatives, friends and everyday life. The program topics usually center around the children. When showing the children's or adults' perspectives the camera is pointed up or down, respectively. The children featured in the program are young (probably all under six years of age, since most of them are still in diapers), but they have adult-like conversations with each other. These findings indicate that the pilot needs to include some aspects of Rugrats. The child and adult perspective camera angles will be used in the program. The camera angles may be one of the reasons the girls like the program, but they were unable to articulate this point.

A characteristic of Rugrats, as well as several other programs mentioned by the girls, is that these programs have teams of characters with diverse viewpoints. The girls seemed to enjoy listening to and watching characters debate an issue or have amusing interactions with each other. This data led me to decide that a team of girls should host the program. They will approach the occupations from their different viewpoints. This might include a hands on character, who is always ready to try something new and who is jumping ahead with questions. Another

character may have a more subtle approach of listening and reading about the occupation before the site visit.

The programs listed by the girls were either animated cartoons or composed of real people. Putting these two format characteristics together can provide a way to explore areas (machinery, the human body) that otherwise could not be explored. An animated character can be incorporated into the program. This character will be able to go places a real person could not go (e.g. inside of a printing press or a human heart).

Alex Mack is another program that is high on the girls' viewing list. Alex Mack, the main character of the program, is a teenage girl. She has her own style of dressing (colorful tops, pants, hats, no socks). Alex's signature piece of attire is a hat, and she wears a different one each day. The program is a drama. At some point during Alex's teen years, she was covered with some type of chemical and now she can, at will, morph into a silver liquid resembling mercury. The program deals with typical teenage issues (e.g. learning to be comfortable with who you are). Alex's morphing power usually comes in handy when dealing with the issues in each episode. In the program, Alex is a self-reliant, thinking individual.

There are many implications to be derived from Alex Mack. Alex Mack is a drama. This is a program format that the girls enjoy, so When I Grow Up will be created in a drama format. Through the program, Alex matures, and she learns how to think things through and handle some situations on her own (with her parents' encouragement). The characters in the program should project the same attitude as Alex Mack, being self-reliant and thinking. One or both of the characters could have a signature item, like Alex's hat. The signature item could be a key chain, backpack, a piece of jewelry or some other item.

The names of the programs watched by the girls are interesting: some appear to be slang terms and others are composed of made-up words (All That!, Ren and Stimpy, Kablam). This suggests that the name of this pilot (When I Grow Up) may need to be changed to reflect the style and feel of the programs currently watched by the girls. "What Cha' Gonna Do?" is possible for the new title. This new title, along with other title suggestions, would be presented to the audience and tested for comprehension and appeal.

The girl's musical interests lie in three areas: rhythm and blues, rap and gospel. Some of the girls did not have a favorite music group. The groups that were mentioned are: TLC, Immature, Mary J. Blige, Lil' Kim, Tupac, Mariah Carey, Aaliya, Whitney Houston and Da Brat. The implications from these findings are that the music created for When I Grow Up can be one of or a combination of the three styles of music listed. The music can be performed by one of the artists mentioned or a singing group can be created especially for the show.

The girls enjoy wearing fashionable colorful clothes. Some specific pieces of clothing are daisy dukes (short shorts), skorts, skirts, hats, tie-shirts and dresses. The girls are very flexible in regard to the characters' attire. The most important dress stipulation given by the girls was that the characters be comfortable and be themselves, however, the girls do identify more with people who dress like them. The characters of the program will wear fashionable, colorful clothes.

I also gathered information on the format of A Girl's World. The girls thought that the host should be more energetic and ask more questions. They enjoyed the theme song for A Girl's World. The implications from this are that the characters of When I Grow Up need to

be energetic and ask lots of questions. A similar style song can be used for the pilot treatment theme song.

Some format elements of A Girl's World can be incorporated into When I Grow Up. In a Girl's World, one of the girls visits the work site of the Equestrian Veterinarian, and while there, she has an opportunity to check a horse's eye for problems. Visiting a work site and performing one of the professional's tasks allows the host to experience the profession in a more in-depth manner than she could by just seeing and hearing someone talk about the job without visual aids or hands-on opportunities. Incorporating site visits into When I Grow Up will allow the characters and the target audience to see and experience a location that they may have never seen or heard of before. Allowing the characters to receive hands-on experience lets the target audience conceive that they can perform the task too.

Parent and Caregiver Questionnaires

The parents were not sure of the specific shows that the girls watched on Nickelodeon, but they knew that they watched that channel regularly at various times of the day. Programs that the girls watch with their parents are Fresh Prince, Living Single, Martin and family shows. The parents and caregivers cited the same programs as the girl's favorites. Fresh Prince is a favorite because of the main character's suave personality. The girls enjoy the comic relief of Martin, Living Single and Rugrats. The implications from these findings are that the parents need to be alerted to the air time, day of and channel of When I Grow Up. Parents can encourage the girls to watch the program when it comes on. Two characteristics of the programs watched by the girls (as stated by their

parents) can be incorporated into When I Grow Up: humor and a male character (who may appear periodically).

Parents say that the girls watch television at various times, but their viewing is concentrated in the evenings. The caregivers were not sure when the girls watched television, but one suggested that they watched several hours of it. The caregivers did say that sometimes the girls are at the Boys and Girls Club until 7:30 or 8:00 p.m. Leaving the Boys and Girls Club at this time may leave little time for watching television, depending upon the girls bedtime. The implication from these findings is that the program should air on weekends or in the evenings when the girls normally watch television. An appropriate air day and time is Sundays at 8:00 p.m.

Parents stated that the girls enjoy several activities. Some of the things they like to do are: skate, swim, dance and sing. The caregivers said that the girls enjoy playing, art, hands-on activities and sharing games at the Boys and Girls Club. The implication from this finding for this program is that these activities need to be performed by the characters, which will provide a way for the girls to relate to the characters in the program. The characters may be learning something as they do these activities or the activities may just provide a way to move the story along.

The girls listen to all types of music, as stated by their parents. They enjoy the words, the beat and music in general. One specific type of music was listed -- gospel. This parent listed gospel because that is what is played around the house. The caregivers say that the girls listen to all types of music. They listed gospel, hip hop, country and rock. Only one musical group was listed: Immature. According to the girls, Immature is a favorite because the boys are cute, and they "sing good songs." The caregivers

suggest that the girls like to listen to music that they hear older people listening to. A favorite rap artist listed is Tupac. The reason cited for the girls' interest in Tupac is because he was in the news recently. The implications from these findings are that all different types of music can be used throughout the program. Immature could be recruited to sing songs for the show or a group similar to them could be created to do songs exclusively for the show.

The parents said that the girls like to wear all types of clothes, especially ones that they feel they look good in. Looking good makes them happy. One parent says that her daughter wears clothes that are too small. Caregivers say that the girls like to wear whatever is in style because they want to fit in. Some of the items listed are: jeans, skirts, shorts, sandals, jelly shoes and tennis shoes. Sometimes the girl's parents pick their clothes. The implication from this finding is that the characters should wear a variety of clothes that are in style.

Several of the girls that I spoke with during the group interview sessions wanted to be in the program that this pilot treatment is being created for. Providing call-in opportunities and arranging site visits through local companies will allow the girls to feel like they are part of the show.

SUMMARY

This is a synthesis of the research conducted for When I Grow Up. It includes a compilation of the findings, along with implications for the program.

The literature review pertaining to content revealed that the program should present the education, skills, salary and responsibilities for a wide range of occupations.

The group interviews provided a wealth of information on content. The girls' role models included a combination of relatives, sports figures and musical artists. Some of their occupational aspirations were realistic and some were unattainable. Overall the girls' occupational aspirations were limited: their choices were centered around making money and helping others. The girls became aware of the occupations that they desire through personal relationships and through the media. Even though they know of someone who holds the occupation that they want, they don't know the skills and education necessary to obtain and retain the job. The girls did not seem particularly concerned about what they will do when they grow up. The implications from these findings are that the girls need to be exposed to everyday occupations, to African-American females in these positions and to the knowledge necessary to obtain these positions.

The parent and caregiver questionnaires provided valuable information for the project. Parents would like their daughters to be like their relatives. The desired characteristics were successful and mature. Characteristics that caregivers said girls admire are being a leader and being outspoken. Of the three parents who filled out questionnaires, only one knew what her child wanted to be (a nurse). Caregivers listed several occupations. Parents and caregivers stated that the girls are unsure of the skills and education necessary to obtain the jobs that they desire. No formal channels are set up to discuss occupations with the girls at the Boys and Girls Club.

There are many implications that can be gathered from the findings for the content of When I Grow Up. Traits of the girls' role models should be emphasized by the characters appearing on When I Grow Up. The professionals should be presented in a way that encourages the girls to view them as role models. A wide variety of realistic and attainable occupations should be presented, along with details on the education, skills and responsibilities specific to that job. These jobs must be presented in a manner that interests the girls. Aside from viewing, the program can provide the girls with additional methods of learning about careers: newsletter, question list and reading list.

There are three learning goals of the program. After watching the program the girls should be able to name the occupation discussed, list one subject to study in school pertaining to the career discussed, and list a responsibility or product of the occupation.

The literature review suggests several implications for the format of the pilot treatment. The characters should reflect the race, SES and demeanor (activities) of the target audience. The program will present simple, relevant information. The girls will acquire this information based on Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory and his concept of modeling (Liebert 64-67). The program will provide visual and audio effects that appeal to the audience. Along with these effects, the content of the program needs both to stimulate and to accommodate the girls desire to learn. The girls can retain about three pieces of information per show (Frederick).

Following are elements obtained from the group interviews with the girls pertaining to format. The girls are active but, they do spend time watching television. A relative often watches television with the girls.

They have several favorite programs that they watch after school or on weekends. The girls have a wide range of musical interests. Their taste in clothes is also very diverse.

The Implications from these findings addressing format are many. When I Grow Up should contain aspects of Alex Mack and Rugrats. A name change may be necessary for When I Grow Up if the program is to appeal to the girls. A combination of different kinds of music can be used in the program. A team of girls should be the main characters in the program. Their attire should be fashionable and up-to-date. The characters should be active (e.g. riding bikes, swimming), self-reliant, thinking individuals.

The parent and caregiver questionnaires provided additional information pertaining to the format of the program. Humor should be incorporated into the program. A male character could be incorporated into the program. Parents should be alerted to the program day and air time.

Chapter 6

PILOT TREATMENT

This thesis focuses on audience research and pilot treatment development for the series called When I Grow Up. The objective of When I Grow Up is to help make eight to ten year old, low income, African-American girls aware of the range of occupational opportunities available to them. The program will cater to the entertainment preferences and the educational needs of this audience. It will present occupations that are attainable and realistic to the target audience. These occupational choices are derived from the analysis done in this project. The analysis for this project is based on the audience participation-based message design procedure created by Bella Mody. Following is a list of findings from the research and their implications for the program:

FINDINGS

- (1) The girls want to be like their parents, relatives, singers and a professional basketball player.
- (2) Traits of the individuals that the girls want to be like are nice, helpful, positive personality, and high self-esteem. Characteristics parents think the girls should have are maturity and be successful.
- (3) The girls want to be doctors, singers, dancers, professional basketball players, nurses and beauticians.

IMPLICATIONS

- (1) A variety of occupations should be presented within the series.
- (2) These traits will be highlighted in the characters presented, through modeling and the story line.
- (3) Realistic and obtainable occupations will be presented within the series.

FINDINGS

(4) Reasons for choosing the occupations were having fun, making money and helping others.

(5) The girls did not know much about the skill, education, salary or responsibilities of the occupations that they choose.

(6) Often the girls know of someone who does the job that they want to do.

(7) The girls are not particularly concerned about what they will do when they grow up.

(8) A satisfactory amount of information was provided about the professional in A Girl's World.

(9) Parents either do not know what their daughters want to do when they grow up or speak to them about occupations. The Boys and Girls Club does not have a formal program that teaches about occupations.

(10) Children respond more positively to individuals of the same race and SES. Girls at this age are energetic, inquisitive and are becoming more self-reliant.

IMPLICATIONS

(4) One of these three characteristics will be emphasized when presenting an occupation.

(5) The characters will have an opportunity to learn about the education, skills, salary and responsibilities relating to the occupation presented.

(6) The girls need to feel as if they know the characters and the professionals in the program.

(7) Create this program now so the girls can learn from it.

(8) A generous amount of information about a variety of professions will be shared.

(9) A question and reading list will be provided at the end of the program to initiate conversations about occupations between the child and her guardian.

(10) Two of the characters will be African-American, low income girls. They will project an energetic, inquisitive and self-reliant attitude.

FINDINGS

- (11) Freestyle was unable to communicate complex messages.
- (12) The girls can learn through repeatedly seeing an individual perform an action (modeling). The girls must believe they can perform the task presented before they take action (self-efficacy).
- (13) Video and audio special effects appeal to the target audience.
- (14) Children at this age like to be challenged to think.
- (15) Children at this age can retain about three pieces of information per show.
- (16) The girls like to swim, eat, have sleep-overs, ride their bikes, read and go shopping.
- (17) The girls do not speak with an adult or older sibling about the programs they watch.

IMPLICATIONS

- (11) The program will only try to communicate simple messages (name of occupation, education, skills, salary and responsibility).
- (12) The characters will be shown asking lots of questions and will assist the professional when possible. The professional will also be shown performing her responsibilities. The actions must be presented in a way to appeal to the girls.
- (13) Video and audio special effects will be used in the program when appropriate.
- (14) Some of the dialogue will be written in question form. The girls will be provided with a question list at the end of the program (for the next week's show).
- (15) Information that the girls need to remember will be clear (occupation discussed, one subject to concentrate on in school, or one product of the job).
- (16) The characters will lead active lives in the program (riding bikes, shopping, reading).
- (17) The information shared must be written so the girls can understand it without further input from an adult.

FINDINGS

(18) The girls watch television after school and on weekends.

(19) The girls have several favorite programs of which, Rugrats and Alex Mack were mentioned the most. Some of the titles of the programs the girls watch seem to be composed of either made-up words or of slang terms.

(20) The girls like gospel, rap and rhythm and blues. They like a variety of musical artists.

(21) The girls enjoy wearing a variety of clothes -- colorful shorts, hats, dresses and tops.

(22) After viewing A Girl's World, the girls thought the hosts should have been more energetic and asked more questions. They enjoyed the theme song for the program.

IMPLICATIONS

(18) Sunday at 8:00 p.m. is an appropriate time to air the program.

(19) Several aspects of Alex Mack will be incorporated into the program. The characters will wear colorful, fashionable attire. One or both of the characters will have a signature item of attire. The program will be a drama. The characters will have self-reliant, thinking attitudes. There will be some aspects of Rugrats in the program. At appropriate times the camera angle will be from a child's view. Amusing interactions will take place between the characters in the program. An animated character may be added to the program. The name of the program may be changed to "What Cha' Gonna Do?"

(20) A combination of rap and rhythm and blues will be used in the program.

(21) The characters will wear a variety of colorful, fashionable clothes.

(22) The characters will be energetic and ask lots of questions. The theme song will be evaluated when creating the theme song for the program.

FINDINGS

(23) Parents were not sure of all of the programs the girls watched or when they aired. Three programs the girls watch include humor, one of them includes an appealing male character.

IMPLICATIONS

(23) The program will include humor. A male character may appear in the program periodically.

SERIES DESCRIPTION

The open features a video montage and rap music with a mixture of rhythm and blues vocals. The main characters of the program will be two African-American girls between the ages of eight and ten. The set will consist of various locations. In this half hour program, the viewers will learn about occupations through the girls' everyday experiences. These experiences will catapult the girls (Keyonda and Pam) into the occupational discussion of the day.

An example of an occupation that can be explored is a beautician. Pam may wonder where Keyonda and her Mom are going and why they are so dressed up.

Pam: Your Mom looks so pretty.

Keyonda : I know, she went to the beauty shop and everything.

Pam: Where are you all going and why is your Mom so dressed up?

Keyonda: We are going to some kind of party, I think.

Pam: I wish I could do my hair like that. I'm going to ask my Mom if I can go to the beauty shop and get my hair done.

This discussion would serve as the base for an exploration into being a beautician.

Each episode will include an extensive tour of a particular work site with Keyonda and Pam observing and interacting with the professional featured. Special sound and video effects will be used when appropriate.

The aforementioned tours would include information such as name of occupation, educational needs, necessary skills, job responsibilities, salary range and products created by the professional. There will be three lessons emphasized in each episode such as salary, name of occupation and education. After each lesson is addressed by the girls and the professional, a comic strip dialogue bubble will appear above both of the girls heads. The comic strip bubbles will include the text for each lesson separately (one, two and three). The girls will say what is in the comic strip bubble to each other in a conversational manner.

A reading and question list will be provided at the end of the program for the viewers to learn more about occupations. A toll free number, an address and a web address to contact about the program will also be provided. Following is a list of occupations to explore within the series (Hannon 99-101; Moskowitz 24-25):

Beautician

Computer Repair Technician

Dental Hygienist

Electronic Engineering Technician

Flight Attendant

Mechanic

Nurse

Operating Room Technician

Painter

Secretary

Teacher

Veterinary Care Technician

PILOT TREATMENT DESCRIPTION

This pilot treatment will focus on a health care profession, namely a nurse. Keyonda and Pam visit a hospital. While at the hospital they learn what being a nurse is all about: what kinds of nurses there are, what kind of education you need, responsibilities of the job and how much money you make. Following is a sample pilot treatment.

Open

The title What Cha' Gonna Do will be superimposed over the opening video montage. The montage is of various professionals performing their jobs and Keyonda and Pam imitating them. The music playing will be rap and rhythm and blues with some instrumental music. The lyrics of the song are as follows:

Rap

What cha' gonna do when you get outta school, heyyy

What cha' gonna do when you get outta school, hooo

Gonna make some of money, howwww?

Gonna make some of money, howwww?

Gonna make some of money, howwww?

Gotta go, gotta get to college

Gotta get to college, gotta go

Gotta figure out, how to get a job

Gotta make some money, you know

Rhythm and Blues

What are you going to do?

Where are you going to go?

Where will you find a job?

At the end of the show you just might know

Talking during musical interlude

Who me go to college?

Yea you go college

Not me in college

I don't know how to get there

Don't know what to study

On top of that I have no money

The Story

After a fun day at the YMCA (Y) Keyonda and Pam's usual rambunctiousness gets them into trouble. Pam falls down and hurts her ankle. The girls were racing down the street on the way home from the Y. Pam is taken to the clinic where the neighbor's granddaughter Vicki Wilder is a volunteer nurse. As Pam gets her ankle checked, the girls talk with Nurse Vicki.

Keyonda: I know, it's a strain. She'll have to get one of those brown things to wrap around her ankle.

Pam: Do I have a strain? What's a strain?

Nurse Vicki: It's actually called a sprain. It's when you stretch or tear ligaments in your ankle.

Keyonda: Where is the x-ray?

Nurse Vicki: Right here (pointing)

Pam: What does an x-ray do?

Keyonda: It can see right through you.

Pam: It won't hurt will it?

Nurse Vicki: You won't feel a thing

Pam: How do you know its working if I can't feel it?

Keyonda: I know, I know, it's like a big camera and...

After a barrage of questions and an obvious curiosity, Nurse Vicki asks the girls if they would like to visit the big hospital where she and several of her friends work. The girls plan for a visit the next day.

Mrs. Black (Keyonda's Mom) drops the girls off at the main door, under the canopy, in the circular drive at Eaton General Hospital. Nurse Vicki waits for them just inside the revolving door. The girls are excited, fidgety and full of curiosity.

In the lobby, the girls are fascinated by a display case full of old medicines and medical tools. After winding through the halls, past great big desks with friendly old ladies behind them and people dressed in a rainbow of colorful clothes, the girls and Nurse Vicki arrive at the emergency department (ED). The girls are fascinated by all of the gadgets on the walls and little packets of stuff in containers everywhere. The girls notice that the hospital is very bright and has a certain smell.

The ED is quiet now, so the girls get a chance to speak with one of the nurses (Carmen). Carmen explains that ED nurses are forced to think

very quickly while they are working on a patient and that they must be able to retain lots of information, like your math tables. Carmen says "For example, quick, what's four times six?" The girls look at each other and then answer, "Twenty-four." Vicki jokes with the girls, "Imagine having to recite all of your tables in just a few minutes." Keyonda and Pam get the picture.

The ED can be a very busy place. Here we work on any type of injury, from a sprained ankle to a heart attack. Carmen asks the girls, "Do you know where your heart is?" Pam and Keyonda answer, "Right here, where we put our hands when we say the Pledge of Allegiance?" Carmen corrects them, "Actually, it's in the middle of your chest" (she points to the place on their chests) (Ehnis). Carmen continues to explain about the ED, that after we do all we can here, we send our patients to various specialized departments upstairs. The department each patient goes to depends on his or her injury or why he or she came to the hospital. Each department has its own special kind of nurse. Some of the different kinds of nurses are: emergency department or ED, like me; pediatric, for kids like you; obstetric/gynecological, for women and babies; geriatric, for older people; psychiatric, for those with mental disorders; intensive and coronary care, for heart and very serious patients; and medical/surgical, for people who are having surgery (Martin; Seltzer).

Lesson One:

OCCUPATION

- Occupation - Nurse
- Several different kinds of nurses - ED, surgical, psychiatric

Carmen tells Pam that she could have come to the ED when she hurt her ankle. Nurses in the ED would have looked at your ankle just like Vicki did at the clinic. Pam asks, "Would you have sent me up stairs?" Carmen replies "No, because your ankle injury was not very serious." Rrrar, Rrrar, an ambulance pulls up. Carmen says good-bye to the girls.

The three of them (Nurse Vicki, Pam and Keyonda) are off to the second floor where coronary care takes place. The girls met Rashawn, a coronary care nurse (Seltzer). The girls are full of questions. One of the first questions pertains to the heart monitors. The girls ask, "What are those televisions with the black screens and squiggly lines across them for?" Rashawn replies, "See the numbers at the ends of the squiggly lines, those are heart rate numbers. They let me know how fast or slow the patient's hearts are beating. Coronary care nurses watch the numbers to make sure they are steady. If the numbers go up very high or down very low, the nurses need to go see how the patient is doing because there may be a problem" (Martin). The girls get a chance to hear their own heartbeats. The viewers get to hear Keyonda's and Pam's heartbeat too. The girls ask several other questions to learn more about coronary care nurse responsibilities.

"What's next", the girls ask. They are anxious to see what is on the next floor. The girls continue to ask Vicki questions, "When do we get to see the babies?" "Well, as a matter of fact the maternity ward is our next stop", Vicki says. The girls get to see the babies in the nursery (Martin). The girls have an opportunity to see a delivery room and to speak with Felicia, a maternity ward nurse. The maternity ward nurse's main job is to monitor the new moms and their babies. They make sure the mothers are

recovering okay and that the babies are adjusting well to life outside of their mother's bodies (Martin; Seltzer; Ehnis).

On to the next floor. The girls meet Tiffany, a nurse in training in the psychiatric ward. The girls comment that, "Everybody looks okay on this floor. They are not hooked up to any tubes, they don't have heart monitors or broken legs or anything. What's wrong with them?" Tiffany explains that these are psychiatric patients. There may be something that is not working right mentally or emotionally in their heads or their brains. Our bodies produce certain chemicals that help us to function properly. For example, some people are very sad all of the time. It's not because things are not going well in their lives, it is because there is an imbalance in the chemicals that their bodies are producing. People with problems like this come to the psychiatric ward to get help. Sometimes they get medicine to help their bodies produce the right amount of the correct chemicals.

Tiffany explains her duties as a psychiatric nurse. Some of the duties of a psychiatric nurse are to watch the patients behavior, to give them medication if it is needed and to watch to see if the medication is working (Martin).

Tiffany explains the education a person needs to become a nurse. First you have to graduate from high school. The girls say in unison, "High school!" "Yes, high school", Tiffany answers. Tiffany adds, "Try to do well in your math and science classes because you will use them a lot in nursing." There are lots of different levels of nurses. To be a Licensed Practical Nurse or LPN like Vicki you must go to school at least one year at a practical nursing school. The next step is a registered nurse or RN. To become a RN you must earn a two year degree called an associates degree. There is also a Bachelor of Science in Nursing or BSN. A BSN

takes four years. The next level is a Masters of Science in Nursing which takes about six years. Then there is a Doctorate or Ph.D. in nursing which takes even longer to get (Martin; Seltzer; Ehnis). Tiffany also tells the girls that nursing comes from the heart, it is not just something that you learn from a book. This means that medicine is only part of the cure. Patients may need nurses to be caring individuals who are also good listeners (Martin; Ehnis).

Lesson Two:

EDUCATION

- Subjects to focus on - Math and Science
- Graduate from High School
- At least one year at a Practical Nursing School

"Wow", the girls realize, we are almost on the top floor of the hospital. Vicki explains that here on the seventh floor is where physical therapy and recreational therapy take place. The people that come to this floor are healing from their injuries. The girls ask, "Does this floor have anything to do with football players?" Vicki answers "A lot of football players do have to go through therapy after hurting a knee or some other part of their bodies. Most of the people here are not football players, though." Debbie and James are rehabilitation nurses. They explain that these patients were hurt some other way and their joints have become weak. These patients are working on strengthening tendons in various parts of their bodies.

Debbie and James tell the girls about another type of patient who may need rehabilitation. Other patients, who may have had a stroke or a

similar type of injury, are working on coordination and strengthening their muscles. Some people are actually learning to walk again. Vicki encourages the girls to remember when they were on the psychiatric floor and Tiffany told them that your brain produces chemicals to keep you from being too sad. The girls remember. Vicki adds that, "Your brain also controls walking and other movements of your body. Sometimes your brain does not remember how to walk." Debbie and James continue to explain that therapy helps your muscles to remember what your brain does not. A nurses' job on this floor takes a lot of patience. We need to provide lots of encouragement and support for our patients (Martin). We try to help our patients heal so they can go home as soon as possible (Martin; Seltzer).

As they (Nurse Vicki, Keyonda and Pam) take the elevator down to the first floor, the girls comment that nurses sure work hard and have to know a lot of stuff. The girls wonder how much nurses get paid Vicki explains that how much nurses get paid depends on how much education and experience they have (Ehnis). Remember when Tiffany told you about LPNs, RNs, MSNs, Ph.D.s and going to school anywhere from one to six years or more? How much a nurse can make also depends on how much they work and where they work. They can make \$30,000 to \$75,000 a year (Martin, Seltzer).

Lesson three:

PAY/RESPONSIBILITIES/OUTCOMES

- Nurse Pay - \$30,000 to \$75,000 a year
- Nurse's Main Job - Help patients get well quickly
- Outcome - well patients

The girls see that being a nurse is fun, interesting and challenging. They become aware of the knowledge and leadership characteristics as well as the caring attitude needed to become a successful nurse (Martin, Seltzer).

Nurse Vicki takes the girls to the door where Ms. Black is waiting to pick them up. As the girls are riding home they list the things they learned, the bubbles appear once again. They appear one right after the other as the girls recite what they have learned.

The theme music begins to play. The vocals from the opening of the program begin to play. The girls are dancing and singing to the music as they ride along. Several full page graphics come up. Three questions pertaining to next week's show are shown:

Who Am I?

- I make men handsome and women beautiful?
- I set my own schedule?
- I work with chemicals?

Next a reading list of books is shown pertaining to this week's show:

Reading List

- Visual Dictionary of the Human Body by Eyewitness Visual Dictionaries
- 11 African-American Doctors by Robert C. Hayden
- America's First Trained Nurse by Linda Richards

Following these graphic pages is contact information for where to send suggestions or questions to the program producers. The text will

read: "What are you gonna do when you finish school? Call us at 1-800-555-1234." The voice over will say: "Curious about a job? Want to know how you get there? What do you want to see on our next show?" The video will show an African-American girl calling the 1-800 number on her phone at home. We will also see a girl calling on a pay phone. The address graphic page reads: "Or Write Gonna Do, Department C, Box 123, LingYing Studios, Cleveland, OH 45555." The video will show a third little girl putting her letter into a mailbox. Finally the e-mail address will be shown: "<http://www.kidswork.WhatChaGonnaDo.com>." The credits will roll at this point.

Chapter 7

CONCLUSION

The objective of this project was to create a treatment for an educational television program for eight to ten year old African-American girls using Mody's audience participation-based message design procedure. Mody's procedure requires that those who want to communicate (namely, media producers) with audiences that they cannot either see or hear actually listen to the audience before drafting a treatment (or other forms of media) in order to understand what words or images to use.

Research for the pilot treatment was conducted with a total of fourteen girls who were recruited from the Boys and Girls Club of Lansing and from Wainwright Elementary School. The girls participated in group discussions moderated by the researcher. The main questions were *what do you like to watch on television* and *what do you want to do when you grow up*. Additional questions that spontaneously probed television preference and occupational choice were also discussed. The data gathered from these two sessions was used to create the pilot treatment.

The pilot treatment follows two African-American girls who visit a hospital to learn more about nurses. One profession is covered during each episode. The program opens with rap music and a video montage made up of professionals performing their jobs and the main characters imitating the professionals. The program is a drama. Through the girls' everyday experiences the viewers learn about professions that they may acquire when they grow up. The viewers obtain information like the education needed, skills required, salary range and responsibilities of the profession featured.

In this pilot treatment described above, the girls are escorted through the hospital by Nurse Vicki, who is the neighbor's daughter and also a volunteer nurse at the local clinic. They visit several of the floors in the hospital and speak with several different kinds of nurses. Learning points highlighted in this program are: what kinds of nurses there are, education needed, salary range and responsibilities of a nurse. These points are emphasized by placing them in comic strip dialogue bubbles above the girls heads. When the bubbles appear the girls, discuss the points in a conversational manner.

The pilot treatment without any research would have been very different. The program format would have been news magazine style. The program would have been targeted towards male and female children of all races. A boy and a girl would have hosted the show. Three professions would have been featured in each show. When speaking with the professionals, the hosts would have only gathered basic information about their duties. No information would have been supplied about salary, education or skills. The basic goal would have been to inform children about various occupations that exist in the world today. The program's intention would have been to help children understand how each occupation in the world, from trash collector to nuclear physicist helps to make society progress, grow and change. Finally, all of this information would have helped the children decide both how they can and how they would like to impact the world.

The title of the program would have also been When I Grow Up. The program would have aired on a weekday, immediately after the children got out of school (about 3:00 p.m.).

Like all theses, this one has limitations too. To obtain more accurate results, the research for this thesis ideally would have been conducted by a team of individuals. Several more girls would have been recruited to participate in several group interviews. Conducting focus groups after the group interviews would have been helpful in order to gather information about the girls' understanding of occupations. It would also be interesting to know what jobs the girls think are unattainable, if any. Because of the small sample size and the interviews being conducted by only one researcher, validity and reliability were affected. A larger study needs to be conducted before creating a television program for national viewing by the target audience (eight to ten year old, low income, African-American girls).

SUMMARY

This conclusion chapter describes the objective of the thesis, how the research was conducted, how the pilot treatment was developed through audience research, a summary of the pilot treatment and an explanation of how the pilot treatment would have been different without the research. The limitations of the project are also discussed.

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