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Jan Warne
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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31979/etd.5tv7-5u5y>
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**Television in Barranquilla, Colombia: Audience uses of
telenovelas versus program imports, a question of cultural
imperialism**

Warne, Jan, M.S.

San Jose State University, 1993

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TELEVISION IN BARRANQUILLA, COLOMBIA:
AUDIENCE USES OF TELENOVELAS VERSUS PROGRAM IMPORTS,
A QUESTION OF CULTURAL IMPERIALISM

A Thesis
Presented to the Faculty
of the Department of Journalism and Mass Communications
San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science

by
Jan Warne
May 1993

APPROVED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF
JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Diana Stover", written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Diana Stover

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Dennis L. Wilcox", written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Dennis L. Wilcox

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Zhou He", written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Zhou He

APPROVED FOR THE UNIVERSITY

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Serena N. Stanford", written over a horizontal line.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to three remarkable women: Clara Warne,
Heather Gregg, and Roberta Barnes, my mother, daughter, and sister.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to express gratitude to Dr. Diana Stover for invaluable assistance throughout the long process of completing this thesis. Dr. Stover's dedication to the graduate students she advises is unparalleled. Her encouragement and guidance enabled me to transform the raw material of my research notes and ideas into a cohesive thesis. If the raw material were clay and the thesis were a vase, I would thank Dr. Stover for teaching me how to master centering a lump of clay on a pottery wheel.

The author is grateful to Dr. Zhou He, who gave knowledgeable guidance during the final stages of writing the thesis. Although Dr. He only advised me at the final stages, his comments were like brush strokes on the glaze of a vase, an important addition to the final piece.

The author is also grateful to Dr. Dennis L. Wilcox and Dr. David Grey for valuable guidance and support at various stages of this study. The author is grateful to James Lull, who advised me on the mechanics of ethnographic research before the research was conducted in Barranquilla, Colombia.

The author wishes to thank the people in the five families of Barranquilla and Cartagena who graciously allowed me into their homes during this study. Special thanks are extended to host family and friends, Giovanni, Rosemary, Tanya, Judi, and Octavio. Giovanni, my coastal guide in Colombia, selflessly donated many hours to this study, helping with translations of coastal idioms, arranging travel, and maintaining a high level of enthusiasm for the project.

The author is grateful to Geoff Bradley for his help with the Macintosh and for his encouragement and patience. Encouragement, patience and plenty of nagging were greatly appreciated from those three remarkable women listed in the dedication, Clara, Heather and Roberta.

ABSTRACT

This study used participant-observation methods to examine television viewing of selected families in Barranquilla, Colombia. A uses and gratifications framework was used to compare the roles of imported programming versus indigenous programming in the viewing patterns of this audience. The purpose of this comparison was to address the issue of cultural imperialism as it related to this Latin American television audience.

The study found that the audience did not establish strong allegiances to U.S. programming. Their favorite foreign programming was Venezuelan telenovelas. Their favorite overall programming was their own indigenous telenovelas. Therefore, there was not a finding of cultural imperialism.

The most significant finding of this study was the perceived existence of cultural hegemony from the urban national center. The coastal audience members complained that the television media was controlled by the national government and programming companies, located exclusively in Bogotá.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study uses participant-observation methods to examine television viewing of selected families in Barranquilla, Colombia. It employs a uses and gratifications framework to compare the roles of imported programming versus indigenous programming in the viewing patterns of this particular audience. The purpose of this comparison is to address the issue of cultural imperialism as it relates to the audience under observation.

Cultural imperialism refers to the implied threat that the powerful industrialized nations can dominate the weaker emerging nations through enculturation, by exporting their media products, which carry encoded messages of their culture. The idea for this research project developed in the late 1980s, when the theory of cultural imperialism was an issue concerning media domination by either the Western democracies, especially the United States, or by the Soviet Bloc.

Now with the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe and Russia, the world is no longer segmented according to the terms: First World, Second World and Third World. The debate over Communist or capitalist influence over the developing world is becoming meaningless in a world where nations previously Communist are also struggling to develop economically. However, this is not to say that the world is no longer segmented between the powerful developed nations and the struggling undeveloped nations. The nations that were first to develop had certain advantages, which they still have. The transnational media corporations within the highly developed nations are

now poised to increase their power and influence because they are ready to take advantage of expanding markets with the collapse of the Soviet empire and the move toward a market orientation in China.

Thus the potential threat of cultural imperialism, at least by transnational corporate producers of cultural products, may still exist. The theory of cultural imperialism is predicated on the tenet that the foreign-produced media carry powerful cultural messages that affect indigenous audiences adversely. Whereas, uses and gratifications is an audience-based perspective which assumes individuals take the initiative and are goal-directed in their mass communications behavior (Rubin & Windahl, 1986), thus assigning power to the receiver of the message. Schiller, with his tenacious distrust of transnational corporations and lack of confidence in the active-audience perspective, noted that the individual audience member is "not equipped to deal with a pervasive disinformational system--administered from the command posts of the social order--that assaults the senses through all cultural forms and channels" (1989, p. 156).

Tracey (1985) noted that empirical evidence to support or refute the theory of cultural imperialism had not yet been provided. He stated that Schiller, Hamelink, and other scholars were implying a theory that did not "rest on any clear or obvious evidence" (p. 45). This study was designed to observe the audience in a media-importing nation. The purpose was to provide data on the social uses of television that could be analyzed with respect to supporting or rejecting the theory of cultural dominance of the media. This analysis adds to the body of work regarding cultural imperialism for an increased understanding of the complexities of international communications.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Cultural Imperialism

Seizure of radio and television stations, the telecommunications net and mass production newspapers is an immediate imperative in every coup or revolution. Symbolically and practically, this act sums up the role of information in maintaining or overthrowing a social system" (Smythe, 1981, p. 20).

Through coups and revolutions, the emerging nations of the world have attempted to free themselves from the yoke of colonialism or the tyranny of dictators. Many political and intellectual leaders of these emerging nations believed they were then threatened by a potential new form of colonialism. They charged that the developed nations, especially the United States, attempted a neo-colonial cultural domination (Singh & Gross, 1981) via exports of cultural products such as television programs. In the early 1980s, UNESCO became a forum for the ensuing debates centered around this theme of cultural imperialism following the publication of the McBride Report, which called for a New World Information Order. The NWIO called for policies to help protect the culture of developing nations from media exports of the industrialized world as well as assistance for the developing nations in creating their domestic communications systems (McBride, 1980). The publication of the report, Many Voices, One World, set off a furor in the American press (Sussman, 1981). It was considered to be against freedom of the press and the free flow of information. It was interpreted as promoting

government-controlled media with a bias against private sector involvement in communications. The United States withdrew from UNESCO in 1984, partially as a result of these debates. Schiller noted that the unilateral withdrawal was a reflection of the Reagan administration's "encouragement of deregulation and privatization in the international arena and in the poorer countries in general" (1989, p. 115).

The mandate for change that the McBride report called for, was considered by Hamelink (1983) to be impressive verbal commotion, but little concrete action toward changing the existing information structure or providing a "definition of the new information order" (p. 71). Hamelink considered the cultural autonomy of the less developed nations to be threatened by the dominance of Western media.

Preservation of cultural identity can also be a concern of other Western nations with regard to American media products. Hoffman-Riem, with regard to imported media in Germany, noted that "the question of whether special protection of national identities and cultural peculiarities is justified presupposes the existence of a cause for concern, a threat of some kind" (1987, p. 59). He proposed that there was an immediate threat, prompted by the new communications technologies of cable and satellite systems. He observed that the already existing dominance of U.S. media corporations in providing programming to Europe would thereby continue to increase. He considered this dominance a threat to the public sector philosophy of broadcasting--the broadcasting traditions of most European nations--which "is oriented toward the accessibility of pluralistic information for citizens and society rather than the freedom of expression of communicators" (p. 60).

Schiller would agree. He stressed that communication was destined to become "a, if not the dominant industry of the twenty-first century" and that the transnational corporations within this industry had become "the motor force influencing economic and cultural developments far from home and far into the future" (1989, p. 113). The defense by journalists of the developed nations was summed up in their belief in a free flow of information (Sussman, 1983). However, this flow was seen as a one-way flow by many researchers (Hamelink, 1983; Schiller, 1973; Mustapha, 1979; Varis, 1980). The one-way flow resulted from the advantage that the previously established media corporations had over the international communications market in distribution of media products. Especially with regard to television programming, these media products had already earned their production costs in the domestic market and thus were made available to the export market at inexpensive rates (Hoffman-Reim, 1987).

The one-way paradigm proposed that the less developed nations would become dominated culturally by consuming cultural products of the industrialized nations. What the paradigm assumed was that the producers of messages were all-powerful; what the paradigm ignored was that the receivers of messages had a power of their own. Jensen noted: "The media are clearly carriers of cultural forms, but the recipients already carry an essential part of the message within them" (1987, p. 26). Data generated by the "Dallas" audience studies of Ang (1985) and Liebes and Katz (1990) were used by these researchers to propose that the foreign audience for U.S. television programs was not a passive audience, but an active audience. These audiences derived their own uses and gratifications from watching "Dallas."

Ang stated "it is the television networks which decide which programmes are to be broadcast . . . programmes are selected that are *thought* likely to take the fancy of the public at large" (p. 23). Liebes and Katz noted:

To prove that Dallas is an imperialistic imposition, one would have to show (1) that there is a message incorporated in the program that is designed to profit American interests overseas, (2) that the message is decoded by the receiver in the way it was encoded by the sender, and (3) that it is accepted uncritically by the viewers and allowed to seep into their culture (p. 4).

Schiller distrusted the results of these studies, casting doubt on the "dubious methodology of Ang's study"; the empirical data consisted of 42 letters received in response to an ad in a magazine. Schiller worried that the current popularity of the active-audience view had resulted in a false sense of security as the view had "served to minimize, if not cast doubt on, the influence of concentrated media-cultural power" (1989, p. 151).

Schiller had previously noted (1969) that the three national broadcasting networks--NBC, ABC, and CBS--held a monopoly on cultural content through their television programming. Schiller also proposed that another threat was the "monopolized informational apparatus which is tightly bound with an industrial producer interest, itself inseparably connected to the military establishment" (p. 52). Schiller considered the developing world at that time to be besieged by American electronic media, threatening their indigenous cultures. He called this cultural imperialism:

The concept of cultural imperialism today best describes the sum of the processes by which a society is brought into the modern world system and how its dominating stratum is attracted, pressured, forced and

sometimes bribed into shaping social institutions to correspond to, or even promote the values and structures of the dominating center of the system (p. 9).

Tunstall (1977) was not as convinced as Schiller and wrote that "Schiller attributes too many of the world's ills to television. He also has an unrealistic view of returning to cultures many of which, are dead" (p. 63). Tunstall noted that the media imperialism theory did not mention regional exporters. He cited as an example, Mexico's exports to other Latin American countries. However, Tunstall admitted that strong regional exporters tended to be heavy importers of U.S. media, thus heavily influenced by Hollywood. Tunstall proposed that, when a government imported news, "it is, in effect, importing a piece of another country's politics" (p. 63). Thus, the combination of entertainment media and news media might have an influence on the people of the importing nation in their perception of the world.

Ithiel de Sola Pool differed from the Marxist view of Schiller and the moderate view of Tunstall. Pool stressed that "culture does not need protection. Culture is what people are already attached to. If culture is satisfactory, if it is not itself already in the process of decomposition, the audience will not look primarily abroad" (1977, p. 144). Pool discussed the formation of culture from the point of view of diffusion theorists, that culture is formed through the selection and adoption of elements from outside. An example would be the development of Reggae music in the Caribbean from African music brought to the region several generations ago. After a few generations pass, the imported or borrowed elements become a part of the cultural heritage that must be protected from the influence of foreigners.

Pool noted that the locally produced media had several distinct advantages over imported media even if the local product was not as slick in terms of production. It offered the local audience members a program that contained people speaking their language, wearing similar clothing, eating foods they eat, and telling jokes they can understand (p. 143). Pool thus challenged the concept that the media from industrialized nations was exported in an effort to cause the cultural subjugation of the helpless audience members of the developing world.

Tracey (1985) also challenged the theories of Schiller, noting that the assumption of cultural domination by media imports was not substantiated by any empirical studies. He proposed that a "theory that cannot be translated into empirically apprehendable propositions is no theory at all" (p. 46). Regarding cultural imperialism, or domination, Tracey wondered "why such simple, impressionistic analyses have come to hold such sway in the debate about" international communications and "why have such analyses--paradoxically dripping with human concern--become so divorced from any human contact" (1985, p. 38). He suggested ethnographically-based studies for "understanding the patterns and meanings that emerge when an audience in one culture watches television programs from another" (p. 52). DeSousa (1982) noted that "Television programs as messages do not become decoded in vacuo. Meaning is always a function not only of the intention on the part of the transmitter, but also interpretation on the part of the receiver" (p. 20). Field research cited by DeSousa had shown that, although U.S. program exports might affect the perceptions foreigners had of Americans, they do not erode existing culture.

Hamelink disagreed, but termed the erosion of culture as "cultural synchronization" rather than cultural imperialism (1983, p. 5). He wrote that the cultural synchronization can occur without imperialistic relations. The transnational advertising industry was seen by Hamelink as a prime example of cultural synchronization. Hamelink noted that this form of advertising presented the sort of items that are luxuries only the wealthy of the developing nations could afford, thus assimilating them into the international culture. The poor are left lagging further behind or purchasing products they do not need and cannot afford. He cited as an example the growth in sales of cigarettes (doubled over 10 years) as the result of the transnational tobacco firms' aggressive advertising campaigns (1983, pp. 12-16). Hamelink was joined by Schiller (1973, 1989), Tunstall (1977), Smythe (1981) and others in an abhorrence of the transnational advertising practices. Regardless of Ehrenberg's (1981) claim to the contrary, it is the overt intention of advertisers to change the consuming behavior of their target audience.

Hamelink noted that "cultural synchronization implies that the traffic of cultural products goes massively in one direction and has basically a synchronic mode. The metropolis offers the model with which the receiving parties synchronize" (pp. 5-6). By metropolis Hamelink was referring to the local elite of the developing nations, who along with transnational communications interests, control the media. Hamelink noted that the local elite were the "convenient intermediaries for the global spreading of a profit-oriented mercantilistic and consumer culture" (p. 7). Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) suggested that the power elite served as gatekeepers for change, rejecting any innovation that could disturb the status quo and thereby threaten their wealth and power. Straubhaar (1988) stressed that the military

regimes in Brazil, comprised of the power elite, "affected the basic structure of television, altering the environment in which modern telenovelas are created, and made a direct impact through censorship and the placement or encouragement of pro-government propaganda within and between programs" (p. 59).

This propagandistic manipulation of the media can be interpreted as a cultural threat by impeding the natural development of the domestic cultural product, i.e., the telenovela. Although it is difficult to see an overt cultural threat in Walt Disney's "Donald Duck," Hamelink observed that Mattelart's (1973) close analyses of the Donald Duck cartoons revealed a strong political orientation. Mattelart analyzed a Donald Duck cartoon set in mythical San Bananador. In this cartoon, pirates capture Donald Duck and his nephews, put them on rations and force them into slave labor. A pirate shouts "long live the revolution," and the Navy comes to the rescue, saving them from slavery. As Mattelart interpreted this cartoon, the intended moral was that overthrowing the government caused slavery and thus law and order (the Navy) should be welcomed (1973, pp. 428-29).

Boyd (1988) would disagree with this interpretation, suggesting that "one may find it difficult to comprehend how such programs such as 'I Love Lucy,' 'Leave It to Beaver,' 'My Three Sons,' and more recently the corruption, greed, and violence depicted on 'Dallas,' 'A-Team,' 'Dynasty,' and 'Miami Vice' would help promote American ideological expansion" (p. 151).

Mattelart considered the solution to curbing expanding American ideology via exports was to make the mass communication medium an instrument of the people in developing nations, thus removing it from the "mercantile system" and imperialists who are "curators and judges of culture"

(pp. 439-40). He stressed that organized masses should maintain the forms of mass communication, therefore maintaining their own cultural character. Even taking into consideration Mattelart's recommendation for "talleres populares" (people's workshops), his idea of organized masses controlling mass communication is seen as simplistic. Modern mass communications are highly capital intensive, requiring experienced professionals and technicians to maintain them. The United States has risen to its dominant position over many decades of experience. Tunstall (1977) added that World War II played a key part in securing America's media dominance, chiefly by keeping Britain occupied fighting a war on her own ground. There was phenomenal expansion by U.S. media into Latin America during this period, as it was all but abandoned by England and Russia (Tunstall, 1977, p. 139).

Fejes wrote that the U.S. media were used to mobilize the Latin American public in support of U.S. policies in the early 1940s. The goal assumed priority over commercial goals (1983, p. 16). Nelson Rockefeller, a liberal Republican, stressed that the United States should take measures to "secure economic prosperity in Central and South America" (1983, p. 17). President Roosevelt agreed and set up the Office of Co-Ordination for Inter-American Affairs. The goals of the OCIAA were to persuade Latin Americans to join the United States in defensive action against Germany, to convince them that the United States would help them with their military defense, and to assure them that this Good Neighbor policy was not temporary (1983). The State Department sanctioned the use of government and private facilities in radio, press, cinema arts, and sciences to further their ends (Fejes, p. 18). The government also offered tax incentives to advertisers who advertised on government approved Latin American radio stations or in approved newspapers. OCIAA's press section

supplied news and programs stressing propaganda points such as inter-American solidarity (p. 20). According to Fejes, the OCIAA may not have won over the people of Latin America but it had certainly "gained allegiance of the Latin American media owners" (1983, p. 24).

After World War II, OCIAA was no longer justified and was discontinued. But the way had been paved for the American commercial media interests to take over. The domination the United States held in Latin America in radio and films created the perfect milieu for the entrance of television. Gandy (1980) argued that the American telefilm exporters were perfectly discriminating monopolists, who set price according to demand. He noted that the economies of scale made the available exports inexpensive and therefore tough competition for the local television producer. According to Tapio Varis (1980), the United States dominated the export market for television programming. He attributed their success to the same economies of scale noted by Gandy and also to the industry's sophisticated distribution network. Varis noted that the impact of these foreign programs was enhanced by the fact that these imports dominated prime-time viewing hours. He suggested that a solution to the dominance of imports would be that local producers should co-produce programs in an effort to reduce costs and increase quality (1980, p. 109).

Although this solution would create more indigenous programming, the pervasive influence of American television could still be difficult to escape. DeSousa (1982) considered the example of the South American telenovela, a "hybrid form of the U.S. soap opera" (p. 23). In reviewing the process of hybridization, with respect to Brazilian television, Herold (1988) noted that "although the overall format was still copied, Brazilian writers and producers introduced Brazilian themes into the plots of their programs . . . the violence

of 'Baretta' was to be mixed with the tropical landscapes and the street-wise *malandragem* [vagrancy] of Rio's slums" (p. 44). The South American telenovela can be seen from another perspective as the natural evolution of the narrative and not something inherently American. Writing about the Colombian telenovela, Rodríguez and Tellez (1989, p. 10) noted that the scripts are often taken from literature or new ones are written by such well-known authors as Gabriel García Márquez. They described the appeal of their indigenous programs by noting that:

La comunicación está en la cultura, en las prácticas cotidianas de las personas, en sus gustos, deseos, problemas, y fantasías [Communication is a part of culture, the everyday habits of the people, in their pleasures, desires, problems, and fantasies] (p. 11).

González (1992) stressed that soap operas, although not of Latin American origin are "the most current and vital cultural product that Latin American countries export to the world and share among themselves . . . this telenovela, and in general melodrama, functions like a carousel with multiple points of access . . . to re-model the audience's affections and visions, and the divisions of" daily life (p. 60). González summarized the study, thus far, of soap operas as beginning with:

- (1) The effects approach, "initially oriented by market demands and war propaganda."
- (2) Analysis of structure, using linguistics to explain how telenovelas create meaning and pleasure.
- (3) Analysis of modes of ideological manipulation to demonstrate how soap operas create a false sense of reality.

(4) Analysis by uses and gratifications to determine what "needs are satisfied by telenovelas and the kinds of uses the public makes of them."

(5) "Finally, the analysis of pro-development telenovelas . . . attempts by governments (political units) to positively reinforce attitudes congruent with their policy goals. Its first applications have been in family planning and adult literacy" (p. 59).

González noted that the uses and gratifications perspective gave more "dynamism to the rigid concept of passive viewer" although he observed that this perspective had inherent problems relating to conception of the audience (p. 60). He discussed a study in progress, in 1992, by Latin American researchers, to analyze the many ways the audience "appropriates meaning" from telenovelas. Tracey (1985) would approve of these studies conducted by local researchers. He proposed that the theory of cultural dominance in media should be supported or rejected by empirical audience research in the media importing nation. He suggested as possible methods: ethnographic research, in-depth interviews, and small-group discussions guided by questionnaires. He noted that the research should be conducted by "native-speaking and thinking researchers" (p. 54).

Tracey stressed that the theory of cultural imperialism was not based on analyses of audience research data, but on company reports and facts that described the flow of international media and assumed their effects. This assumption, Tracey noted, was equivalent to the hypodermic model that had long been abandoned in domestic analyses, although it continued to remain in international communications discussions. Tracey noted that in the cultural dominance theory the "indigenous population is no more than an innocent fly caught in a beguiling, sticky, and overpowering spider's web" (p. 45).

Uses and Gratifications

To observe the indigenous television audience of the media importing nation to determine whether cultural imperialism exists, the researcher must choose a research framework that focuses on the audience. Uses and gratifications is one of the choices. Uses and gratifications is an audience-centered perspective which assumes individuals take the initiative and are goal-directed in their mass communication behavior, and that alternative sources might be chosen to gratify needs or motives (Rubin & Windahl, 1986).

Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch stated the basic tenets of the uses and gratifications approach as a concern with:

(1) the social and psychological origins of (2) needs, which generate (3) expectations of (4) the mass media or other sources, which lead to (5) differential patterns of media exposure (or engagement in other activities) resulting in (6) need gratifications and (7) other consequences, perhaps mostly unintended ones (1974, p. 20).

Carey and Kreiling (1974) noted that it was Katz in 1959 that penned the term *uses and gratifications* in an "attempt to produce a marriage between the critical work on popular culture and the study of audience effects . . . (and to ask) . . . what is it people do with, what uses and gratifications do they find in mass produced news and entertainment" (p. 226). Carey and Kreiling, as well as Katz, Blumler, Gurevitch, et al. (1974) defined the uses and gratifications view as an audience-centered approach to the study of mass media.

Carey and Kreiling explained that the uses of media depend on the social setting of the audience and depend on the assumption that "human perception is not a passive registering process but an active organizing and structuring

process. Thus, gratifications sought by the audience are assumed to result from active psychological processes of constructing lines of action" (p. 227).

Uses and gratifications evolved out of the failure of effects research to adequately look at the receivers of messages. Kline, Miller and Morrison (1974) noted that effects research assumed the audience was a "passive mass that was acted upon by the media" (p. 113). They admitted that effects can't be completely ignored but that the needs of the audience must be considered. Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch (1974) reported that audience gratifications derived in whole or in part from: (1) media content, (2) exposure to the media per se, and (3) the social context in which the media was consumed (p. 24). In the same text, McGuire argued that media consumption was not necessarily motivated by deliberate processes but could be "rather haphazard, an outcome of chance and external circumstances" (p. 168). He argued that it would be difficult to find and then index the gratifications the audience derived from media consumption.

However, Rubin found in his secondary study of television motives (1983) that there were two television user types. The first type used the medium for time consumption and entertainment, while the second type used television for nonescapist, information seeking. He developed a typology that categorized television uses as relaxation, companionship, habit, passing time, entertainment, social interaction, information, arousal, and escape.

Rosengren stated that "the individual stands out both as a passive object and as an active subject" in his or her relation to the mass media. He noted that the mass media can be regarded as contributing to a consensus in a conflict-based society (1986, p. 27). McQuail similarly stated that uses and

gratifications could provide a "powerful framework for looking at media in a wider social and cultural context" (1984, p. 185).

Rubin and Windahl (1986) saw the need for the uses and gratifications method to evolve into a framework that was an audience-centered and society-based framework. In their uses and dependency model, Rubin and Windahl proposed that "different societal and media settings can foster different gratifications-seeking behavior" and that "people's needs vary as they evolve in interactions with societal and communications systems" (p. 186). This framework did not define the audience as all-powerful, because it also stated that media use was deterministic of social-structural influences. They described the uses and dependency model as providing "an integrated view of the interactive nature of mass communication uses and effects," which considers the audience and society and the uses and effects (p. 197).

The working framework for uses and gratifications research was first proposed by McQuail, Blumler and Brown (1972). Their typology was divided into the following categories: (a) diversion or escape from routine and/or problems, (b) personal relationships or companionship and/or social utility, (c) personal identity as personal reference or value reinforcement, and (d) surveillance (p. 155). Lull developed a more detailed typology for use with ethnographic audience research. He noted that the social uses of television could be divided into the structural and the relational. Lull (1990) described the structural aspect of television as providing a social environment, a busy atmosphere. He defined the elements of the structural as background noise, companionship, entertainment or regulating time, activity, or conversation. He described the relational aspect of television as its ability to cause social arrangements within the audience. Among the elements of relational he listed

conversational entrance, common ground, agenda for talk, avoidance of talk within the family, value clarification, conflict reduction, social learning, relationship maintenance, problem-solving, information dissemination, substitute schooling, role enactment, role enforcement, validation, authority exercise, and gatekeeping.

Ethnographic Research and the Objectives of this Study

This study focused primarily on the actions of the receivers of mediated messages. Through ethnographic research methods using Lull's "social uses of television" typology, the study explored the possible effects of cultural imperialism on the television audience being observed in Barranquilla. Lull (1988) developed this typology "after conducting extensive ethnographic research in family homes" to reflect "family members' interpersonal uses of both program content and the viewing experience itself" (p. 237). This research method was chosen over the more traditional methods of mass communications research, such as content analysis, laboratory-type experiments, or survey questionnaires in an effort to provide data that would include the intercommunication of audience members and their specific behavior within their natural viewing environment.

Borrowing from traditions of anthropological research, the ethnographic researcher conducts naturalistic studies in the intimate environment of the home. Researchers have agreed (Lull, 1990; Lindlof, 1987) that the home is the ideal research setting for studies of mediated communication since it is in the home that the majority of television viewing occurs, and where the interaction of audience members can be observed. Does the observer's presence interfere with the natural behavior of the family being studied? There is a risk of this. However, Lull cited an audience study

(1990) where audience members reported that "with few exceptions, their television habits did not differ with the observer in the home" (1990, p. 182). Lull stated that a minimum of three days per family is necessary to create a sense of trust among family members and for the researcher to become less conspicuous. He noted that the researcher should attempt to act natural and engage in conversation or actions of the family (1990).

Babbie discussed the criteria for a good survey interviewer as neat, pleasant, and friendly but not overly so (1986, pp. 226-25). He noted that the researcher should seem interested in getting to know the respondent without appearing to spy. These personality traits are especially crucial to the ethnographic researcher because she/he will be spending longer periods of time with the respondents and will be accepted into their homes. Because "the researcher's own talents of observation and judgment are continually called into play in the process of witnessing the mundane aspects of the 'social actors' routines" (Lindlof & Meyer, 1987, p. 8), it is necessary for the researcher to possess keen observation skills and an awareness of seemingly insignificant detail. When studying a foreign culture, the ethnographer should be knowledgeable of and reasonably compassionate towards that culture, to feel an affinity with those involved in the study.

Lull noted that ethnographic research is well suited to the study of foreign audiences, allowing the researcher a flexibility of inquiry into the patterns of audience behavior (1988). Since the ethnographic researcher is able to observe both the consumption of mediated communication and the ensuing patterns of intercommunication, ethnographic studies provide a more detailed picture of audience behavior.

The problem with this picture is that it is invariably small. The question then becomes: Is a small detailed picture more explanatory than a large general picture? Because of the time-intensive nature of participatory research, the sample size is necessarily small. This research project was no exception. The time constraints on a single researcher or even a small group of researchers make large population ethnographic studies prohibitive. However, the rewards of this qualitative research lies in its power to delineate the actual audience responses to mass media compared to their stated responses in survey-type research.

Morely (1986) chose the ethnographic framework for his research on family viewing in England. He argued that this was the best method to reveal family uses for television, noting "we all 'watch television,' but with how much attention and what degrees of commitment and response, in relation to which types of programming, in which scheduling spot" (1986, p. 50)? One of the major findings in his study was the consistent distinction in program preference between men and women. Whereas these findings could have been revealed by survey-type research, Morely was able to observe and probe for deeper answers as to why the women preferred soap operas and men preferred sports programming and who had ultimate power over what programs were watched.

Lindlof and Meyer (1987) discussed the value of qualitative research in explicating the meaning of media in the social context. They observed that mass communication was difficult to study because of the "separation in time and space between message producers and receivers" (p. 9). They suggested that qualitative research, or interpretive research, was especially useful in determining "changes in audience-imputed meanings of programs" (p. 9).

Lindlof and Meyer proposed that the strength of qualitative research was its ability to encourage theory development. They attributed this strength to the fluid nature of qualitative research, its ability to interweave "concept formation, data collection, and hypothesis testing throughout many phases of the project" (p. 10).

Jensen noted that "in-depth interviewing and participant observation offer explanatory value that, for a number of purposes, goes beyond the quantitative analysis of general interview statements concerning reception" (1987 p. 30). However, Jensen further noted that qualitative data are often not "respected as forms of evidence in their own right. Instead, qualitative inquiry tends to function as a pilot study that then becomes a stepping stone for 'real' quantitative inquiry" (p. 33).

The purpose of this research was to determine whether exports of television programs from an industrialized nation, such as the United States, subverted the cultural orientation of audience members in the receiving, developing nation. Examples of this cultural subversion might manifest itself in: (a) a desire to imitate the lifestyles portrayed in U.S. programming, (b) a desire to own objects seen repeatedly on American programs, (c) an admiration or imitation of the heroes/heroines as distinctly defined by American television writers, (d) a desire to leave one's home for a better life in the United States, (e) shame for one's social standing as compared to the lifestyle portrayed by an American television program, or (f) shame for one's own culture in general.

This qualitative study was designed to reveal the viewers' uses and gratifications of indigenous programming, especially the Colombian-made soap operas, the telenovelas, as compared to the imported programming,

specifically U.S. programs. If the uses for American programming created a desire to imitate aspects of American culture, then data would be generated to provide evidence that the theory of cultural imperialism was valid as it related to this Latin American audience. If the uses of American programming served nothing more than to pass time, while the indigenous programs created an agenda for talk, validation of values, common ground, and more significant uses, then the theory of cultural imperialism would not be supported as it related to this Latin American audience. This qualitative inquiry into the television viewing patterns of a group of families in Latin America was intended to serve as an exploratory study, providing data that would add to the body of knowledge in both the fields of uses and gratifications and in international communications and stimulate further inquiry, perhaps on a larger scale.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHOD

The Barranquilla Setting

This study was conducted in Barranquilla, Colombia in August 1988. Barranquilla is the fourth largest city of Colombia after Bogotá, Medellín, and Cali. Unlike the three largest cities located in the Interior of Colombia, Barranquilla is a port city, located on the Caribbean Coast. Another significant difference between Barranquilla and the other three cities is that it has a more diverse population. Because of the location on the coast, Barranquilla has received many more foreigners in this century and in the 19th century than the cities of the Interior. The population includes many of Arab, Italian, Jewish, African, and French descent. The coastal people, *costeños*, are known throughout Colombia for their ethnic diversity and carefree attitude, including an openness to various cultures and races. In a quote from the notes on a map of Colombia, the *costeños* are described as equal in spirit to their nationally famous Carnival:

Esta multiplicidad de razas ha contribuido a formar en la región un tipo de personas abiertamente hospitalarias, extrovertidas, y alegres que patentizan su condición en el tradicional Carnaval, una gran fantasía y jolgorio [This multiplicity of races has contributed in the region to a people that are open, hospitable, extroverted, and joyous, as revealed in the spirit of their Carnival, a wild and exotic spree] (Instituto Geografico de Agustin Codazzi, 1985).

Television environment

There are three channels available in Barranquilla. All three are owned and managed by the national government. The two main channels are broadcast via repeater stations from Bogotá. The third channel is a government-owned regional channel, located in Barranquilla to serve the coastal population. The regional channel, Telecaribe, operates limited hours on a small budget. Since its inception, television in Colombia has been state owned; the government leases time slots to private production companies to provide programs for the two national channels.

The government agency in charge is the National Institute of Radio and Television, known as Inravisión. Inravisión mandates what type of programs it considers appropriate and how much advertising is allowable within the half-hour time slots. Every four years, coinciding with national elections, the time slots go up for bid. Inravisión sends out a solicitation for new programs. Original programming takes precedence over foreign imports. A list of programs approved by Inravisión and available for viewing during 1988 is provided in Appendix 3.

The production companies must prove that they have good enough equipment to produce high quality programming. The program companies that get the bids are located in Bogotá exclusively. This can cause regional friction since the themes developed for most of the telenovelas relate specifically to Bogotanos.

Inravisión is directly responsible for program creation for a fourth channel, available only in the Interior, that is an educational channel, geared to developmental education such as agricultural methods and innovations.

According to Pierce (1979), Inravision is based on the intent of providing media that are culturally uplifting to the people of Colombia and free from commercial and political domination, but in fact Inravision gives the people what they want: telenovelas, game shows, children's programming and action series (p. 156).

The Pilot Study

Barranquilla families were first observed in a non-structured pilot study conducted in August 1986 and August 1987. It was at this time that patterns of viewing were first observed and preferences noted. The preference for indigenous programming, specifically the telenovela, was observed at this time. The Colombian soap opera, unlike the American version, had a one-year duration to accommodate the directives of Inravision. There was a favorite telenovela each year. The overwhelmingly favorite telenovela of 1987 was "Gallito Ramirez" [Ramirez the Bantamweight]. This telenovela was so popular that it was still a topic of conversation in August 1988 at the time of this study.

Preliminary Interviews

The five families asked to participate in this study were chosen from 42 preliminary interviews. The questionnaire (see Appendix I) used to conduct preliminary interviews was designed to reveal general information such as age, gender, number of children, socioeconomic status, occupation, level of education, amount of foreign and domestic travel, and automobile ownership. Questions were also included to reveal specific information regarding television viewing patterns such as the number of hours watched per day, with whom programs were watched, favorite program, favorite foreign program, and any brief opinions on these programs.

Using members of the host family as guides, this researcher went into various neighborhoods in Barranquilla, to conduct preliminary interviews based on the questionnaire. This initial method of gathering data on audience viewing patterns was not very successful, as had been predicted by the host family. People were suspicious of strangers and their motives. Since television channels are owned and operated by the federal government, there was a feeling of distrust for a television survey team. There was an overwhelming unwillingness to participate in this door-to-door survey.

Further surveys were conducted in the streets of downtown Barranquilla, which proved ultimately more successful. Interviews were conducted with passersby, shopkeepers, and the clientele of a small sidewalk café owned by the researcher's host family near downtown Barranquilla. Rather than invading the privacy of a person's home, interviews were conducted anonymously in a public café or on the sidewalk. Although several of the people were acquainted with the host family, they were merely customers. A level of trust existed but there was not necessarily any similarity of education, wealth, or social standing. The researcher was thus able to encounter people from many neighborhoods, who came downtown to work, look for work or shop. This level of interviews led to another, whereby people would bring friends, neighbors or relatives who also wanted to participate in the survey.

Conducting interviews in this manner yielded an adequate variety of family types as to wealth, education, ages and size. Forty-two questionnaires were completed. The five families observed in this research were chosen from the pool of data available from these interviews.

The questionnaires revealed that the respondents watched an average of five hours of television per day. The educational level for adults ranged from fourth grade to a master's degree. The majority of adults had completed high school. There was an equal number of questionnaires from both sexes. The average number of children per couple was two, although adults over fifty listed as many as eight children. More than one half of the families could be described as extended families because two or three generations lived in the same house.

Only five respondents had travelled outside of Colombia; only two of those had visited the United States, the others had travelled in South America. These five respondents were the wealthiest of the 42 people interviewed. More than two thirds of the respondents had never travelled beyond Cartagena or Santa Marta, cities along the Northern Coast of Colombia. Nearly all the respondents listed their neighborhood as middle class, although five families lived in upper middle-class areas, three families lived in wealthy neighborhoods, and at least three families lived in lower middle-class areas.

The occupations listed by the middle-class family members were construction worker, veterinarian, cab driver, factory worker, child care worker, beautician, lab assistant, secretary, seamstress, salesman and chauffeur. The occupations listed by the upper middle-class family members were engineer, factory manager, and importer. The occupations listed by the heads of household of the two wealthiest families were: retired bank manager and retired lawyer.

One woman, a beautician, was the head of her household. Two other women with children worked; one worked at home as a seamstress and the other worked part-time at a daycare center. The other women with children

were housewives. Single women worked as either secretary, lab assistant or beautician. One young woman was a veterinarian. Single women, regardless of their age, lived at home with their parents. Most of the single men also lived at home.

The Sample

The questionnaires were analyzed and seven families in Barranquilla were asked to participate. The seven families were chosen on the basis of diversity in:

1. Family structure: extended family or nuclear family; young children or teenaged children; patriarchal or matriarchal; and size in general.
2. Wealth/neighborhood: upper class, middle class, and lower class families were invited from old money, new money, and poor neighborhoods.
3. Education: referring to level achieved by the heads of households and their spouses.
4. Travel: amount of travel and level of awareness of places outside the local region of the Northern Coast of Colombia.

The families were chosen on the basis of similarity in:

1. Television in the home: the presence of at least one television set.
2. Hours of television reportedly watched: at least three hours per day.
3. The number of children in the home: at least one child, preferably three to twelve years old.
4. Native costeños: that at least one, preferably both, of the parents were native to the Northern Coast of Colombia.

Three of the invited families declined to participate in the observation stage of this research project. One family was very poor, and it can be assumed from comments made by the head of household that he was embarrassed to

invite strangers into his home. No amount of persuasion would change his mind. The other two families who declined were wealthy families. In one case the father did not want strangers in his home. He travelled a great deal between Miami and Barranquilla, and was described by his wife as an importer and by his neighbors as a contrabandista—one who brings contraband such as: cigarettes, tennis shoes, and stereos into the country. Members of the other wealthy family, a traditional old money family, were eager to participate, but final approval was denied by the grandmother, the matriarch of the family. Word was sent that they were in the process of remodeling and could not accept guests into their home.

Alternative choices had already been ruled out, thus the observation sample became the four remaining families. They included an upper class family, an upwardly mobile middle-class family, a middle-class family and a lower middle-class family. A fifth family was chosen from Cartagena, another city along the Northern Coast of Colombia.

This family was asked to participate so that observations could be made and compared to the other four families. In this manner, data about the Barranquilla families could be analyzed and compared to that of another coastal family. This comparison became more important as the theme of regional imperialism emerged during this research. By choosing this family from Cartagena, the researcher hoped to provide valuable cross-reference data of another coastal family that may or may not have correlated with the data from Barranquilla families.

Description of the Five Families

The El Prado family. The family that lived in the El Prado district of Barranquilla was the wealthiest of the five families in this study. The

patriarch was 74 and was a retired bank official. His wife was 68 and kept busy with various projects such as cake decorating and ceramics. Their oldest son of 34, his wife of 33, and their son's three-year-old daughter lived with them. The son was a chemical engineer working in the Guajira, 200 miles east of Barranquilla; he only returned home on weekends. Their daughter of 35 stopped by to visit for a few hours nearly every day. The wife's two spinster sisters visited every day, eating all three meals in this home. The husband's brother stopped by two out of the three days of observation.

The family owned their home. It was a large one-story building in a neighborhood of two-story mansions and large estates. The home had four bedrooms, two bathrooms, and servants' quarters with a bedroom and bathroom. There was a large formal dining room with antique Spanish furniture and a second dining room for casual suppers. The television was placed at the end of a long alcove with several chairs facing in one direction; a ceiling fan above made the room comfortable. The family had a video player but it was broken. The patriarch owned an old Jeep and his son drove a new Japanese compact car. The Jeep was more practical for maneuvering around the many potholes in the streets of Barranquilla.

This family was a traditional old-money Spanish family on both the father's and the mother's side. They said their family could be traced back several generations in Colombia. All the family members were born on the Northern Coast of Colombia. The men were both college educated. The daughter-in-law had some college and the mother had a high school diploma. Their features were European and their skin color was very fair. The parents

had travelled throughout South America, to Spain, and to the East Coast of the United States. The son and his wife had travelled to Venezuela.

The El Salvador family. The Salvador neighborhood is located on the outskirts of Barranquilla. Many of the homes were government-subsidized housing for low-income families. The houses were built in rows with adjoining walls and the streets were narrow alleys that would not accommodate cars. Nobody in this neighborhood could afford cars. Guests had to park on the cross streets at the end of the alleys.

The family that lived in this area did not own a car, nor did they own their own home. They were the poorest of the five families in this study. The mother was a beautician, 45 years old. The father was a handyman, 54 years old. They had three boys, 8, 18, and 22. The wife's beauty shop was the main financial support for the family. The wife's younger sister worked with her and lived with them. The wife's mother, who was 60, also lived with them. The grandmother had a business making and selling frozen fruit confections. This attracted a constant swarm of neighborhood children.

The home had three bedrooms and one bathroom. The building was long and narrow with no walls separating the living room, eating area, and kitchen. The television was in the living room near the front door. The television was a small portable black-and-white set that was often moved into the children's bedroom.

The father of this family had a high school diploma, but the mother had only completed the eighth grade. They had travelled to Bogotá and to cities along the coast. Their 22-year-old son was attending the university and worked as a warehouseman. He had never travelled beyond Cartagena. The family members had all been born along the coast. The members of this

family would be called *morenos*, or brown-skinned. They had a combination of European and Indian features.

The Silencio family. The Silencio neighborhood is located closer to the center of town than the Salvador area. The family that lived in Silencio was middle class. They did not own a car, but they did own their own home. The home was a modern two story duplex with three bedrooms and one bathroom. It was on a tree-lined cul-de-sac with many other duplexes and apartment buildings. The television was a large color set located in the living room. The television could be seen from the dining room table where the children did their homework.

The father was 53 years old and worked as a salesman. He travelled to the cities along the coast selling auto parts and was often out of town. His wife was 53 years old and worked in the home as a housewife. They had three daughters, 15, 16, and 20 years old. Their son was 22 years old. Like the family from the Salvador neighborhood, this family was *moreno*. The father had a high school diploma, but the mother had only finished eighth grade. The two older children were taking college classes. The oldest daughter worked part-time as a secretary.

The father was born in a town in Northern Colombia called, Valledupar. This town was famous for originating a type of music and dance called, *Vallenato*, which had been very popular in Colombia for at least two decades. The man's wife and daughters said he was a great dancer because he had been born in Valledupar. Calling someone a great dancer was one of the greatest compliments that one costeño paid another. The mother was born in Bogotá. However, she said she considered herself a costeña because she had spent more of her life in Barranquilla as her husband's wife than in Bogotá. The mother

had Spanish features and a light complexion. The father was dark complected with Indian, African and European facial features. The family had travelled extensively throughout Colombia, but had never gone beyond its borders.

The mother was close to her daughters. They included her in their conversations about school or work. The son was gone in the evenings, either in the library or with his friends. The husband and wife sat close together when they watched television. He was outgoing and had many friends in the neighborhood. He said even the parrot in the corner market called him by name. He liked to sit outside in the evenings and talk to the people that walked by their home.

The Boston family. The Boston area of Barranquilla is located between El Prado and downtown. The socioeconomic status of the families range from middle class to upper middle class. The family in this study was upwardly-mobile middle class. The home was large and so was the family. There were four bedrooms and one and one-half bathrooms. The television was located at the end of the dining room. The children would watch television from the dining room table as they worked on homework or other projects. The mother could join the conversation from the adjoining kitchen. They had a large color television and a video player. They owned a car, a very old Jeep.

The father worked as an electrical engineer at the power plant. He had gone to college but did not have an engineering degree. He was 49 years old. His wife was 10 years younger and worked in the home as a seamstress. They had two sons, six and 11 years old. Their daughter was 15 years old. The husband's sister, her husband, and their infant daughter lived with them. The sister and her husband were both 35 years old. The sister worked in the home as a seamstress. The brother-in-law had a college degree in architecture but

worked in a blue-collar position at the power plant. The father and brother-in-law enjoyed each other's company. They engaged in conversation about politics, sports, and family. The husband's mother also lived in the home. She helped out in the kitchen and took care of the baby.

The father, his wife, and their children had never travelled beyond the coastal cities. They were all born in or near Barranquilla. The brother-in-law was born in Cucuta, a city in the Interior of Colombia on the Venezuelan border. He said he had travelled throughout Colombia and to Venezuela. The family had relatives in New York who had started a clothing manufacturing operation.

The father and brother-in-law were eager to go to the United States. They said it was impossible to get visas even to travel as a tourist. According to the father, visas were granted to Colombians who were married, owned their own home, owned their own business, or had large Colombian bank accounts. The applicant for a travel visa had to prove he had something substantial in Colombia to ensure his return. The family members in the Boston family were very dark skinned with curly black hair and a mix of Indian, African, and European facial features.

The Cartagena family. The Cartagena family members were darker skinned. The father was a tall man with African features. His wife was a small woman with African and Indian features. They were both about 58 years old. He was a veterinarian of farm animals and taught three classes at the university. She raised rabbits and house plants in the half acre behind their house. They owned their home but did not own a car.

They had three grown children living at home and a nine-year-old niece. The oldest daughter was 26 and worked as a veterinarian. She had

graduated from college and was teaching one class per week in the evening. Their son was 24 and was finishing his B.S. degree in engineering. The younger daughter was 21 and was studying medicine at the university. Another daughter had married young and left home. She was 22 and had not attended college.

They lived in a district called Escalón, located towards the outskirts of Cartagena. The homes were large one-story buildings on half-acre lots. The homes were large and impressive with well-tended gardens, but the street was unpaved and not lighted. The home had four bedrooms with two and one-half bathrooms. The family phone was located in the daughter's room. The youngest daughter was always using it. The son's room had a blackboard covering one wall. This had been used by the father to teach his children when they were younger.

The niece was sent to live with this family so she could succeed in school. The father was very proud of his children because of their educational accomplishments. He was proud of his wife because she was able to accomplish all her tasks as a housewife and also contribute financially to help support the family. She seemed to enjoy being so busy. The money earned from the sale of rabbits and house plants would help the oldest daughter start her own veterinarian clinic for small animals.

The Cartagena family watched television in a square landing that adjoined the kitchen, dining room, and daughters' bedroom. There was constant traffic in front of the television. The mother's chair was beside the television and next to the kitchen door; she could not watch television without standing up and walking to the other side of the room. She rarely sat down because she was always busy in the kitchen or elsewhere. There were only

three chairs facing the television. If the entire family watched television together, some members sat on the two steps leading up to the landing.

The Five Families Compared to State Statistics

Barranquilla and Cartagena are located in the state of Atlántico. According to the last census, in 1985, 76% of all households owned their home (Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística, 1986, p. 337). Four out of the five families in this study, or 80%, owned their home. The statistics on dwelling size reported that 23% of the homes had three bedrooms, and 28% had four bedrooms. Homes with more than four bedrooms or less than three bedrooms ranged below 15% of total dwellings (D.A.N.E., p. 30). The families in this study lived in three or four bedroom homes, the size of an average home in their state.

According to the 1985 census, the average number of people per household in Atlántico was six. On a national basis, the average was five people. In Bogotá the average was 4.5 people. In this study the Cartagena family, the Salvador family, and the Silencio family each had six family members like the state average. The El Prado family was slightly smaller with five people living in the home. The Boston family was chosen to participate in this study because it was larger than average. There were nine people living in the Boston household.

The statistics on educational level for the population of Atlántico reported that men and women had nearly the same levels of education. The percentages for no education were 7% for men and 7% for women. The percentages for a primary education were 20% for men and 23% for women. The percentages for a secondary education were 17% for men and 18% for women. The percentages for a partial college education were 2% for men and

2% for women. In terms of 4 years of college or more the percentages were 2% for men and 1% for women (D.A.N.E., p. 132-133).

The educational level of the family members in this study compare adequately to these statistics. The Cartagena family, El Prado family, and Boston family had higher levels of education than the state average. The Salvador family and Silencio family had below average educational levels. Except for the Cartagena family, the women in this study had less education than the men. The women in the Cartagena family had more education than the state average.

The Participant-Observation Schedule and Plan

The family is the most natural television viewing group and the only one officially observed in this study. However, notes were taken on other viewing groups and significant observations will be noted. Television viewed outside the home in public or private places included cafés, cantinas, stores, a beauty shop, a swimming pool, a doctor's office, and a veterinarian clinic.

The five families participating in this study were observed in their homes during weekday and weekend evenings. They were each observed for three consecutive days, four to five hours per evening. Because of time constraints and a lack of qualified fellow researchers to use as assistants, the evening-only hours were chosen to maximize family members present. The evening hours were also when the greatest conflict in scheduling occurred between foreign and domestic programs. Hopefully, if a pattern of preference existed, it would be apparent in the evening hours.

No recorder was used. Notes were taken before observation sessions when interviewing the heads of households. Notes were also taken during the observation periods to record conversations and copious notes were taken

after the sessions. After the observation sessions the children were interviewed using the questionnaire (see Appendix 2). A total of 10 more questionnaires were completed by the children. The researcher speaks fluent Spanish, but a member of the host family was present during observation sessions to assist later in translating Spanish specific to the region or cultural references unknown to the researcher.

Typology of Uses

The sub-categories used to group the data from this study were suggested by Lull's typology. They included television's uses as providing background noise, companionship, entertainment, regulation of time or talk patterns, common ground, agenda for talk, anxiety reduction, conflict reduction, family solidarity, behavior modeling, gatekeeping, authority exercise, information dissemination, value transmission, problem solving, role reinforcement, role enactment, experience illustration, setting for family neglect, value clarification, and substitute schooling. However, these sub-categories will not be grouped under structural and relational categories used by Lull (1990) but instead as transient and intransient.

The transient or temporal uses will include those that did not carry value beyond the actual viewing session. The intransient uses will include those uses that transcended the actual viewing session and had lasting, if not permanent effects, on the audience. The transient uses include background noise, anxiety reduction, regulation of time, and entertainment. The other more social uses, listed above, will be considered intransient, having more significant value in the social lives of the audience. If programming use were relegated to the sub-categories within the transient category, they would not be expected to have any lasting effects. Thus, if U.S. programs were used to

pass time or as immediate entertainment, they could not be considered to cause the profound effects that cultural imperialism implied.

Colombia Revisited

In February 1992 the researcher revisited the host family in Colombia. Observations were noted on television behavior during this period which reconfirmed the 1988 observations. The amount of television watched remained the same. The different types of programs preferred by women, men, young children, or teenagers remained the same as in the 1988 observations. The most popular foreign telenovela had changed from the Venezuelan favorite of 1988 to a Mexican telenovela which was also popular in Mexico during February 1992.

The audience complaints of poor television reception persisted in 1992. The audience continued to complain about available programming: not enough channels for variety and not enough interesting programming on the two channels available.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Overview of Primary Findings

Cultural Hegemony from the National Center

Cultural imperialism implies an invasion from outside the country, but when a nation has many different cultural regions and a centrally located system controls the media, cultural hegemony can be imposed from within the nation. The theme of cultural hegemony from the urban elite of the nation's center was the most significant finding that emerged from this study. The resentment and bitterness regarding Bogotá's power over their television viewing choices and their lives in general was voiced by every adult in the five families observed and the host family.

This theme came up in conversations in all five of the observed families. Sometimes the comments became heated political conversations; other times they were made as mere matter-of-fact statements. All program companies were in the capital city of Bogotá, in the Interior region of Colombia. All programming decisions were made in Bogotá by the federal government agency, Inravisión. All programs were physically generated from Bogotá, with the signal being bounced off repeater stations on its way to the Northern Coast. The common complaints of the costeños were three-fold:

1. The reception along the Coast was frequently without either picture, sound, or both because of faulty equipment. Costeños believed that the people in charge in Bogotá were not concerned because reception was fine in Bogotá.

2. The government was by and for the people of Bogotá, thus its decisions regarding television did not consider the other regions in Colombia.

3. The programmers of the Interior wrote programs about themselves and thus, the Coastal people were not represented in national telenovelas. Because there were so few channels, they were often forced to watch programming about life in the Interior or not watch television at all.

Children Prefer American Programs

A finding that appeared to lend credence to cultural imperialism was the children's overwhelming preference for U.S. children's programming. However, this can be attributed primarily to the lack of children's programs made in Colombia. The Colombian-made programs were on the order of "Captain Kangaroo" or "Romper Room" filmed in Bogotá with the host and audience of children from that area.

The children observed in this study were allowed freedom, for the most part, to choose programming. But it must be noted that there were only two full-time channels and one regional channel with limited hours from which to choose. Also, it should be noted that the programming had already been reviewed by an Inravisión committee that included Inravisión employees as well as educators and Catholic priests

The children were left with choices during early evening hours that resembled Saturday mornings in the United States: "Smurfs," "Muppet Babies," "Pink Panther," and "Mickey Mouse" among others (see Appendix 3). One of the most popular prime-time programs at the time of this research was "Alf," which was apparently enjoyed by all ages, but especially the children and women. As a result of these programs, the children were susceptible to the

marketing of related products: dolls, notebooks, lunch boxes, and clothing with the program characters emblazoned on them.

However, as the children aged, they began to prefer the programs similar to their parents: the telenovelas, game shows, and music/variety shows that were made in Colombia. These shows were watched as a family, whereas the American children's shows were usually watched without adults. This observation was aided by the information gained in the pilot study, that provided a look at Barranquilla families during the previous two years. Further observation of the host family in 1992, provided added confirmation of the validity of this finding.

Desire for American Lifestyle

A set of findings emerged relating to the desire for American products that could be seen on American-made programs. This could be seen as evidence of cultural envy that might be directly linked to viewing U.S. television programs. The audience members expressed a desire for cars, home furnishings and honest policemen as seen on American-made programs. However, television cannot be considered the only source of information inspiring these desires. Family members living in the United States reported back to the family on the affordability of cars and related stories of decent policemen. Thus the American-made programs were often merely a reminder of what the audience member already knew about the United States.

Admiration for Technical Superiority of American Programs

The audience's stated preference for American-made television programming, because of its technical superiority, would also point to a case for cultural envy except for the fact that during the research observation, it was noted that the American shows commanded less than normal attention

from family members. The uses could be categorized as passing time and entertainment.

The themes and characters of these programs did not provide an agenda for talk, common ground, nor validation for the audience. The special effects, car crashes, and lavish sets of the U.S. shows were commented on as a comparison to the indigenous programs. The comparison did not always favor the American programs over the indigenous programs. The comments reflected either admiration for the higher quality production of the American product or criticism of the U.S. programmers for spending so much money just to create a television program.

Preferred Foreign Programming is Venezuelan Telenovelas

The foreign programming that commanded the most viewer loyalty was the Venezuelan telenovelas or soap operas. The audience for these programs was primarily women even though they were shown in the prime-time hour and in the afternoon. Men and children, for the most part, were not interested. The Colombian government became concerned about the obsession with these foreign telenovelas and in May of 1988 discontinued "Leonela," "Topacio," and the much adored, "Cristal," before the storylines had been completed. There was such outrage across the nation that a letter writing campaign spontaneously developed; Inravisión was forced to rescind its order and resumed the programming (Rodríguez & Tellez, 1989).

An Inravisión employee interviewed in Bogotá in August of 1988 corroborated this story. He said the administration of Inravisión changed every four years or as the presidential administration changed. He also noted, with the request that he remain anonymous, that many of the Inravisión administrative functionaries were affiliated with the privately owned

program-creating companies. These companies were adversely affected by the preference for telenovela imports from Caracas, the capital of Venezuela.

The Venezuelan telenovelas mirrored the U.S. daytime soap operas: the characters were urban professionals, the scenes were shot indoors in lavish homes, apartments, or offices and the relationships among the characters were so intricate that the viewer was compelled to watch every episode to follow the plots. The characters and plots provided an escape for the audience from their everyday lives. Neither the characters nor locales reflected everyday life along the Northern Coast of Colombia. A case could be made that a form of cultural imperialism existed with these imports. However, the societies of Barranquilla and Caracas are in some ways more similar than the societies of Barranquilla and Bogotá. They have similar histories, more ethnic diversity than Bogotá and, since they share the same Caribbean Coast, similar climates and seasons. If a form of cultural imperialism existed because of these imports, it would be more difficult to detect because of these similarities.

The Favorite Program

The most popular program during the period of this research, which cut across both age and sex differences, was "Caballo Viejo" ("The Old Horse"). This program was watched as a ritual by family members with the storylines discussed and the characterizations overflowing into everyday conversations. This telenovela was created by Caracol, a Bogotá production company. It had actors from Bogotá, but the telenovela was filmed along the coast and the story was about life in a coastal village. It had a large national following, and it was especially loved in the coastal region.

Caracol had a successful telenovela in 1987, the year before, that also portrayed coastal village life, "Gallito Ramirez." Both telenovelas did not

resemble typical soap operas. Instead they were more like the American series such as "The Waltons" or "Little House on the Praire" because the cast of characters included all ages, the scenes were filmed outside and indoors, and the stories had moral lessons. The cast of characters were dressed liked costeños, used coastal slang, fanned themselves, and complained of the heat from the coastal climate. The program provided a common ground for the coastal audience.

General Television Apathy

There were many distractions to the television audience along the Northern Coast of Colombia. The climate along the Northern Coast of Colombia is hot and humid. The cooler evenings encourage people to go out of doors, rather than remain in a hot and stuffy house. People prefer to be outside in the evening, strolling along or sitting out front on their patios watching their neighbors stroll by.

Because of preference and economics, most families are extended families with many people of varied ages living under one roof. As far as television viewing, the many family members caused both a distraction in actual viewing and conflicts of preference in choosing programming.

In 1988, programming choices were limited to two national channels and a regional part-time channel. Audience members in this study, from both Barranquilla and Cartagena, complained that there wasn't enough choice of programming offered to them. They said programming was often duplicated on the two national channels, making television rarely worth watching.

Because Barranquilla is such a distance from Bogotá, the reception was frequently interrupted or lost for hours during any adverse atmospheric conditions such as storms. Programs that had been anticipated were

frequently unavailable because of poor broadcast quality. Therefore, the audience found other means of diversion instead of developing strong program affiliations.

Because of these factors: the climate, the large extended families, the availability of only a few channels, and the poor reception along the Coast, prime-time television allegiance was not in strong evidence among the families in this research.

Observations

Cultural Hegemony from the National Center

"Gallito Ramirez" and boxing. During the presidency of Belisario Betancur (1982-1986), Law Number 42 of 1985 was enacted. Known as the Television Statute, its express purpose was to decentralize the governing of television and encourage more Colombian-made programs (Rodriguez & Tellez, 1989). In 1988, at the time of this research, the ratio of national versus international prime time telenovelas had dropped from nine national versus three foreign in 1986 to four national and five foreign in 1988.

However, the law encouraged a broadening of themes in the Colombian-made telenovelas, resulting in the previously mentioned "Gallito Ramirez" and "Caballo Viejo," telenovelas that portrayed coastal village life. The storyline of "Gallito Ramirez" followed a poor coastal man who became a successful boxer.

"Gallito Ramirez" was observed the previous season, in 1987, by this researcher as somewhat of a cult phenomenon. One of the comedic characters was a black man with a blond "Afro," named *Fercho*. One young man in this study said that during Carnival 1988 in February, many men wore *Fercho* wigs as part of their costumes. The character was like a clown, so dressing up like him really fit the spirit of Carnival. A preteen boy amused his older sisters by

walking and talking in the exaggerated style of *Fercho*.

Women in four of the five families discussed the upcoming wedding of the two young actors who portrayed the title character and his love interest, *La Mencha*, in the series. This wedding was covered in the television news, the national news magazine, and the television guide inserts to the local newspaper. One young woman noted that the young girl was from a family in the Interior and the young man was from the coast, just like the characters they portrayed in the telenovela series.

The mother in the Salvador family remembered this series during a boxing match televised from the Forum in Los Angeles featuring "Happy" Lora, a local bantamweight. She said:

"Gallito Ramirez" was the first telenovela I can remember about costeños, and it was about time we had one. I used to watch the Venezuelan telenovelas. They were more enjoyable than the ones from Bogotá. But even those were mostly about the antics of the rich in their high-rise apartments. What do I care about that? That's why "Gallito Ramirez" was so enjoyable, because it portrayed simple village life instead of the constant focus on the rich doctors, lawyers and architects. I wish "Gallito Ramirez" was still on. I really liked that show. (Mother, Salvador Family, August 1988).

She called the final episode, when Gallito Ramirez married *La Mencha*, a big event. She said that probably everyone along the coast watched that episode. She spoke with her mother about the wedding of the two actors that would take place in Cali later that summer.

During the "Happy" Lora fight, the observation was conducted in the Salvador household. The father in the Salvador family said:

The only famous athletes we have along the coast are our boxers. They are very valiant. As costeños we are small people but that's OK for boxers because it's broken down by weight. "Happy" Lora is a Bantamweight just like Gallito Ramirez. We have some pretty good soccer players too but they never get to play on national teams because it's only for the sons of the rich or super talented foreigners (Father, Salvador Family, August 1988).

In the afternoon of the "Happy" Lora fight, Barranquilleros were arranging where and with whom they would see the fight that evening, whether in their home, the home of a friend or in a bar or restaurant. While the program was being broadcast live via satellite, the members of the household being observed that evening were all gathered around the TV set to watch. Also in attendance were some neighbors whose television wasn't working. With the doors open to the street because of the heat, the noise could be heard from the neighborhood simultaneously as the blow by blow action of the match began. The boxing match was enjoyed by the men and women alike across the age spectrum. It would later be the topic of conversation in several of the households. The fighter's life was profiled in the television news and newspapers of the Coast. Boxing was big in Barranquilla and the series about a coastal boxer had enjoyed a cult following.

The journalist and World Cup soccer play-offs. In the Silencio household, a heated conversation arose centering around a news story and a journalist who had been fired. The father of the family had not come home from work yet so the conversation was between the mother and her daughters. The mother thought it was outrageous that the journalist assigned to

Barranquilla was ordered to do a derogatory piece on the city's soccer stadium. She said:

Have you heard this story? It's really scandalous [escandaloso] what they have done. Just because Bogotá wants the World Cup soccer playoffs in their city they have ruined the reputation of a very good journalist. They fired this woman journalist because she refused to denigrate our stadium here, but they said they fired her because she was incompetent. She was the first journalist they sent from Bogotá that was fair in her reporting of coastal news. And anyway, there is nothing wrong with our stadium. Have you been there? It's new and very nice (Mother, Silencio Family, August 1988).

The oldest daughter agreed with her mother. She said the woman had been a good journalist and should not have been fired. The daughter said, "This woman did a good job of representing costeños fairly and seemed to be on our side regarding many issues" (Oldest Daughter, Silencio Family, August 1988). In the daughter's opinion this was rare in national news programming

The mother said Bogotá received an unfair proportion of media coverage as if the rest of the country didn't even exist. The mother began to discuss another problem brewing because of a news story on the proposed natural gas pipeline:

This pipeline is the idea of those rich people in Bogotá, of course. They are the ones who will benefit and we here on the coast are the ones who will lose. The pocket of gas is here on the coast and would last for another 100 years for us costeños. But once the pipeline is built to take it into the Interior, the gas will last only 10 years or so. And to make

matters worse, our tax money and taxes from all over the nation will be used to build the pipeline. This is how Bogotá gets richer while we get poorer (Mother, Silencio Family, August 1988).

The conversation continued the next night when the news story of the journalist was updated. The father was home at this time and voiced his opinions. He was angry that the people from Bogotá would try something so sneaky to ensure that the games continued in Bogotá:

This is a perfect example of how greedy the people from the Interior are. They are so greedy they have ruined our nation. They have ruined our reputation overseas, have they not? When an American thinks of Colombia, do they not think of us all as cocaine dealers? Well, there are very few of these dealers. It is a monopoly of very greedy people from the Interior. They are so greedy for more and more money that they have forsaken all morals. Excessive ambition and the greed that comes with it is characteristic of the people from the Interior. We costeños are not like that. We are more easy going. The people from the Interior say we are lazy and lack ambition, but this is untrue. Anyway, at least we aren't greedy criminals (Father, Silencio Family, August 1988).

During observation in the Cartagena household, the family was watching a newscast about the upcoming centennial celebrations in Bogotá. The oldest daughter said that Cartagena was the first city in Colombia and had celebrated its 450-year celebrations several years back. This young woman was irritated by the extensive coverage and said:

I'm tired of seeing all this detail on the news about the celebrations in Bogotá. They should have covered our ceremonies this well a few years ago. We had tall ships in the harbor and parades. It was much better

than anything they can do in Bogotá. Cartagena is older and has more history and tradition. But that's the way the news is, always everything about Bogotá (Oldest Sister, Cartagena Family, August 1988).

Poor Reception. One old patrician gentlemen, the father of the El Prado family, was not much concerned about the journalist story. He enjoyed the telenovelas about the coastal life but did not voice any feeling of unfairness in the centralized programming decisions. But he became angry if the television reception was disturbed during the news. He cursed the people from the Interior with the derogatory term, *cachacos*, blaming them for the poor reception and the fact that they didn't care about the people along the coast.

During one viewing session with the El Prado family, a children's program lost sound and nobody really noticed. The granddaughter had fallen asleep on her grandfather's lap, the grandmother was decorating a cake, and the aunt was watching the program while she listened with headphones to a daily radio talk show.

In the Salvador family, the youngest child left the cartoon program on when the sound reception was lost, and continued his homework at the dining room table. But the children of the Boston family were unwilling to leave the cartoon program on with sound only and no picture. Members of the host family were quite willing to "watch" their daytime telenovelas with sound only, rather like a radio serial. These instances were always accompanied by cursing the *cachacos* for not being able to properly transmit the television programs. The family in Cartagena received even more sporadic reception, although they were not as bothered by the loss of reception. When this was observed in their home, they turned off the television, brought chairs out to

the porch, and talked about subjects unrelated to either television or the North-South rivalry.

"Dejémonos de Vaina" ["Go Away Troubles"]. This Colombian-made comedy followed the life of two college friends, one from the Northern Coast and one from Bogotá. They were both journalists. The man from the coast was single and lived temporarily in his friend's apartment in Bogotá. An episode of this program was observed during participant observation of the El Prado family. In the episode, the Bogotá friend's wife left the two men in charge of caring for the couple's infant twins while she she went out shopping. The men were busy at their typewriters and busy trying to keep the twins happy. The man from the coast did a better job of caring for the children; he had more patience. The father in the El Prado family responded to this by saying:

Look at how lost the cachaco is in caring for his own children. We costeños are more mellow and have more patience with children. It's a good thing that cachaco has his friend there to help him with this *vaina* [hassle, trouble]. I don't know how the costeño could stand to live in Bogotá. But I guess people have to go wherever they must go, to find a job (Father, El Prado Family, August 1988).

Children's Preferences

The children observed in this research project overwhelmingly preferred U.S. television programming. From the three-year-olds through the teenagers, the children chose American shows as their viewing option. The younger children preferred cartoons such as "Scooby Doo," "Smurfs," "Popeye," and "Heathcliff." The older boys sometimes enjoyed these shows, but preferred "A-Team" (known as "Los Magníficos"), "Wizards," and "Alf." The

older girls liked "Alf," the program about a furry alien and "Small Wonder," the program about a 10-year-old robot girl, and "Little House on the Prairie."

In the Cartagena family, the niece rushed through her homework so she could watch "Alf." But she was greatly disappointed when there were reception problems. She listened to the dialogue without the broadcast picture. The rest of the family went into another room to sit and talk. She continued watching this channel when the next program came on, "Caballo Viejo." This young girl, of nine or so, liked "Caballo Viejo." She was the only one in the family willing to listen to this telenovela's audio without video, following the broadcast of "Alf." The teenaged daughter in the Boston family said she enjoyed "Alf" even more than her younger brothers. She liked Madonna and had a poster of the rock star up in the room she shared with her brothers. She said she hated telenovelas:

The telenovelas are so stupid and they never end. They only have stories about grown-ups and I don't really care about the characters. I like "Alf" because he's so cute. He's funny and very smart. He wants to do whatever the kids do but always ends up confusing things. But he never gets in trouble (Teenaged Daughter, Boston Family, August 1988).

Unlike this young girl, most teenaged girls liked the telenovelas. They watched them with their mothers and sisters and talked about the characters and plots. They said they discussed the programs with their friends at school.

The boys had a stronger preference for the American shows than the girls, watching almost exclusively the American action and fantasy shows. The two younger brothers of the girl mentioned above listed "Wizards" as their favorite show. When it was on during observation of this family, the father talked throughout the entire program. The boys didn't seem to mind or try to

turn the volume up. They just watched it as best they could. When it was over, they asked their father if they should turn it off. He said they should, and they returned to the project they were working on before their favorite program came on: pasting nature stamps in a book that described plants, animals, and minerals. The father said that the nature stamp book was a more productive use of time than watching television; at least the boys were learning something about their world.

In the El Prado family, the adults had gathered in the late afternoon to watch their favorite telenovela, "La Daga de Oro" (The Golden Dagger). But when the three-year-old granddaughter woke up from her nap, they switched to a channel with a cartoon show. The little girl sat on her grandfather's lap and watched the program while her grandparents, mother, and great aunt watched her.

In the host family, the television was often used as a baby sitter to entertain the seven-year-old while his mother did chores. Between the two channels, there was almost always a cartoon show on in the morning and late afternoon hours. A few cartoon shows were Japanese but most were American. The young boy would sit in front of the television with his action toys. He intermittently watched television and played with his toys.

A neighborhood preteen boy said his favorite program was the "A-Team." He was observed at the cabana of the swimming pool waiting for this program to begin. He said it was the best program on television, listing its characters and noting that the van that the team rode around in was fantastic. But when the program began, he watched no more than five minutes and then dove in the pool where he remained for the rest of the afternoon.

"Alf" was popular with young children, older children, and their parents. Survey results showed that "Alf" was the favorite program of the girls, even teenagers. They quickly finished their homework and chores so they would be ready to sit down and watch this program. The affection for "Alf" went beyond just watching the television program. The children wanted Alf dolls, lunch boxes, clothing, keychains, and notebooks. The action figures of the A-Team members were popular with the young boys. The younger children wanted the Muppet dolls and Mickey Mouse sheets, clothing, and dolls. Parents, especially mothers who also enjoyed the "Alf" programs, indulged their children to the extent that the family budget allowed. Most items were purchased as birthday gifts or as needed anyway for school, although they were priced higher than similar products.

Desire for American Lifestyle

Automobiles. In three out of the five families observed, the men or older teenaged boys made comments regarding the profusion of cars in American detective programs. In Colombia, in 1988, foreign cars cost twice what they would in the United States and there was no domestic manufacturer. Considering that the average wage was roughly one-tenth of an American salary, cars were prohibitively expensive. Only two out of the five families owned an automobile, even though four out of the five owned their own home.

The following comments were made regarding the desire to own an automobile. These statements were made exclusively by men. None of these men owned their own car. The 18-year-old son in the Salvador family was watching an episode of "Hunter" and said:

I wish I had just one of the cars that they crash on this show. How can they afford to waste so many cars? Does everyone, I mean everyone,

really drive their own car in the United States? That would be great (Middle Son, Salvador Family, August 1988).

The 22-year-old son of the Silencio family was amazed that a man about his age drove a brand new car in an episode of "Miami Vice":

I can't believe that such a young man can afford a fancy new car like that. I will never be able to buy such a car. I would have to save for years before I could even buy an old car that hardly even worked (Oldest Son, Silencio Family, August 1988).

A boy of 13 said that the van in "The A-Team" was "muy chevre" (very cool). The father in the Cartagena family enjoyed "Hunter" for its action but felt that the destruction of so many cars was a waste. This gentleman did not own a car but was proud to point out that he owned his own home and had sent four of his children through high school and three through college. The brother-in-law, living in the upwardly mobile middle-class family of the Boston neighborhood, was curious to know the theme of this study. At the end of the observation period, the theme of cultural imperialism was briefly explained to him. He was amused, noting that his desire for a car had nothing to do with watching a silly show like "Alf" or "Hunter." He said that the economics of his country were so bad that he was a trained architect who worked as a janitor, and that it would take him 10 years to save up enough to buy a car. Meanwhile, he added, he had a cousin in New York who was able to buy a used car within a year.

Home furnishings and clothes. In two out of the five families the women discussed an appreciation of the homes portrayed in foreign programming. The grandmother in the Salvador household, who had been the maid in a wealthy family, told her daughter how she wished their home looked

like the high-rise apartment in the Venezuelan soap opera, "Cristal." The daughter, a beautician and chief breadwinner for the family, told her mother:

I like my house just the way it is. Besides, that furniture is all too modern and will be out of style in no time. Who could afford to buy new furniture all the time just because it went out of style? We're not doctors and lawyers here in this family like in the telenovelas (Mother, Salvador Family, August 1988).

Her mother laughed and agreed. She then noted that she preferred to live on ground level anyway rather than in a multistory building. This family did not own its own home; it rented a small house in the outskirts of Barranquilla. In the Silencio family the three teenaged daughters chatted about the clothes and home furnishings portrayed in "Dynasty" and "Cristal." They included their mother in the conversation as if she were another sister. These programs did not hold the attention of these girls. They wandered in and out of the living room where the television was located. They did their homework, housework, cooking, or sewing while the programs were aired.

Honest policemen. The father in the Boston family said that he wished the Colombian policemen were as honest as the ones portrayed in the U.S. detective programs. He noted that the way policemen demanded bribes of common ordinary citizens was criminal. He said this as he watched an episode of "Starsky and Hutch," an old American series, but it might be noted that he had a brother-in-law in New York and seemed to know many things about American culture.

However, the father in Cartagena, who had never been further away than a few cities along the coast, also made a similar comment. He was

watching "Hunter" and said that, except for the criminals, the people in this program always seemed happy to see a policeman, never afraid. He spoke of the general distrust that he and his friends had for policemen in his city of Cartagena.

The father in the El Prado household said that policemen and other petty officials were corrupt throughout Colombia, but that it was worse along the coast. He said that, Bucaramanga for example, the capital of the state known for growing coffee and pineapples, had very honest policemen like in the American detective shows such as "Hunter."

Admiration for the Technical Superiority of American Programs. The comments regarding the production quality of the programs were made by men about detective shows such as "Hunter" and "Miami Vice." The boys were impressed by the special effects of such programs as "Wizards" and "Starman." The women appreciated the costumes and sets of the American imports such as "Dallas" and "Dynasty."

Preference for Venezuelan Telenovelas

Evidence of the preference for Venezuelan telenovelas was mainly from data from the questionnaires. There were a total of 52 questionnaires. Of the 13 women who were more than 25 years old, 11 said that their favorite foreign programming was the Venezuelan soap operas. Two men also answered that these regional imports, which were shown primarily in the afternoons, were their favorite foreign programming.

This preference was observed during the afternoon viewing hours within the host family household. However, observation of the five families was during evening hours when programming choices were between Colombian-made telenovelas or U.S. sitcoms. "Cristal" was listed as the favorite

Venezuelan telenovela. It was about a mother and her grown children. One of her sons wanted to be a priest. The telenovela family was wealthy and lived in a high-rise apartment in an urban setting like Caracas. The stories often glorified the life of a Catholic priest.

The Favorite Program, "Caballo Viejo"

Taken from a favorite piece of literature, "Caballo Viejo" was about a village affected by the circus coming to town and two circus members staying until the circus returned the next year. It was nationally and internationally applauded, and even won awards (Rodriguez & Tellez, 1989). It was enjoyed nationally but especially along the coast. Out of the 52 respondents, 12 people listed it as their favorite program. News was the next favorite, with nine responses, and "Alf" had three. But it was the only program that all family members liked to some degree, gathering together for the nightly episodes. "Caballo Viejo" was unlike other telenovelas in format or cast of characters. The main character was a 50-year-old farmer from the coast. In one sequence of episodes, the old man went to Bogotá and was somewhat confused and intimidated by the size of the Capital.

The father in the Silencio family said he could especially relate to this. His wife was from Bogotá and they used to travel there to visit her family. He said that he never really enjoyed Bogotá:

Whenever I go to Bogotá I feel just like Epifanio, because that city is so overwhelming. It is so big and everybody is always rushing around. The people there are often rude. I feel self-conscious and out of place. We don't go so much anymore, now that my wife's parents have died. And that's just fine with me (Father, Silencio Family, August 1988).

This show was popular with men as well as women, a departure for telenovelas in general. Young children also liked the show, because it had comedy interspersed with the standard romance themes. One character, named Reincarnación, was especially amusing to the children because of his wild and erratic craziness. The eight-year-old son in the Boston family was laughing at an episode in which Reincarnación is at the end of a pier making a melodramatic speech before jumping into the river to drown or save the missing girl. He jumps into the water to discover it's only three feet deep. The boy laughed and said:

Did you see that? That is just like Reincarnación. He is always doing something stupid. He's the best part of "Caballo Viejo." The rest is just like all the other telenovelas. But this guy is really funny. If he just walks into the room, it's funny, but when he talks it's even funnier (Youngest Son, Boston Family, August 1988).

Families gathered for this program, chatting throughout the previous telenovela and commanding silence of fellow family members during "Caballo Viejo." The jokes were funny to all ages and both sexes, the characters were endearing and the plots were discussed later among children at play and people at work. The family members in the Silencio household became very animated in trying to recap the year's worth of episodes to the researcher. They not only enjoyed watching the program while it was on, but were proud that there was a telenovela of such quality that depicted an aspect of life along the Coast.

The father of young children from the Boston neighborhood, noted that it was the only program worth watching that was made in Colombia:

The other shows are made for the "cachacos" to enjoy, but this is a show we costeños can enjoy. And our children can watch it too, because the stories are about regular decent people. It's the only telenovela I would let my children watch; the other ones have such weird relationships, and the stories are of no use to children. Besides, "Caballo Viejo" has humor in it, which the children enjoy (Father, Boston Family, August 1988).

During observation with the family in Cartagena, "Caballo Viejo" was on a channel that was only receiving sound and no picture. Some of the family members continued to listen to the dialogue, while the father and older son went outside on the front patio. After "Caballo Viejo," the rest of the family joined them outside.

The main character, Epifanio del Cristo was portrayed by Carlos Muñoz. Although he was a well-known actor from Bogotá, one of the mothers being observed said he did a fairly accurate imitation of the costeño accent. In the character of Epifanio, he wore a straw cowboy hat, typical of those worn by farmers along the coast. The straw hat became very popular along the coast, and elsewhere in Colombia. This mother's young son had one of these hats and was encouraged to dance a typical folkloric dance, when he brought the hat out to show it off. The proud father noted that:

You can tell that my son is a costeño by how well he can dance. You'll notice when you go to Bogotá that the people there don't dance very well; the cachacos, are stiff-as-boards. They haven't any idea how to dance. If you see someone at a party in Bogotá that's a good dancer, chances are he's a costeño (Father, Boston Family, August 1988).

The father then asked his son to imitate the way someone from Bogotá dances, and the boy danced stiffly like a robot. The family was amused and nodded in agreement at the boy's accurate imitation of a cachaco.

During observation of the Cartagena family, the reception was so poor that "Caballo Viejo" could not be seen, although there was audio. The young niece continued to listen to the program, but the other family members left the television-viewing area. However, the family members in the Cartagena household said they enjoyed this program. The father said:

One can tell that "Caballo Viejo" doesn't cost as much to make as those American shows like "Hunter." There are no car chases or fancy settings. It is shot right here along the coast. But in spite of this, the stories and characterizations [argumentos y personajes] are very convincing so I guess it doesn't matter (Father, Cartagena Family, August 1988).

General Television Apathy

There were many examples of the audience's lack of commitment to watching television. Family members often expressed a preference for a show and then ignored it during its broadcast. Even if the program were their stated preference, television did not take precedence over other activity. One example was the boy who eagerly waited to watch his favorite program, "A-Team." The program was quickly abandoned for another activity, playing in the pool.

The show most watched in Barranquilla, as a family, was "Caballo Viejo." But, with the other programs, there was always some or all the members of the family wandering in and out of the television viewing room. The men paid less attention to the romantic telenovelas. The women paid less

attention to the American detective shows. The women performed tasks in the evening that took them away from the television and into the kitchen, dining room or elsewhere.

Most adults said they enjoyed the news and watched with full attention. But in most of the households the television was ignored or turned off after the news had ended. The father in the Boston household said the viewing choices were so slim it was pathetic and utterly ludicrous. He pointed to the "Jetsons" cartoon show that followed the news in prime time viewing hours and a soap opera from Venezuela on the other channel. He turned the set off, lamenting that:

Look at how silly [pocio] these programs are. I would rather have another hour of news. I wish we had more channels to choose from. My wife's cousin lives in New York and there they have 32 channels to choose from. Imagine that! But here the cable is so expensive. It cost nearly a year's wage for the average person, just to install it. It's not really worth it (Father, Boston Family, August 1988).

A third channel available was Telecaribe, a regional coastal channel. Many stated in their questionnaires that they liked the local coverage of sports, news, talk shows, and beauty contests. This channel broadcast only during weekends and five hours each weekday evening. The programs looked like those on a community access channel in the United States. While many families did leave Telecaribe on, it did not hold anyone's attention very long.

The matriarch of the El Prado family said she had never really watched television at all during the day because she was too busy and the selection was so limited and juvenile. But she admitted that since her husband had retired, they had begun to watch the afternoon telenovelas together:

I used to be so busy during the day when the kids were younger, I never watched the soap operas. Later I got involved with my ceramics, then cake decorating. Now I just do a few cakes once in a while since my husband retired. He likes to watch television in the afternoons and likes me to accompany him (Mother, El Prado Family, August 1988).

Her husband said he was embarrassed to admit it, but he liked "A-Team." He liked the way the stories always had a moral even if the plots were farfetched.

Families were easily distracted from television with the daily activities of everyday family life. When the Boston family was watching "Alf," a favorite show of the children in the family, they were called into the pantry to watch the infant niece playing in her bath. She was washed and dressed, while the entire family looked on, in preparation for the "ceremony" of government registration that was to take place sometime that evening. The government official arrived, took the baby's footprint, issued a "cedula" (social security number), and gave the family a certificate. The television was left on without an audience.

In this family and the others, the heat indoors after a hot day drove family members outside for a stroll or to sit on the patio. Some family members remained indoors watching television programs and wandered outdoors to chat. They didn't necessarily come outside during commercials. Many people were observed enjoying the commercials and commenting on them.

In the Salvador family, the 18-year-old son was known as a television addict. Because the other family members weren't as attached to television, they allowed him to take the television into his room. It was brought into the living room again for the much publicized boxing match. This young man

liked a wide variety of programs: Colombian musicals, American detective shows, cartoons, and Venezuelan soap operas. His favorites were the Colombian musical shows.

The father in the Cartagena family said he used television to relax after a hard day's work. He confessed that he would watch more television if there were more choices. The choices were limited to two channels and, if there was poor reception as there had been all that week, he noted it could be limited to just one channel. And he said with irony:

Even though we are so close to Telecaribe, we can't get it to come in very well because of interference from the nearby mountains here on the coast. It is a shame because they have programs about local events. It would be great if we could watch it (Father, Cartagena, August 1988).

This man said in his questionnaire that he only watched one hour of television per day to keep up with the news. But, in fact, he watched the American detective shows such as "Hunter" for relaxation. He watched more television than anyone else in the family.

The lack of programming choices, the poor reception, and the distractions of normal family life in a large extended family caused a general apathy to television. It was difficult to establish strong program loyalties. Family members could interrupt and take precedence over television in almost all cases. Lack of choices in channels and lack of appealing programs allowed people to easily walk away from the television. Disinterest in television was also created when even the broadcast itself couldn't be counted on because of poor transmission quality.

Analysis of Television Uses

Entertainment, Pass-Time, Regulate Time, Background Noise, Anxiety Reduction

Children used American children's programming for entertainment and as background noise while they played with other toys or worked on projects. This was observed by Leoncio Barrios, as well, in his study of television and Venezuelan families (1988). Young children were placed in front of the television in the late afternoons to be entertained by U.S. or Japanese cartoon shows and to pass the time while their mothers prepared the evening meal.

The television was left on all day in places of business such as beauty parlors, dentist offices, and cafés as background noise. A fortune teller, living in a poor neighborhood, had an expensive color TV that she invited her clients to watch as they waited for their appointments. The daytime programming schedule was filled with Colómbian and Venezuelan telenovelas, as well as very old American sitcoms.

Several men admitted that television was used for relaxation. For this purpose, the men preferred the American detective shows and the Colómbian music/variety shows. The women did not mention using television for relaxation, although some mentioned that they enjoyed taking a break in the middle of the day to watch the Venezuelan telenovelas. The American program, "Alf," was enjoyed as family entertainment, although it did not create any ensuing agenda for talk.

Information Dissemination, Agenda for Talk, Family Solidarity

According to responses to the questionnaires, the news was listed by nine people out of fifty-two as their favorite program, making it the second

favorite program next to "Caballo Viejo." The families watched the news together. The young children paid the least attention. But the older children participated in the conversations generated by the news. The national and international news was broadcast from Bogotá, but Telecaribe provided a local news program. In answering the question, "Do you watch the news?" 50 people answered "yes." Two teenaged girls said they did not watch the news. The news preferred was national, although five people said they preferred the local news on Telecaribe. Watching the news together created an agenda for talk as well as bringing the family together and disseminating information.

"Caballo Viejo" created an agenda for talk on various occasions. Once, a man returned from a business trip and asked his wife to tell him what had happened on the soap opera when he was away. Whether he sincerely wanted to know, or was just making conversation, the program had created an agenda for talk. A teenaged girl who needed to go to the library asked her sisters to fill her in on that evening's episode when she returned. During the program's commercials on one evening of observation, these three sisters and their mother tried to fill the researcher in on all the minute details of plot and characters. The telenovela, "Gallito Ramirez," was off the air but continued to create an agenda for talk in 1988 because of the wedding of its principals. During the broadcast of the "Happy" Loro boxing match, the audience was once again reminded of "Gallito Ramirez" and it became an agenda for talk.

The U.S. programs did not create an agenda for talk. Neither the plots nor the characters were discussed after the programming. One man's viewing of American programs could be attributed to information dissemination because he enjoyed watching the detective programs to see the various American locales.

Role Reinforcement, Validation, Experience Illustration, Common Ground

Among the reasons given for why "Caballo Viejo" was their favorite program were the standard "I just like it" and "It's entertaining." However, some answers were more expressive including the following:

1. "Because they do a good job of imitating the local customs and speech of the people along the coast."
2. "Because in this show, one encounters the customs of our area in every single episode."
3. "Because it is so enjoyable, humorous, and based on a true story. It's like real life."
4. "Because this program depicts coastal life so well and it's entertaining."
5. "Because it's romantic and portrays our culture and countryside."

Responses as to why "Alf" was their favorite show included: "He's cute," "It's funny," and "It's amusing." This American program was used for entertainment purposes only. In contrast, the responses above support the finding that the Colombian-made telenovela, depicting life in a coastal village, was used as common ground, validation, and experience illustration.

Limitations of This Study

Effects of Foreign Programming v. Effects of Close Proximity to the United States

A problem arose in this study in trying to distinguish between the effects that foreign television programs might have had on the Northern Coastal people and the effects that may have been a result of their close proximity to the United States. The Caribbean Coast of Colombia is only a few

hours from Miami by plane. Thus, even the poorest of families knew of someone or actually had a relative who had gone to Miami or New York. These travellers brought back stories of the cultural differences as well as a taste for brand named items that were only available on the black market in Colombia. Reebok and Nike tennis shoes, Sony and Mitsubishi televisions, and Camels and Marlboro cigarettes were all contraband items that were highly sought status symbols at the time of this research. Another cultural input were the Spanish language versions of U.S. magazines that illustrated the latest styles of clothing, home furnishings, and automobiles.

Problems Inherent in Small Population Ethnographic Studies

The results of this study are limited (1) by the small sample observed over a short period of time and (2) because ethnographic research is time intensive. Time and resources limited the researcher to the small number of families that could be observed, thus limiting the amount of data collected. The data is qualitative and narrative in form, making it more cumbersome than survey response data. Because of the small sample, care must be taken not to generalize the results. The findings are applicable only to the five families observed in this study.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study proposed to find evidence in the viewing patterns of the audience observed that might support or reject the theory of cultural imperialism caused by television program imports. An attempt was made to catalogue the uses of television among the five families in the study that might reveal any evidence of enculturation.

Interpretation of Data

Summary of Findings

The findings in this study do not support the claim of cultural imperialism. The data indicated that the adult audience members did not prefer American-made programs. They preferred the indigenous programs or the regional imports. The children preferred the U.S. children's programs because there was a lack of availability of indigenous children's programs. Observations revealed that the uses for American-made programs was for their entertainment or technical values. The programs did not create significant effects beyond the viewing time.

Data from this study does suggest a different theory: cultural hegemony from the urban elite of Bogotá. The audience along the Northern Coast of Colombia reported that Bogotá was not responsive to their region with regards to television broadcasts. They complained that the programs developed in Colombia were aimed at the tastes of the people from Bogotá. They complained that the news agenda was developed to interest the people from the Interior.

Observation of this audience in the pilot study and the final participant-observation revealed that the audience members developed a strong affiliation for the two Colómbian-made telenovelas set in towns along the Northern Coast. Observation revealed that the favorite foreign import was the Venezuelan telenovelas. During observation of the host family in 1992, the favorite foreign import was another regional telenovela, a soap opera from Mexico instead of Venezuela. Although these telenovelas were predominantly the favorite of women, there were also some men who said they preferred these telenovelas over other imports.

The men and children had the strongest allegiance to the American-made programs. But it must be noted that this allegiance would not be considered strong by American standards. Nearly any social or individual activity could preempt the viewing of a favorite television program. This was observed behavior for adults and children.

Another factor adding to this weak allegiance was the frequent problems with television reception along the Northern Coast. Frequently the audio, the video, or both aspects of the broadcast were completely missing. Favorite programs were missed week after week, thus weakening the allegiance to these programs and to television in general. The television audience members in Barranquilla and Cartagena complained often of the frequent broadcast problems. They blamed the bureaucrats in Bogotá for not caring enough about the people in other regions of Colómbia, especially the Northern Coast.

Uses for American TV Imports

The U.S. programs were used as entertainment, relaxation, and to pass time. This can be interpreted as transitory uses that had slight effect or

transitory effects on the viewing audience. The level of involvement was low. Men preferred these programs more than women. But it must be noted that the indigenous programming was mostly soap operas and, in general, men do not prefer soap operas. Men liked the American programs for their action and special effects; they were entertaining.

The children's preference for these programs can be somewhat attributed to the lack of Colombian-made children's programs. The desire for products related to these programs, such as dolls, key chains, and lunch boxes, can be viewed as a lasting effect and therefore, enculturation. However, in this study, the researcher found that these trends were short-lived and prompted by a lack of similar products available with indigenous icons. Also, the desire for Mickey Mouse dolls pre-dates television in Colombia.

Since the uses of American programming were transitory, the effects observed were small or negligible. The desire to buy American advertising specialties or the envy for the ease of obtaining a car would be seen by Schiller (1969, 1973, 1989) as an intrusion into a foreign culture by American transnational corporations.

However, the desire for automobiles, as also the desire for honest policemen, can be looked at as a natural desire of anyone in the modern world. The economic situation in Colombia made an automobile a luxury for only the wealthy. This situation created an envy that already existed because of an aspect of the culture that was unsatisfactory. As Pool (1977) noted, if the present culture is satisfactory the audience will not look abroad.

Uses for Colombian-Made Telenovelas

The audience members in this study used the Colombian-made telenovelas as an agenda for talk, common ground, validation, role enactment,

family solidarity, and experience illustration. These are all social uses (Lull, 1988) that transcend the actual viewing period. The level of involvement in the program was high. Their preference for indigenous programming supported Pool's contention that locally produced media has certain natural advantages that endear it to the local audience (1977).

The advantages of similarity in customs, speech, clothing, and countryside were all present in "Caballo Viejo," creating a common ground for the entire family. The conversations after the program are proof that it transcended the viewing sessions. The cowboy hat of the main character became a recognizable piece of clothing, to be commented on by friends and family. This program was a part of the Coastal culture in 1988.

Uses for Venezuelan Telenovelas

Women liked soap operas and men liked action series and sports. Men used television in the evening to relax. Women did not relax in the evening because they were too busy waiting on their families. They reported that they watched telenovelas in the afternoon to take a break from their chores and relax for a half hour.

Cultural Hegemony from the National Center

The finding of cultural hegemony from the urban elite was not anticipated prior to the observations. This finding was not revealed in the surveys conducted before the five families were chosen for observation. A brief review of the literature will be provided in this section to define and clarify terms.

Slack and Allor (1983) defined hegemony as, "the practices through which subordinate classes or subcultures come to understand themselves and the social whole in terms laid down by the dominant class/culture" (p. 216).

Because Colombian television is centrally located in Bogotá and centrally managed by the national government, the possibility of hegemony within the nation is present.

Hoffman-Reim (1987) saw the possibility that the national identity might need to be eclipsed by a regional identity, to provide better representation regarding media programming. Hamelink (1983), Rogers and Shoemaker (1971), and Straubhaar (1988) noted that the power elite within nations could gain and maintain power over the media to maintain their elevated position in the status quo. Hallin (1987), discussing the media in the United States, noted that:

The media play the role of maintaining the dominant political ideology: they propagate it, celebrate it, interpret the world in its terms, and, at times, alter it to adapt to the demands of legitimation in a changing world. At the same time, the concept of hegemony is employed to explain the "behavior" of the media, the process of cultural production itself. The media themselves are subject to the hegemonic process. The dominant ideology shapes the production of news and entertainment; this explains why the media can be expected to function as agents of legitimation, despite the fact that they are independent of direct political control (p. 4).

De Lima (1988), discussing the media in Brazil, stressed that one company had a virtual monopoly of the Brazilian television media. De Lima noted that:

TV Globo became the key mediator between the ruling bloc and the dominated class. This role makes TV Globo one of the most powerful

political and ideological forces, central to constructing and maintaining the hegemony of the Brazilian ruling bloc (p. 115).

Rogers and Antola noted that the Mexican counterpart to TV Globo was Televisa, which had also become a virtual monopoly because of favorable government policies and their ability to create popular telenovelas (p. 27).

The Colómbian television industry is unlike the U.S., Mexican, or Brazilian model because the government is actively involved in managing the television media. Aliskey (1981) noted that "whereas the newspapers of Colómbia are free of government, television news does have a degree of government guidance." The government agency, Inravisión, has the power to grant programming companies the right to produce news and entertainment for national broadcast. Inravisión officials and programming company directors control the content of news and entertainment for the entire nation. Lewis (1992) noted that:

Because members of the dominant class control the base or material structures and processes of social relations, they have a distinct edge in ideological battles. . . but material control of the base is not enough; the ideological hegemony of the dominant must be developed and maintained through existing ideologies (p. 281).

Lewis discussed the need for more systematic empirical research to reveal "just how this hegemonic process of cultural leadership manifests itself, especially through mass media" (p. 281). One such study by Piepe, Charlton, and Morey (1990), looked at frequent viewing of soap operas in England. The authors noted that, "Television soap operas play a central role in fixing new images of the good life, 'levering up' working-class occupational

and consumer images while retaining the externals of working-class accent and community" (p. 29).

The development of soap operas in Bogotá about life in Bogotá was a direct, or at least indirect, attempt at cultural synchronization of the other regions of Colombia. The people along the Northern Coast of Colombia considered themselves culturally different from those of the Interior as indicated by their conversations. They considered Bogotá to be out of touch with their television viewing needs and noncommittal in promising any significant change.

They expressed the opinion that programming was forced on them that was of specific interest to the people of Bogotá, but of little or no interest to them. Since there were only two channels and one part-time channel, there were few options. The telenovelas about coastal life, "Gallito Ramirez" and "Caballo Viejo," were token offerings of regionally-based storylines. There was no telenovela in 1992 to portray the coastal family. The predominance of programming made in Bogotá, about the life there can be interpreted as cultural hegemony from the urban elites of the national center.

The power elite of Bogotá controlled the manufacturing of domestic television programs and the decisions regarding which foreign programs would be broadcast. The opinions expressed by the coastal people in this study indicated that the choices made by the power elite were not the national consensus because:

1. The content of the Colombian-made programs reflected the culture of the urban elite of Bogotá.
2. The news agenda was developed to serve the needs of the urban elite.

3. The imported programming was chosen based on the preferences of the urban elite of Bogotá.

The intention of Inravisión, as interpreted by Pierce (1979), was to provide culturally uplifting programming for the Colombian people. But who decides what is culturally uplifting? Who are the Colombians that Inravisión is aiming to culturally uplift? Colombia is a large country with a diverse population in several distinctly different regions. The threat of domestic hegemony is very real in a large nation where the power over media decisions is centrally located. Whether by plan or by default, it is easy for the media planners to ignore the outermost regions.

Tunstall (1977) noted that the cultural imperialism theory did not include the effects of regional importers. The findings of this study revealed that the regional imports of telenovelas from Venezuela were a form of regional imperialism. They portrayed a level of society above the average person in Barranquilla or Cartagena. The viewing of these programs created an envy for the clothing and home furnishings portrayed in these programs. McAnany (1988) noted that:

The majority of Latin American countries have large urban populations which are being incorporated into a new urban society through the mass media, and especially television (p. 10).

McAnany warned that the process of incorporation of popular culture "operating in an unequal society" could have a hegemonic structure (p. 10). Elisabeth Bueros-Debray (1984) noted in her introduction to the autobiography by nobel prize winner, Rigoberta Menchú:

We Latin Americans are only too ready to denounce the unequal relations that exist between ourselves and North America, but we tend

to forget that we too are oppressors and that we too are involved in relations that can only be described as *colonial* . Without any fear of exaggeration, it could be said that, especially in countries with a large Indian population, there is an internal colonialism which works to the detriment of the indigenous population (p. xii).

Hamelink (1983) commented that the threat of the local elite controlling the media, existed in developing nations. De Lima (1988) warned of the dangers present when a powerful media giant was aligned with the government. He noted that TV Globo of Brazil was involved in many instances of distorting the news to help the ruling power stay in power. He cited one instance when TV Globo failed to report the growing popularity of the political opposition. Rallies that amassed as many as 300,000 people were not reported in the evening news. De Lima noted that:

In its news, and other programming as well, the Globo network was instrumental in creating, maintaining, and reproducing the hegemonic climate of euphoria through a distorted view of life in the country, a view that legitimated the socioeconomic structure in which the network itself was inserted. In serving the regime through misinformation, TV Globo was serving itself, working to consolidate its monopoly and the conglomerate of enterprises to which it belongs (p. 123).

The power elite in the national government and programming companies of Bogotá distorted the news by providing stories that glorified Bogotá, such as the news coverage of its 450-year centennial celebrations. The national newscasts were designed for the benefit of the Bogotá elite. They attempted to distort the news in the outer regions if there was a conflict of interest, such as the competition for the site of the World Cup soccer play-offs.

The majority of telenovelas from Bogotá were patterned after the other regional telenovelas from Venezuela or México; they were about rich doctors and lawyers living in high-rise apartments in an urban setting. The centrally managed system of directing the television media gave immense power to the elite. The power to decide the content of news, the content of entertainment programs, and the choice of which foreign programs would be allowed created an atmosphere where domestic cultural hegemony was possible. The audience members in this study reported that they perceived this domestic hegemony.

Contributions to the Literature

Cultural Imperialism

This study, like others such as Ang (1985), Liebes and Katz (1990), and Rogers and Antola (1985) found that there was not much support for the theory of cultural imperialism. U.S. programming was not found to have an adverse affect on the five costeño families. Perhaps if the sample were larger or the observation time was longer, there may have appeared some signs of enculturation. However, the audience members in these five families did not watch the U.S. programs such as "Dallas" and "Dynasty" that are representative of programs accused of creating a setting for cultural imperialism. They did not develop strong allegiances to the U.S. programs. Even their favorite show, "Alf," was not as important as family conversations or going to the library. However, this study did reveal the perceived threat of cultural hegemony from the national center as perceived by the audience members in the study.

Cultural Hegemony from the National Center

This study revealed that an audience in the outer region of a nation could perceive the threat of enculturation from the urban elites in the capital. This finding adds to the understanding of cultural hegemony from the urban

elites within a nation as well as to the understanding of how the television media, if centrally managed by the government, can ignore, disenfranchise, or even enculturate the audience in the outer regions.

Uses and Gratifications

This study revealed that uses and gratifications for television in the families observed in Northern Colombia resemble the results of similar studies in England (Morely, 1986) and the United States (Lull, 1990). Women liked soap operas, children liked animated programs, and men liked action series and sports programs.

Data from this research suggest that the audience is active in making choices about media consumption as proposed by Rubin and Windahl (1986), McQuail, Blumler, and Brown (1972) and Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1974). Data indicated that the audience was not content with the limited choices they had regarding programming.

Ethnographic Research

The survey data from this study did not reveal the existence of domestic hegemony. The questionnaires did not provide data that would have suggested this theory. Cultural hegemony from the urban elites of the national center was uncovered during the participant-observation phase of the research.

Lewis (1992) stressed the need for qualitative research, "particularly participant observation, which moves the researcher more into the day-to-day context of subjects and helps the researcher to avoid relying merely on the self-reports of subjects through interviews" (p. 286). The usefulness of ethnographic research is that it uncovers what empirical research was unable to reveal. Lindlof and Meyer (1987) had noted that qualitative research was valuable for its ability to encourage theory development.

Directions for Future Research

Further ethnographic research on television audiences in developing nations would be valuable in validating or refuting the findings of this study. Research that followed several families over a period of years would advance the understanding of children's changing television viewing habits. A larger scale study of this Latin American city or others would improve the understanding of our neighbors in this hemisphere.

Research on the indigenous programming companies of Colombia and other Latin American nations could prove valuable in revealing the level of influence that exists among the writers, producers, and directors with respect to Hollywood. A review of studies on the "Brazilianization" of the soap opera by Herold (1988) noted that the format was copied verbatim, but the characters and storylines were particular to Brazil.

Future research in developing nations outside of the Americas would provide a valuable comparison to test the effects of media imperialism without the effects of close proximity to the United States. Research in other developing nations with centralized broadcast control would be helpful to test for evidence of urban elite dominance of outer regions.

Research conducted by Inravision throughout Colombia to assess the needs of its citizens on a regional basis would provide valuable information for developing program formats that would serve all the citizens, including people in remote regions. Permission to broadcast one or two commercial channels in Colombia would create a stronger environment of competition and thus improve the quality and quantity of programming choices available in Colombia.

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APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE/Households

Good morning/afternoon. My name is Jan Warne. As a student in international communications, I am interested in the television of your country. You could help me understand it better by answering a few questions. It will take up about 10 to 15 minutes of your time and your answers will remain strictly confidential. Do you mind if I record our conversation so I can be certain to catch all the important points?

1) What is your favorite television program?

2) When did you see it last? _____

3) How often is it on? _____

4) How often do you watch it?
always ____ often ____ sometimes ____ seldom ____

5) Tell me briefly, if possible, why you like this show.

6) Do you watch this show with family and/or friends?

N ____ Y ____ if Y, who _____

7) Do you ever find yourself talking to others about the characters or the stories in this show?
often ____ sometimes ____ seldom ____

8) Which show do you think is the most popular TV show in Barranquilla today?

9) What do you think of it? [do not ask if 88 = 81]

10) When commercials come on do you watch them? _____

talk to others? _____ leave the room? _____

11) Which commercials annoy you? _____
 inform you? _____
 entertain you? _____

12) What was the last product you bought because you saw it on TV?

13) Do you have any children? N _____ Y _____

14) if Y, how many? _____

15) what are their ages? _____

16) Are there any characters on TV you would want your daughter/s to grow up to be like? _____

17) Why? _____

18) Are there any characters on TV you would want your son/s to grow up to be like? _____

19) Why? _____

20) On an average, how many hours a day do you watch TV? _____

21) Do you watch television news? N _____ Y _____

22) if Y, Do you watch mainly for local news? _____

 national news? _____

 international news? _____

23) Do you think the coverage is accurate?

 always _____ sometimes _____ never _____

24) Do you read the newspaper? always _____ sometimes _____ never _____

25) Do you watch any shows from other countries? Y _____ N _____

26) Which ones? _____

QUESTIONNAIRE/Households

27) What is it you like about them?

28) Do you ever find yourself wanting to visit the places portrayed in these shows? Y ____ N ____

29) Is there a character in any of these shows you might want to switch places with for a day? _____

30) What is it about her/his lifestyle that you like?

31) Do you think these shows realistically portray life abroad?

Not at all _____ A little _____ Very realistic _____

32) Have you ever travelled abroad? N ____ Y ____ if

33) When? _____ Where _____

34) Have you travelled much in Colombia? N ____ Y ____

35) Where? _____

36) Were you born in Barranquilla? Y ____ N ____

37) if N, Where were you born? _____

38) if Y, Were your parents also born in B'quilla? Y ____ N ____

39) Were any of your grandparents born here? Y ____ N ____

40) What was the last grade of school you completed?

grammar _____ some high school _____ high school diploma _____

some college _____ college degree _____

41) Are you currently employed? Y ____ N ____

42) if Y, What is your occupation? _____

43) What would you estimate as the family's income? _____

QUESTIONNAIRE/Households

44) How many people live in your home? _____

45) Do you own a car? Y _____ N _____

ask questions #46-49 if "[telenovela costefia]" not
already the response to #1 or #8]

46) Are you familiar with the show, "[telenovela costefia]"? Y _____ N _____

47) if Y, What is your opinion of the stories?

48) if Y, What is your opinion of the characters?

49) Does it accurately reflect life/lifestyles of people on
the northern coast of Colombia?

Not at all _____ Somewhat _____ Very much _____

50) Do you have any opinions regarding the value or purpose of TV?

[estimate the following without asking the respondent]

51) Age? 18-25 _____ 26-35 _____ 36-45 _____ 46-55 _____

56-65 _____ over 65 _____

52) Sex? Female _____ Male _____

53) Dwelling? Apartment _____ Small house _____

Large house _____ Estate/ Apt Bldg _____

54) Neighborhood? Poor _____ Moderate _____

Well-to-do _____ Wealthy _____

55-56) _____ [Serial # of the INTERVIEW]

APPENDIX 2

Buenos días/tarde. Me llamo Jan Varne. Como estudiante en comunicaciones internacional, me interesa la televisión de su país. Usted puede ayudarme en entender mejor a contestarme a estas pocas preguntas. ¿Puede llevarnos unos 10 a 15 minutos de su tiempo? Y sus respuestas permanecerán en completa confidencia. Yo las grabaré para así obtener mejores resultados en mis estudios.

1) ¿Cuál es su programa preferido de la TV?

2) ¿Cuando fué la última vez que lo la vio? _____

3) ¿Cuántas veces sale en la TV? _____

4) ¿Cuántas veces lo ve? siempre ____ con frecuencia ____
a veces ____ de vez en cuando ____

5) Dígame lo mas breve posible porque te gusta ese programa.

6) ¿Ve Ud. este programa con la familia y/o amigos?

Sí ____ No ____ Si es sí, ¿con quién? _____

7) ¿Se encuentra Ud. hablando con otros sobre los personajes o argumentos?

con frecuencia ____ a veces ____ de vez en cuando ____

8) ¿Cuál cree Ud. es la programa más popular que se ve en Barranquilla hoy día?

9) ¿Qué cree Ud. de ese programa? (no preguntarla si 8=1)

10) ¿Cuando salen los comerciales...los ve? _____

?Habla con otros ____ o sale del cuarto?_____

ENTREVISTA/La Familia

27) ¿Qué es lo que mas le gusta de ellos?

28) ¿Tiene alguna vez el deseo de visitar los lugares que aparecen en el programa? Sí _____ No _____

29) ¿Hay algún personaje que quisiera representar aunque fera un día? _____

30) ¿Qué es lo que mas le gusta de ellos?

31) ¿Cree Ud. que representan la vida real de esos países?

En absoluto _____ Un poco _____ muy real _____

32) ¿Ha viajado Ud.? No _____ Sí _____ Si es sí,

33) ¿Cuándo? _____ ¿Dónde? _____

34) ¿Ha viajado mucho por Colombia? No _____ Sí _____ Si es sí,

35) ¿Dónde? _____

36) ¿Hació Ud. en Barranquilla? Sí _____ No _____

37) Si es no, ¿donde nació? _____

38) Si es sí, ¿nacieron sus padres también en B/quilla? Sí _____ No _____

39) ¿Algunos de sus abuelos nacieron aquí? Sí _____ No _____

40) ¿Cuál fué su último año de escuela?

Elemental _____ Superior _____ Bachillerato _____

Universidad (incompleto) _____ Carrera (termino) _____

41) ¿Está empleado ahora? Sí _____ No _____

42) Si es sí, ¿Qué ocupación tiene? _____

43) ¿En cuanto estima el ingreso de la familia? _____

44) ¿Cuántas personas viven en su casa? _____

45) ¿Tiene Ud. un carro? Sí ____ No ____

[interrogar la 46-49 si "[telenovela costeña]" no está
contestada 81 o 88]

46) ¿Conoce Ud. el programa "[telenovela costeña]"? Sí ____ No ____

47) Si es sí, ¿qué opinión tiene de su argumento?

48) Y, ¿Qué opinión tiene de su personajes?

49) ¿Si tiene parecido el estilo de la vida de la
costa, ambiente costeño?

No _____ Un poco _____ Mucho _____

50) Tiene su opinión a cerca de los valores y propósitos de la TV?

[calcule sin preguntar lo que representan]

51) ¿Edad? 18-25 _____ 26-35 _____ 36-45 _____ 46-55 _____

56-65 _____ over 65 _____

52) ¿Sexo? Feminina _____ Masculina _____

53) ¿Domicilio? Apartamento _____ Casa pequeña _____

Casa grande _____ Mansión _____

54) ¿Barrio? Pobre _____ Medio _____

Acomodado _____ Rico _____

55-56) _____ [numero de entrevista]

APPENDIX 3

GUIDE TO THE AVAILABLE TELEVISION PROGRAMS

Imports from the United States

<u>Title</u>	<u>Type of Program</u>
Airwolf	Adventure
A.L.F.	Family Sitcom
A-Team	Adventure
Baretta	Detective
Colombo	Detective
Dallas	Evening Soap Opera
Dynasty	Evening Soap Opera
Fall Guy	Detective
Heathcliff	Animation
Hunter	Detective
Inspector Gadget	Animation
Jake and the Fat Man	Detective
Jetsons	Animation
L.A. Law	Courtroom Drama
Laverne and Shirley	Sitcom
Little House on the Prairie	Family Drama
McGiver	Adventure
Mickey Mouse & Company	Animation
Miami Vice	Detective
Mission Impossible	Adventure
Moonlighting	Detective

Imports from the United States-cont'd

<u>Title</u>	<u>Type of Program</u>
Mr. Belvedere	Family Sitcom
Pink Panther	Animation
Remington Steele	Detective
Scooby Doo	Animation
Simon and Simon	Detective
Small Wonder	Children's Sitcom
Smurfs	Animation
Starsky and Hutch	Detective
Starman	Adventure
That Girl	Adult Sitcom
Tom & Jerry	Animation
The Wizard	Adventure

Also: U.S. movies, miniseries, and educational specials such as "Nova."

Imports from Latin America

<u>Title in Spanish</u>	<u>[English Translation]</u>	<u>Country of Origin</u>	<u>Type of Program</u>
Colorina	[a woman's name]	Mexico	Soap Opera
Cristál	[a woman's name]	Venezuela	Soap Opera
Don Chinche	[Mr. Goofball]	Mexico	Comedy
Joana	[a woman's name]	Brazil	Dramatic Series

Imports from Latin America-cont'd

<u>Title in Spanish [English Translation]</u>	<u>Country of Origin</u>	<u>Type of Program</u>
La Dueña [The owner/a lady]	Venezuela	Soap Opera
Quinceañera [Fifteen-year-old girl]	Mexico	Soap opera
Rosa Salvaje [Rosa the Savage]	Mexico	Soap Opera
Sabados Gigantes [Giant Saturday]	Mexican	Music/Variety

Colombian-Made Programs

<u>Title in Spanish [English Translation]</u>	<u>Type of Program</u>
Caballo Viejo [The Old Horse]	Evening Soap opera
Chispazos [Big rumors]	Comedy/Variety
Dejémonos de Vaina [Go Away Troubles]	Sitcom
El Show de Jimmy [Jimmy's Show]	Music/Variety
El Show de Las Estrellas [Show of Stars]	Music/Variety
Fercho Y Compania [Fercho & Company]	Sitcom
Hojas Al Viento [Leaves in the Wind]	Soap Opera
Jeremias Mujeres Mias [Jeremias' Women]	Soap Opera
La Daga de Oro [The Golden Dagger]	Soap Opera
Los Hijos de Los Ausentes [The Children of the Absent]	Evening Soap opera

Also: news, news magazine programs, sports coverage, sports specials, educational programs, game shows, weekly musical specials and coverage of special events such as "Homenage a Bogotá 450 Años" ["In Honor of Bogotá for her 450 Years"].