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The impact of televised sports on adult nonfiction sports publishing

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THE IMPACT OF TELEVISED SPORTS
ON ADULT NONFICTION SPORTS PUBLISHING

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the School of Library and Information Science

San José State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Library and Information Science

by

Jean Amaral

May 2006

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ABSTRACT

THE IMPACT OF TELEVISED SPORTS ON ADULT NONFICTION SPORTS PUBLISHING

By Jean Amaral

This thesis seeks to determine if media complementarity exists between televised sports and adult nonfiction sports publishing. The study examines longitudinal trends in television ratings and sports publishing, and applies regression and correlation analyses to televised sports and sports publishing data for baseball, basketball, football, and golf.

The primary finding is that the relationship between televised sports and sports publishing differs from sport to sport. Two sports, baseball and basketball, exhibit statistically significant positive correlations between television ratings and book publishing; the baseball correlation is strong, whereas the basketball correlation is weak. Football and golf television ratings are negatively correlated with book publishing; football strongly so and golf moderately. These results suggest that media complementarity does not exist between sports television and sports books in general, but may apply to individual sports.

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IN MEMORIAM

John P. Amaral

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

“The book is dead! Long live the book!” This sentiment has been expressed in myriad ways through articles, books, and other media, perhaps beginning with Octave Uzanne’s 1894 article, “The End of Books,” and most recently on National Public Radio’s *Talk of the Nation* with a discussion about the “bookless library.” New media—from radio to television to the Internet—precipitate new predictions about the death of the book and the demise of reading.

Contrary to these predictions, book publishing and reading appear to be in good health. Book sales in the United States and circulation of books in public libraries have both been on the rise since the turn of the century, according to the *Statistical Abstract of the United States* (U.S. Census Bureau, 2006) and the National Center for Education Statistics (Chute et al., 2005) respectively. What effect, then, do other media actually have upon books and reading? This study examines one facet of this issue through statistical analyses of televised sports and adult nonfiction sports publishing in the United States. The present chapter provides background information on the coexistence of books and television, rationale for the study, as well as purpose, objectives, and limitations of the data.

Background

A little over 50 years ago, *Fahrenheit 451*, Bradbury's (1953) dystopic vision of a book-burning society whose citizens are sedated by four-wall television, was published. In that same year, Meyersohn (1953) compiled what was possibly the first annotated bibliography of research on the impact of television, and by 1956 Bogart declared the Age of Television had arrived with a book of the same title, now considered a classic. Thus began the reign of television in American culture.

Although new media have been introduced since the launch of television, none has yet become equally ubiquitous in our society. According to the U.S. Census (2001), 51% of U.S. households had one or more computers and 41.5% had access to the Internet in 2000, yet 98.2% of homes owned at least one television in 2001. The Pew Internet & American Life Project (Fallows, 2005) reported that only 67% of adults were accessing the Internet at the beginning of 2005. In contrast, Becker and Schoenbach (1989) claimed that television viewing accounted for three-fourths of the time Americans spent using mass media and that television viewing was ranked third, following only sleep and work, among activities engaging the most time.

These data are hardly surprising. Where once there were four television channels, now there are hundreds, and the technology continues to advance with high definition television (HDTV) entering the market within the past few years. As mass media develop and evolve, it is necessary to replicate and expand upon past research. Television's impact as a new medium differs from its impact as a mature technology

which will again differ from its impact as it competes with newer media such as the Internet. Thus television continues to be watched, studied, and vilified.

Historian Daniel Boorstin addressed the complexities and context of studying the impact of television in his opening remarks to the seminar, “Television, the Book, and the Classroom”:

One of the most important questions concerning the place of technology in our civilization is the effect of one technology on another. The relationship among innovations and inventions is one of the least understood and one of the most momentous questions in the history of humankind. It is also an area for the greatest flights of fancy, the greatest alarmists and Armageddon-mongers and the most extravagant utopians and optimists. Nowhere is this more evident than in the relationship between television and the book. (Cole, 1978, p. 7)

The concern for television’s impact on books and reading came well before Boorstin’s comments as demonstrated by two early studies examining the effect of television on libraries: Johnson’s 1954 Master’s thesis, “The Relationship of Ownership of Television Sets to Public Library Use,” and nine years after, Parker’s (1963) article, “The Effects of Television on Public Library Circulation.”

David Attenborough, a highly-respected British broadcaster, provides insight into television’s potential to positively impact publishing and reading. He believes, as recounted by Bianculli (1992), that

what television does best is to light flames of enthusiasm, and to give smells and whiffs and sparks of excitement. And what it doesn’t do, not nearly as well, is carry on abstract lines of thought, which is what books are good at Television is good at igniting. (p. 83–84)

Downs (1963), writing in *Librarianship and Publishing* and relying on anecdotal evidence, came to a similar conclusion several years earlier and suggested at the time that

“the mass media actually appear to stimulate reading, at least in certain fields” (p. 17–18).

Hundreds of articles and monographs later, the impact of television on books and reading is still heavily researched and debated in both popular and scholarly venues. For example, Bianculli (1992) quoted the *New York Times* upon the opening of the Museum of Television and Radio: “Are television and radio, though undeniably shapers of society, worthy of a museum’s ennoblement, or should they be condemned as corrupters of literacy?” (p. ix). More recently, a National Endowment for the Arts (2004) report documented a decline in literary reading that it called “dire” and which it attributed to competing media, especially television.

Rationale

For all the talk and predictions to the contrary, books remain the core of library collections. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, print materials in 2003 comprised 92% of the collection in public libraries across the United States (Chute et al., 2005). Given this fact, librarians, standing between readers and publishers, have a need to understand the factors that influence both populations.

The question of television’s impact on book publishing and reading is important to librarians for several reasons:

— Libraries promote literacy and reading. In what ways does the convergence of media available to our patrons affect our accomplishing this goal?

- In addressing aliteracy (being able to read, but choosing not to), it is important to practice proactive collection development rather than reactive in order to engage patrons in reading to the fullest extent possible. What can we learn from publishing trends and their relation to television viewing to better meet our patrons needs?
- New media continue to be introduced, yet library collections are still, for the time being, print-centered. Will this remain the case? What insights does the research on television's impact on book publishing and reading give us in predicting and assessing the effects of new media?
- A perennial issue in collection development is the consideration of quality versus demand, or as Thomas Webb, Jr. while at the University of Wisconsin Press said, "As servants of the reader, librarian and publisher must provide what he wants" (Downs, 1963, p. 7). How does television affect what readers want?

As will be shown in a review of the literature, current research on television's impact on books and reading is likely to be most productive if focused on a particular segment of the industry, such as sports in the case of this study.

Purpose and Objectives

Given the perennial concern with television's impact on books and reading, the centrality of sports in American television culture, and the paucity of information on nonfiction reading, the purpose of this study is to determine if any relationship exists between televised sports and adult nonfiction sports publishing. The sports included are baseball, basketball, football, and golf. The objectives of this study are to collect

television ratings and publishing data for each sport, to examine and describe trends in television ratings and sports publishing, and to apply regression and correlation analyses to televised sports and sports publishing data.

This research draws on several disciplines, including book history, library and information science, education, mass media and communication, and sports studies. It is a quantitative study utilizing both descriptive and inferential statistics.

Limitations

As is common with quantitative research, data limitations were encountered. Both book sales data and the number of books published would have been useful for this research; only the latter were available. Television ratings availability were limited to certain time periods. There are problems with television ratings that are acknowledged by the television industry and researchers; these include sample size and sample composition.

It is also not possible to determine cause and effect using statistical analyses. Although the non-experimental, correlative data provided by this study will not provide conclusive evidence of a relationship between televised sports and sports publishing, it does have the potential to point researchers toward areas worthy of further inquiry.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Several disciplines conduct research in areas relevant to this study. Book history focuses on the production, distribution, and reading of books. Mass media and communication, although covering print media, more often explores electronic media, such as radio, television, and the Internet. Both disciplines seek to learn about audiences and their behaviors in relation to media. Related research in library and information science and education is concerned with reading and literacy.

Book History

In *A Handbook for the Study of Book History in the United States*, Zboray and Zboray (2000) commented that the emphasis of research on publishing has been and continues to be on fiction and that “in the absence of a definitive bibliography of nonfiction, book historians have to make do with specific studies of the three most popular nonfiction genres: biography, history, and travel” (p. 21). This statement applies to sports publishing, as well. Although there is a strong tradition in researching sports fiction—with illustrative titles ranging from *Sport and the Spirit of Play in American Fiction: Hawthorne to Faulkner* to *The Sporting Muse: A Critical Study of Poetry about Athletes and Athletics*—the research on sports nonfiction is limited and focuses mainly on biography and autobiography, such as Mary McElroy’s “Athletes Displaying Their Lives: The Emergence of the Contemporary Sports Autobiography” (1991). There have been no

monographs studying sports nonfiction, though books about other nonfiction subjects are appearing with more frequency.

Although quantitative methods are mentioned only in passing by Zboray and Zboray (2000) in their overview of a century and a half of book history research, data analysis received increased attention in 2002 with the publication of four articles in a special section of *Book History*, entitled “The Epistemology of Publishing Statistics.” In these articles, researchers elucidated the potential benefits of using statistics in book history research. Eliot (2002) set the context for quantitative research in the field:

Before one says anything else about book history, one should remind readers and practitioners alike that the subject is rooted in the material world This material world is characterized in part, and therefore is to be understood in part, by countable quantities: reams of paper, tons of print, print runs, and percentage returns on capital. (p. 283)

Or the number of books published each year in particular subjects, such as sports. Darnton (2002) and Joshi (2002) were in agreement that statistical analyses are ideal for recognizing patterns which lead to greater understanding and insights at the macro-level of book history, as well as providing insights into possible directions for complementary research using qualitative methods.

One of the few articles combining quantitative analyses and research on nonfiction, albeit in relation to fiction, is Murphy’s “‘Down with Fiction and Up with Fact’: *Publishers Weekly* and the Postwar Shift to Nonfiction” published in 1998. Murphy examined claims that fiction publishing decreased as nonfiction increased in the period following World War II. Using quantitative analyses including number of titles published in the different genres, Murphy concluded that although nonfiction did indeed

take off in this period, fiction had not suffered the decline noted often in the pages of *Publishers Weekly*.

Also in 1998, Luey attempted to estimate the number of nonfiction readers, only to find all data sources and potential methods woefully inadequate. In a small survey (53 respondents), Luey found that nonfiction readers were generally not influenced in their reading choices by television, with 35% of respondents claiming “no influence” and 47% only a “slight influence.” The survey determined that readers chose nonfiction to find specific information, learn about new topics or current events and issues, share in discussions with other readers, and for entertainment. One flaw in survey research such as Luey’s is that the list of motivators is provided by the researcher, which may preclude other answers not anticipated by researchers. Nonetheless, the information provided by Luey’s survey merits further investigation with a larger sample size.

The publishing industry periodically contracts with marketing firms for surveys of the reading public, the results of which are published and reported on intermittently. A pertinent study by McEvoy and Vincent (1980) involving 1,450 in-depth interviews found that there are periodicals-only readers: 39% of those surveyed did not read books, but did read newspapers and magazines, and 55% of respondents read both books and periodicals. Do television sports viewers fall into either of these categories? If so, would their preferences be reflected in the data on sports publishing?

McEvoy and Vincent (1980) also found that these two groups, periodicals-only readers and book readers, watch about the same amount of television per week. Motivations for reading included “to gain general knowledge” and “pleasure,” similar to

Luey's (1998) findings. McEvoy and Vincent concluded that "for the book reader, pleasure appeared to be the key motivating factor, whereas general knowledge most typically was the chief motivation of those who read only newspapers and magazines" (p. 139). Periodicals-only readers regard newspapers as the best source for general knowledge and magazines best for "providing pleasure, relaxation, and specific knowledge; few of them saw books fulfilling these purposes" (p. 140). Book readers, on the other hand, "viewed fiction books as best satisfying 'pleasure' and 'relaxation' interests, and rated nonfiction books as best for specific knowledge and second only to newspapers in terms of providing general knowledge" (p. 140). Would sports viewers tend to read periodicals rather than books? Does a sports viewer need to be a "book reader" to follow up interest in televised sports with reading books on the subject?

It is well documented that people with more education and higher incomes read more than those with less education and lower incomes. Robinson (1990), a well-known time-use researcher, concluded that "age and education are the major predictors of reading time. . . . Reading time increases dramatically with age, for example, with 18-to-24-year-olds reading for 1.6 hours per week, while those aged 55 to 64 read for 4.5 hours per week" (p. 7). Robinson also found that women spend more time reading books, and men more time reading newspapers. Another study reported by Heath (1997) came to similar conclusions in regards to "heavy readers." Heath described typical heavy readers as college graduates in professional or managerial employment with household incomes over \$100,000. Heavy readers were also more likely to be women and to be aged 35–49. These studies defining reader demographics are similar to studies

identifying demographics of television viewers which will be covered later in this chapter. There are no studies describing demographics and characteristics of sports readers.

Reading and Media

One limitation of marketing studies is that they most often examine book buying, rather than book reading. Fortunately, other fields have a rich history in reading research. The golden age of library science research on reading followed the publication of *The Reading Interests and Habits of Adults: A Preliminary Report* by Gray and Munroe in 1929 and the establishment of the doctoral program at the University of Chicago Graduate Library School in 1931. In the 1930s and 1940s, Waples and Tyler (1931); Waples, Berelson, and Bradshaw (1940); Carnovsky (1931, 1934); and Wilson (1938) laid a solid foundation for future studies, examining what, where, and why people were reading.

In 1973, Mathews concluded that research into adult reading was experiencing a resurgence both in the United States and western European countries. Reading studies had grown to encompass a wide range of topics, including

literacy, illiteracy, and the reasons for either; library use or nonuse; needs assessments of various hard-to-reach populations; the books people do like to read, when they read, and where they get them; and the relation of book reading to the use of other media in overall context of communications. (Mathews, 1973, p. 149)

The last topic is the most relevant to the present study. Decades earlier, Lazarsfeld (1940) set the standard for research regarding the interaction of other media with print with his classic *Radio and the Printed Page*.

By 1990, as an indication that the topic had reached a certain maturity, reviews of the literature on television and reading began to appear, the most significant of which were Krashen (1993), Neumann (1995), and Reinking and Wu (1990). All three focused primarily on children and reading, and all concluded that the societal ills and predictions of the demise of reading attributed to television were disproved by the research.

Krashen's brief analysis presented two arguments against television: the displacement theory and impaired language development; the former applies as well to adults, whereas the latter may do so only tangentially, as children who do not develop complex language skills generally do not enjoy reading in adulthood. Krashen cited research that counters the theory of displacement (if a reader is watching television, they are not reading), but noted that some research supports the contention that language development may be inhibited by the simpler vocabulary used in television programming. Krashen also touched on the potential complementarity of media, noting that dramatized books may increase reading.

Neumann's (1995) thorough review of past studies as well as her own direct research support Krashen's (1993) conclusions. According to Neumann, other media (e.g., radio and film in the 1930s and even the mass paperbacks in the 1950s) besides television have sparked controversy regarding their potential and assumed deleterious effects on young and old. Neumann suggested that the difference between these past

objections and those against television is that the former soon faded whereas the onslaught of criticism for television has not waned, regardless of the number of studies that suggest we are not heading toward a society resembling that in *Fahrenheit 451*.

In examining the research produced in the fields of education, psychology, and communication, Neumann (1995) found similar theories to those mentioned by Krashen (1993): displacement, negative impact on school-related behaviors including language development issues, and changes in brain function as theorized by McLuhan. Neumann also reviewed research suggesting that television may positively influence viewers as it stimulates interests and learning, opens a window on the world, and increases knowledge and awareness of current events.

Neumann (1995) concluded that “charges against the medium have been unfounded” and went on to argue that “there is a synergy among media,” that “interests in one medium tend to be reflected in another” (p. xiv). These findings suggest that television, rather than displacing reading, could promote viewers to pursue their interests through other media such as books. If this is true, we might expect to see an increase in sports publishing following increased viewing of televised sports, as publishers respond to the demand from readers for sports books.

Articles in the popular media sometimes cite the continually increasing numbers of books published and increasing publishing industry sales figures each year in defending that books and reading are healthy and vibrant. Yet the health of the industry as a whole does not indicate the health of particular segments or markets. Other than trend reporting in industry magazines such as *Publishers Weekly*, there are few studies

examining specific segments of the industry and their relationship to other media. The 2004 NEA report examining the status of literary reading is one example, though it provides no evidence for its implication of television and other media in literary reading's decline. There is no equivalent report for nonfiction reading.

As Meijer (2001) argued, the environment in which reading occurs has changed significantly since television was first introduced. A surfeit of reading material, in both print and electronic sources (e.g., Web sites and online documents), is available to the majority of Americans today. Given the plethora of reading material, it is no longer possible to discuss reading as a monolithic activity; it has become necessary to examine different types of reading. In light of the fact that book sales have continued to rise in the face of media competition, it would be fruitful to pursue the concept of reading fragmentation. If the NEA (2004) is correct and literary reading has declined, what reading is occurring that would explain the increase in book production and sales?

It is important to emphasize that most of the research regarding television's impact on reading has focused on children. There has been little research investigating the effect of television on adult reading or investigating the effect of television on the reading of nonfiction. The Pew Research Center conducts ongoing studies of adult newspaper reading, and the U.S. Census Bureau's Survey of Public Participation in the Arts tracks adult reading of literature, which includes novels, short stories, plays, and poetry. This literature review did not uncover any recent studies of U.S. adult reading by nonfiction subject.

Magazine Publishing Model

The assessment of a related market, magazine publishing, by Randle (2001) in his article, “A Historical Overview of the Effects of New Mass Media Introductions on Magazine Publishing During the 20th Century,” may shed light on the relationship of television and book publishing. Randle’s argument that television, in particular cable television with its specialized programming, promotes magazine reading is similar to Neumann’s claim of interest proliferation in media. Randle described the phenomenon this way: If a person watches a sport on television and wants more interaction with that sport, the person then turns to magazines to further pursue the interest.

As evidence for this argument, Randle (2001) points to the number of sports magazines being published at the time:

For example, in recent years, we have seen the launches of a variety of new cable sports networks such as ESPN2, The Golf Channel, a sports history channel, Speed Vision, a network of regional sports channels under Fox, and more. Yet 1998 alone saw the launch of more than 122 new consumer sports magazines, with the cable network ESPN launching its own print publication to compete with *Sports Illustrated*. (p. 9)

Rather than a decline in sports magazine publishing due to the increase in televised sports, as would generally be expected, Randle found an increase. There is currently no research that explores the possibility of a similar trend in nonfiction sports book publishing.

Mass Media and Communication

Relevant research in mass media and communication focuses on audience characteristic identification, among other topics. As noted earlier, Lazarsfeld was among

the first and foremost researchers in this field. A typical study conducted by Lazarsfeld and Wyant (1937) investigated the characteristics of magazines readers and examined various factors impacting magazine readership. Using the circulation figures of 25 magazines in 90 cities, Lazarsfeld and Wyant performed several statistical analyses, including correlations, and concluded, among other findings, that “clearly, a rise in the number of movies results in an increase in reading interest” (p. 34), perhaps one of the first instances of media complementarity. Although statistics have not been widely employed by book historians, their use is well established in mass media and communication research.

Developed in the 1940s, the “uses and gratifications” theoretical model was possibly first used by Herzog (1940), and subsequently employed by other well-known researchers in the field such as Lazarsfeld and Berelson. This theoretical approach examines how individuals use media and identifies gratifications that are gained from that use, as well as how these two factors contribute to choosing among media (Becker & Schoenbach, 1989). Another relevant mass media theory, that of leisure and media behaviors, has been addressed by many scholars, including Becker and Schoenbach. Although many time-use studies in the last century tracked leisure’s impact on reading, uses and gratifications theory has not been applied extensively in reading research. Often researchers who study reading do not reference uses and gratifications theory even though their studies relate to this theory, as was the case with Luey (1998) and McEvoy and Vincent (1980).

Although the audience for sports nonfiction has not been examined, there are studies on sports spectators and television viewers. Gantz (1981) surveyed 203 college students and identified four motivations for sports viewing: “to thrill in victory,” “to let loose,” “to learn,” and “to pass time” (p. 268–270). Gantz concluded that “the most important motivational force leading to TV viewing” was “to thrill in victory” (p. 268). Smith, Patterson, Williams, and Hogg (1981) also found similar motivations of escape, self-fulfillment, and social integration, and other researchers concluded that entertainment (Tutko, 1989), sociability (Tutko, 1989; Zillman, Bryant & Sapolsky, 1989), and identification with players (Zillman et al., 1989) are important motivators for watching sports. Some of these motivators overlap with those of reading (e.g., pleasure and increasing knowledge), while others are unique to sports viewing and are not associated with reading (e.g., letting loose and socializing).

Gantz and Wenner (1995) subsequently focused specifically on the sports fan’s viewing experience, hypothesizing that it would be different than a viewer who was not a sports fan:

The central premise of this study is that the audience for sports should not be considered a monolithic mass, with the experience fairly constant across members of the audience. Instead we expect that experience will vary on the basis of fanship, with fans having a qualitatively different, deeper, and more textured set of expectations and responses than nonfans. (p. 57)

They concluded that sports fans “were more involved and responsive” than nonfans while watching televised sports. Do fans and nonfans pursue sports in other media in different ways? Is a fan more or less likely than a nonfan to read a book?

Prior to Gantz and Wenner's research, Schlosberg (1987) in "Who Watches Television Sports?" cited market research that indicated the viewers of various sports make up substantially different markets. Some illustrative differences include:

- women prefer baseball, as do viewers over the age of 45;
- people who earn less than \$50,000 are more likely to watch basketball than the other three sports;
- golf and basketball viewers are more likely to be college graduates than baseball and football viewers;
- and golf viewers are more likely to have higher incomes than viewers in the other three sports.

Schlosberg also noted a 63% increase in network sports programming for the decade ending in 1983. This increase did not take into account the addition of ESPN and other cable networks. Perhaps most importantly, Schlosberg provided evidence that pro football was the most watched sport with 63.2 million adult viewers, slightly edging out baseball with 62.7 million viewers; pro basketball and golf, followed well behind with 34.7 and 25.8 million viewers respectively.

Sports and Television History

If television is considered anti-intellectual, then televised sports is doubly so. Although Americans may have ambivalent feelings about television and sports and the marriage of the two, they were a natural fit from the time they first came together. As the technology was being developed, the 1930 *Encyclopaedia Britannica* suggested it would

be useful for only two activities: to see speakers in another area of the country and to watch sports. In 1936, Furnas predicted that in the future Americans would be watching inaugurations, boxing matches, and football games from the comfort of their homes, and Ron Powers (1984) noted in *Supertube* that “when television reemerged in the postwar years, it would be sports programming that established early beachheads in America’s consciousness” (p. 32).

David Halberstam, who has written so eloquently about baseball, argued that televised sports had a great impact on the national psyche early on as illustrated by his description of the significance of the 1958 National Football League (NFL)

Championship:

The game marked many things. The ascent of pro football to a level enjoyed in the past only by baseball; the explosion of sports as a crucial ingredient in . . . a new television-driven, entertainment-oriented society; and perhaps most importantly, it marked the ability of television to find an event that it favored (that is, something that it could cover well) and virtually reinvent it, taking it from something ordinary to something that was part of the national fabric. (Lasswell, 2002, p. 34)

Halberstam’s analysis is borne out by the Super Bowl accounting for five out of 10 of the top ranked television programs from 1960–1993 (Nielsen Media Research, 1993).

In 1984, Rader argued that there had been two eras of televised sports. The first dating from the first sports telecast in 1939 to the mid-1960s, incorporating the same hiatus all television programming took during World War II, and the second from the mid-1960s onward. The first era involved small scale sports, such as wrestling and prize fighting, the second team sports that benefited from the development and refinement of color television, slow motion, and instant replay at the beginning of the second era. It

could be reasonably argued that a third era began in 1979 with the opening line of the first broadcast from the Entertainment and Sports Programming Network (ESPN), “If you love sports. . . If you REALLY love sports, you’ll think you’ve died and gone to heaven. . . .” (Rasmussen, 1983, p. 15).

Summary

This study attempts to partially fill the gap in research on nonfiction publishing which was identified in this literature review. Additionally, many researchers have posited the existence of general media complementarity, as well as complementarity specific to certain media. This study extends the research in media complementarity through analyses of televised sports and nonfiction sports publishing.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

To conduct this study, three decisions had to be made: 1) which sports to include, 2) what data to collect, and 3) how to analyze the data. These decisions are discussed in this chapter.

The Sports

Data were collected on four professional sports: baseball, basketball, football, and golf. In choosing which sports to include, factors considered were the existence of a significant body of literature on the sport, broad popularity with the American public, and an established professional league at least 50 years old. These criteria ensured that there would be sufficient data to analyze. Sports that were considered and found not to meet these criteria included hockey, soccer, auto racing, boxing, and tennis.

Data Sources

Time Period

The time period covered was dictated by the first year of publication of *Subject Guide to Books in Print* (1957) and by the availability of television ratings for each sport as noted below.

Television Ratings

Network, cable, and satellite television ratings vary in availability and coverage. Sports programming appears on all delivery systems, but ratings for network television, which were implemented in the 1940s, have the longest history and comprise the most complete data. Network television also reaches the largest number of households in the United States: of the 98% of households owning television sets in 2004, only 68% subscribed to cable television (*World Almanac*, 2006). For these reasons, this study uses national ratings data for network television sports programs.

National television ratings in the United States are produced nearly exclusively by Nielsen Media Research. Nielsen ratings measure the percentage of households owning televisions in the United States tuned into a particular television program. For example, a Nielsen rating of 8.6 means that 8.6% of all households in the U.S. were watching a program (Nielsen Media Research, 2006). An increase or decrease in television ratings indicates an increase or decrease respectively in the total number of people watching a program. The time period for which ratings were available varied by sport as indicated in Table 1.

Other indicators of a program's popularity calculated by Nielsen include share and number of households. Share is the measure of the number of households viewing a program as a percentage of the number of households that are watching television at a given time. As such, "a share is a percent of a constantly changing number" (Nielsen Media Research, 2006) and not viable as an indicator of increased or decreased

Table 1

Ratings availability by sport

Sport	Season	Highlight Event	
Baseball	1972–2003	World Series	1957–2004
Basketball	1985/86–2003/04	Finals	1974–2004
Football	1974–2004	Super Bowl	1967–2004
Golf		Masters Tournament	1971–2004
Golf		U.S. Open	1971–2004

viewership. The number of households recorded by Nielsen was not used in this study as it was not available for a majority of the years being examined.

Ratings for the World Series were obtained from Chuck Hildebrandt's "The Rise and Fall (and Rise and Fall) of World Series TV Ratings (1950-1989)," a paper presented at the Society for American Baseball Research Annual Convention in New York in 1991. World Series ratings from 1989 through 2001 were obtained from the *Major League Baseball Public Relations Fact Book* (n.d.). The remaining ratings for baseball and the other three sports were obtained directly from Nielsen Media Research.

Book Publishing Data

Various data for book publishing were considered for use in this study, including number of publishers, book sales, and books published. Because the first two sets of data are not available for several reasons described below, the decision was made to use the number of books published as the variable in the statistical analyses performed. This data is nonproprietary and publicly available. The number of books published is indicative of demand for sports books, as profit-oriented publishers seek to anticipate and fulfill reader markets.

It is important to note that obtaining data for the publishing industry is problematic. There is no comprehensive source of publishers in the United States, and the most complete directories do not categorize publishers by subject. This gap in available information precluded an examination of sports publishers as part of this analysis. It also would have been beneficial to obtain sales data for books in each sport,

but sales data are not consistently reported by publishing companies, as they seek to retain a competitive edge. *The Bowker Annual of Library and Trade Book Information* provides aggregate data for a “sports and recreation” category in book publishing, including number of books sold and sales figures, but this category is too general to be useful other than as an indication of overall industry segment trends.

In 1978, the Book Industry Study Group (BISG) published its benchmark *Consumer Research Study on Reading and Book Purchasing*, with a subsequent report appearing in 1983. In 1991, this report was published as *Consumer Research Study on Book Purchasing*; under this title, it has been produced intermittently through 2002. Similar to Bowker’s *Annual*, the BISG studies report data in broad categories. Sports are included in the subject category “cooking/crafts,” along with, among other topics, automotive, home improvement, wine, antiques, and animals. This BISG category, then, is even less useful than Bowker’s “sports and recreation.”

There is also no source that records every book published in the United States each year. The most complete record is Bowker’s annual *Books in Print*. The starting point of 1957 for the baseball portion of this study was chosen because Bowker began producing its annual *Subject Guide to Books in Print* in this year, making it possible to access books through subject headings rather than by author and title only. Using the *Subject Guide* for this study, the number of books recorded under the appropriate Library of Congress subject headings for each sport during the specified time periods was compiled.

In order to obtain as accurate a figure as possible for the number of books published each year, OCLC's union catalog, WorldCat, was also searched. WorldCat contains catalog records of over 9,000 member libraries. In searching WorldCat, books not included in the *Subject Guide* that were purchased by libraries and remained in their holdings could then be included in the yearly publishing figures. WorldCat records were limited to adult nonfiction titles published in the United States under the Library of Congress subject headings for each sport.

The list of books from the *Subject Guide* was compared to that obtained from WorldCat and duplicates were removed. The combination of these two sources produced as accurate a figure as is possible to obtain for the number of books published each year about the four sports.

For this study, nonfiction books were considered to be all titles not classified as fiction or poetry. Juvenile titles and titles about collegiate sports were also excluded from consideration. This study includes only books published in English in the United States.

Statistical Analyses

The purpose of this study was to determine if sports television viewing, as indicated by ratings, affects adult non-fiction sports reading, as indicated by the number of books published. What are the trends in the data? Is there a correlation between the two variables? The statistical analyses used to answer these questions are enumerated below.

Time-Series Analysis

Time-series analysis involves plotting data in order to graphically depict changes in a variable over time. The time series examined here are both discrete and aggregate—the data were recorded at equally-spaced, specific times (annually) and are a sum total for each year (Chatfield, 1980). While time-series analysis can be used in several ways, in this study it was employed to describe trends and turning points in television ratings and books published.

Scatter Plot

The first step in performing regression and correlation analyses is to produce a scatter plot of the data. For each dataset in this study, a scatter plot was generated, with television ratings as the independent variable plotted on the x -axis and books published as the dependent variable plotted on the y -axis of the graph. Scatter plots can indicate the general relationship between two variables. As x increases, does y also increase? Or vice versa? The shape of the scatter plot also indicates if the relationship between the variables is linear or nonlinear; this shape determines the appropriate analyses to be applied (Berenson & Levine, 1996).

Bivariate Linear Regression and Correlation Analyses

Where appropriate, bivariate linear regressions were applied to the scatter plots. The slope of the line indicates if there is a positive or negative correlation. The

regression analysis defines the form of the relationship between variables, and correlation analysis measures the degree of the relationship (Myers & Mullet, 2003).

Pearson's r . The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, Pearson's r , is the most commonly used coefficient in determining correlation between parametric data with a linear relationship, such as that being analyzed in this study. Pearson's r falls between +1.0 and -1.0; when $r = 0$, there may be no correlation between the variables, or a nonlinear relationship may exist requiring additional analyses to define. The closer to +1.0, the stronger the positive correlation, and the closer to -1.0, the stronger the negative correlation. Pearson's r should be at least .4 to indicate a correlation (Hafner, 1998).

Coefficient of Determination (r^2). To determine the amount of the variation in the dependent variable that is accounted for by the independent variable, the coefficient of determination is calculated (Myers & Mullet, 2003). For example, a coefficient of determination of .77 indicates that 77% of the variation in the dependent variable can be accounted for by the variation in the independent variable.

t-test. Even when Pearson's r and the coefficient of determination indicate a strong correlation between the dependent and independent variables, the findings may not be statistically significant. A t -test indicates whether the results from the regression and correlation analyses are statistically significant. The t -test should return a confidence level of at least 95% ($p < .05$); if it does not, the correlation could be due to chance (Myers & Mullet, 2003).

The above analyses were applied to the television ratings and books published for each of the four sports. Regression and correlation analyses were performed using SPSS software. Figures were created using Microsoft Excel software.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter presents time-series, regression, and correlation analyses of the data.

Book Industry Trends

Two time-series graphs were generated to provide an overview of U.S. book publishing; Figures 1 and 2 present data for total number of books, total nonfiction books, and total sports and recreation books produced in the U.S. from 1957 to 2003. All data are from *The Bowker Annual of Library and Book Trade Information*. The sports and recreation category includes books that fall under the Dewey Decimal Classification 790–799. A third time-series graph in Figure 3 presents data for books published in the four sports.

Figures 1 and 2 exhibit a significant increase in titles for the year 1997 due to a new accounting method implemented by Bowker. Prior to 1997, most of the data were compiled from Bowker's *American Book Publishing Record*, which only includes titles catalogued by the Library of Congress. Beginning in 1997, the data were compiled from Bowker's *Books in Print*, which includes thousands of titles not catalogued by the Library of Congress.

Figures 1 and 2 indicate steady growth in all of the book production categories. Although it appears in these two figures that the trends in the three areas closely parallel each other, the percentage growth of the sports and recreation category has consistently

Figure 1. All books and nonfiction books published, 1957–2003.

Figure 2. Sports and recreation books published, 1957–2003.

outpaced the percentage growth of both total book production and that of nonfiction titles. The percentage growth of nonfiction titles has stayed slightly ahead of that for total book production. Between 1957 and 1996, the total number of books produced in the United States grew by 419%, nonfiction by 450%, and sports and recreation titles by 689%. There was a surge in publishing from 1990 to 1996, during which total production increased 46%, nonfiction 45%, and sports and recreation 80%. Production remained stagnant 1997–1999 but has been experiencing healthy growth since this time. From 1999 to 2003, total production increased 43%, as did nonfiction, with sports and recreation increasing 45%.

In comparing the growth of publishing in the four sports sectors to the industry as a whole, there are significant differences between the sports and the industry, as well as among the sports, as illustrated in Figure 3. From 1957–1996, baseball book publishing experienced dramatic growth of 1092%. Football and golf publishing made modest gains from the late 1960s and early 1970s through 1996, increasing 146% and 119% respectively. Basketball lagged slightly behind the other sports and the industry as a whole with a 60% increase from 1975 to 1996.

In the 1990–96 and 1999–2003 periods when the publishing industry exhibited steady growth, the four sports experienced wide fluctuations. Baseball books decreased 11% in the first period and remained stagnant in the second. Football was up 12% in the 1990s and down 17% by 2003, while golf had increased 97% by 1996 but plummeted 40% between 1999 and 2003. Basketball was the only sport to enjoy growth in both periods with a 81% increase through 1996 and a 26% increase between 2000 and 2003.

Figure 3. Books published annually in each sport, 1957–2003.

Given that the trends in publishing for the four sports do not align with the industry trends, it appears that book publishing for these sports is not tied closely to the industry as a whole. As niche markets, they appear to be at the whim of other forces. For example, during the 1990–96 period when baseball books decreased by 11%, baseball experienced a strike and the cancellation of the 1994 World Series. Tiger Woods burst on the golfing scene winning three straight U.S. Amateur championships in the mid-1990s, the period during which golf titles increased by 97%. Publishers, who are interested in maximizing profits, react to events within the sports that have the potential to impact those profits.

In relation to broader industry trends, an increase in sports and recreation titles might be expected following ESPN's launch in 1979, and there is some evidence that there may have been at least a minimal impact. Schlosberg (1987) notes that "broadcast networks alone increased their hours of sports programming some 63% between 1973 and 1983" (p. 45), so it may be difficult to determine how much change in book publishing in the 1980s is due to cable programming or network programming. Nonetheless, during this decade, baseball publishing increased by 122%, basketball 79%, football 41%, and golf 84%. The increase in sports programming due to new cable stations and programs may partly explain this growth in sports publishing.

Baseball

Statistical analyses of World Series and season television ratings and baseball books published annually are presented below in five figures and one table. In Figure 4,

the time series plot for the number of books published each year illustrates the publishing trend for baseball books over nearly 50 years. Figures 5 and 6, chart the time series of television ratings for each season and the World Series respectively. Figures 7 and 8 present linear regressions, correlating television ratings to books published, with Table 2 providing the correlation coefficient, coefficient of determination, and *t*-test values. The data points in the scatter plots pair each year's television rating with the following year's publishing data, taking into account that the baseball season ends in October each year, as well as the time needed to produce books.

Most noticeable in Figures 4–6 are the steady increases in season ratings and the number of books published, during the same period which World Series ratings declined significantly. The 1994 baseball strike is reflected in a lower season television rating and no World Series rating for that year, with a significant drop in the number of books published beginning in 1994 which did not rebound fully until 2004. Readers apparently have longer memories than television viewers.

The correlation analysis in Table 2 and regression in Figure 7 show a positive correlation between season ratings and the number of books published. The relationship is a strong one, as indicated by Pearson's *r*, which in this case is .88. The coefficient of determination is .77, indicating that 77% of the variation in books published is accounted for by the television ratings. The *t*-test returned a 99% confidence level in the correlation analysis. These data suggest that when the number of viewers who demonstrate a sustained interest in baseball increases, they also satisfy that interest by turning to books, the demand for which publishers seek to fulfill.

Figure 4. Baseball books published, 1957–2004.

Figure 5. Baseball season television ratings, 1972–2003.

Figure 6. World Series television ratings, 1957–2004.

Table 2

Baseball correlation analysis, television ratings to books published

Data Set	Pearson's r	r^2	t -test
Season	.88	.77	$p < .01$
World Series	-.65	.42	$p < .01$

Figure 7. Linear regression, baseball season.

Figure 8. Linear regression, World Series.

In the regression shown in Figure 8, the number of books published is negatively correlated to the World Series ratings. When fewer people watch the World Series, more books are published, and when more people watch the Series, fewer books are published. The correlation analysis shown in Table 2 indicates that this relationship is not as strong as that of season ratings to books published. For the World Series, r is only $-.65$ with 42% of the change in book publishing accounted for by the change in television ratings. Given that baseball book publishing has steadily increased from 1957 to 2004, these data suggest that television viewing of the World Series has minimal impact on the publishing and reading of baseball books.

Discussion

These differing results for the season and World Series are perhaps not unexpected. World Series viewers include not only the baseball fans who have been watching games throughout the season but also people for whom these are the only baseball games they watch the entire year. Gantz and Wenner's (1995) research differentiating fans and nonfans may apply in this situation. Because the many World Series viewers do not have a sustained interest in baseball nor do they experience the deep connection to the sport that fans do, this televised event may have little impact on publishing. Further investigation might show that there can be a small publishing surge following the World Series and focusing on the event, such as the 12 or so titles published about the Boston Red Sox triumph over the "curse of the Bambino" in 2004,

but that small number of books in relation to the year's publishing, 359 baseball titles in that year, is negligible.

On the other hand, the fans who have a strong attachment to baseball are more likely to watch throughout the season, thus providing perhaps a partial explanation of the positive correlation between season ratings and books published. This positive correlation supports the conclusion that televised baseball games positively stimulate the publishing and reading of baseball books. Wilson (2001), executive editor at McFarland, one of the largest publishers of baseball books, provides anecdotal evidence complementing this conclusion. He described readers of baseball books this way:

To publishers, baseball enthusiasts are a special breed: more single-minded than other sports fans, hungrier for minutiae, more conscious of their game's history and lore. . . . And they read books—or buy them anyway, which is all a publisher really requires: books of all kinds, year in, year out. (p. 53)

Wilson's experience may be explained in part by McEvoy and Vincent's (1980) identification of book readers versus periodicals-only readers. Further research is needed to determine if baseball fans are more likely to qualify as book readers than periodicals-only readers according to McEvoy and Vincent, and thus more likely to satisfy an interest in the sport by turning to books rather than to other media.

Basketball

Basketball data and analyses are presented below in one table and five figures. The data points in the scatter plots pair each year's television rating with the following

year's publishing data, taking into account that the basketball season ends in April and the finals take place in June, as well as allowing for the time needed to produce books.

Figure 9 shows a steady decline in basketball season ratings from 1985 to 2004, which fell by 68% during this time period. There was a two-year aberration in this trend in 1995 and 1996, with a slight increase of 14% before sliding back into the downward march. While decreasing only 17% from 1974 to 2004, the finals ratings, shown in Figure 10, experienced wide fluctuations throughout the period, with the highest rating 188% greater than the lowest rating. The peak ratings in 1977, 1982, 1987, 1991, 1993, and 1998 all occurred for series that went to six games. Finals ratings plummeted after 1998, the season during which Michael Jordan retired and only 50 of 82 games were played due to a lockout. A modest recovery was made in 2004.

The time series for basketball books presented in Figure 11 also shows some variation with a modest overall growth rate from 1975 to 2004 of 60%. Within this time period, there are four distinct trends. From 1975 to 1985, titles published declined 35%, and in the following period, 1985 to 1997, they increased 200%. This growth was followed by a 50% drop through 2002. Basketball publishing appears to be in a period of recovery now with increases in both 2003 and 2004.

As shown in Table 3 and Figure 12, the linear regression for basketball finals indicates a weak correlation. With $r = .49$, the correlation between the finals and basketball publishing is weak, with only 24% of the variation in books being accounted for by television ratings. The correlation coefficient for season ratings is too low to claim there is a linear relationship or that a correlation exists between season ratings and books

Figure 9. Basketball season television ratings, 1986–2004.

Figure 10. Basketball finals television ratings, 1974–2004.

Figure 11. Basketball books published, 1975–2004.

Table 3

Basketball correlation analysis, television ratings to books published

Data Set	Pearson's r	r^2	t -test
Season	-.13	.02	
Finals	.49	.24	$p < .01$

Figure 12. Linear regression, basketball finals.

Figure 13. Scatter plot, basketball season.

published. In Figure 13, the shape of the scatter plot indicates the relationship of season ratings to books published may be nonlinear, in which case a correlation may exist with additional analyses required to define the relationship.

Discussion

Although the basketball finals correlation is not as strong as that of the baseball season, it does point to televised basketball having a small impact on basketball publishing. The lesser impact for televised basketball may be explained in part by the fact that basketball, the youngest of the professional sports, has been the least adept at maximizing exposure on television. As related by Fortunato (2001), “one glaring example of the NBA’s lack of exposure and prominence is that at probably the greatest individual performance in an NBA game—Wilt Chamberlain’s scoring 100 points on March 2, 1962—there was not one single television camera present” (p. 24). It wasn’t until 1991 that every NBA finals game was broadcast in primetime (Fortunato, 2001).

Another factor that may affect basketball publishing is the participation level of the sport. Of the four sports being examined, basketball is second only to golf in the number of adults who play the sport more than once a year. From 1986 to 2002, the number adults who played basketball increased 34%, from 11.1 million to 14.9 million (U.S. Census Bureau, 2006). Additional research might show that participation creates an interest in the sport which is subsequently transferred to reading.

Significant growth in basketball publishing was seen beginning in 1986, the year John Feinstein’s best seller, *A Season on the Brink*, was published. Even though

Feinstein's book is about college basketball, some industry watchers believe that it was this book that gave basketball literature, if not sports literature, legitimate standing in eyes of the reading public. Further analysis would need to be done to determine if there was perhaps a "Feinstein effect" catalyzing the 10-year surge in basketball publishing.

Football

The data for televised football and football books are presented below in one table and five figures. The data points in the season scatter plot pair each year's television rating with the following year's publishing data, as the season is called by the year in which it begins rather than that in which it ends. Because the Super Bowl is played in January or February each year, the data points in the scatter plot match each year's Super Bowl ratings with the number of books published that same year.

In Figure 14, the time series for football season ratings show a period of moderate growth from 1974 to 1981 of 33%, followed by a steady decline from 1981 to 2004 totaling 41%. This time series is notable for its lack of significant peaks and nadirs, which are present in the television ratings of other sports. The Super Bowl time series, presented in Figure 15, is equally devoid of significant variation from year to year, beginning with a rating of 41.1 in 1967 and ending with 41.3 in 2004. The highest rating, 49.1 was recorded in 1982, and ratings in the mid to high 40s were sustained throughout this decade.

Football publishing, on the other hand, experienced healthy growth from 1968 to 2004 with a 214% increase in books published, as shown in Figure 16. There was also

Figure 14. Football season television ratings, 1974–2004.

Figure 15. Super Bowl television ratings, 1967–2004.

Figure 16. Football books published, 1968–2004.

significant variation from year to year in the number of titles produced. A peak in 1973 reflects a 120% increase from 1971, followed by a three-year decline of 44% ending in 1976. Another peak of less magnitude occurred in 1987, and a larger peak again in 1997. This last was preceded by 74% growth and ended in a decline of 40% in 2001. Similar to baseball and basketball, football books have been making a comeback since 2001 and by 2004 had increased by 46%. This increase may reflect the recovery seen in the industry trend for the total number of books, nonfiction books, and sports and recreation, which have increased 35–40% since the turn of the century.

In Table 4 and Figure 17, the correlation analysis and regression for football season ratings show a strong negative correlation ($r = -.73$) to books published, with approximately 53% of the change in books published accounted for by television ratings. The shape of the Super Bowl scatter plot in Figure 18 indicates that the relationship between the variables is not linear. The correlation coefficient ($r = 0$) for the Super Bowl also suggests that there is no relationship between ratings and books published or that the relationship is nonlinear.

Discussion

As indicated by the regression and correlation analyses, when more people watch games during a football season, fewer books are published; or, as fewer people watch games, more books are published. It appears that an interest in football satisfied by watching television is not matched by a desire to also read about the sport. Perhaps, in this case, light can be shed on the relationship by examining football viewers and the

Table 4

Football correlation analysis, television ratings to books published

Data Set	Pearson's r	r^2	t -test
Season	-.73	.53	$p < .01$
Super Bowl	0	0

Figure 17. Linear regression, football season.

Figure 18. Scatter plot, Super Bowl.

experience of watching football. Nauright (1996) explains one sports scholar's analysis:

Oriard argues that football is more of a social cultural activity than many other forms of popular culture The central point about football, he argues, is that it is a social activity, watched and experienced vocally in groups compared with novels read in private or movies watched in public, but experienced silently. (p. 112)

As interpreted by Nauright, viewing football is antithetical to the reading experience. If the majority of football fans appreciate watching football for the social nature of the experience, as was also found by many studies mentioned in the literature review, they might be less likely to turn to reading to satisfy an interest in the sport.

Some of the peak years in football publishing coincide with historic events in the sport. The peak in 1973 followed quarterback Terry Bradshaw's pass which was completed by Franco Harris's legendary "immaculate reception" and which won the playoff game for the Pittsburgh Steelers. This peak also followed closely the 50th anniversary of the birth of the NFL in 1922, which grew out of the American Professional Football Association. A similar publishing spike occurred in 1997 at the 75th anniversary. Both anniversaries could have created a buzz that generated increased interest in the sport. At other times football publishing seems to follow industry trends more so than the other three sports. For example, both football books and sports and recreation books experienced a lull from 1976 to 1982.

Golf

In this section, one table and five figures present the data for golf television ratings and publishing. With the Masters Tournament occurring in April and the U.S.

Figure 19. U.S. Open television ratings, 1971–2004.

Figure 20. Masters Tournament television ratings, 1971–2004.

Open in June, the data points in the scatter plots pair each year's television rating with the following year's publishing data to allow for the time required to produce books.

The time-series graphs for the television ratings of both tournaments, presented in Figures 19 and 20, show frequent fluctuations, with an overall decline in ratings from 1971 to 2004 of 20% for the Masters and 69% for the U.S. Open. During this time period, the Masters peaked in 1997, the year Tiger Woods first won the event, subsequently dropping 40% by 2004. The U.S. Open ratings peaked in 1972, the year that Jack Nicklaus won both the Open and the Masters.

In Figure 21, golf publishing exhibits three distinct divisions during the time period covered. From 1972 to 1983, production varied little and remained stagnant; there were 58 golf books produced in 1972 and 60 in 1983. Beginning in 1984 and lasting until 1998, golf publishing exhibited sustained growth increasing 172% in this period. After 1998, golf books decreased by 40%, before bouncing back with an increase of 38% from 2003 to 2004. In contrast to the decline in television ratings for the two golf events, the growth rate of golf publishing from 1972 to 2004 was 202%.

The regression and correlation analyses for the U.S. Open in Table 5 and Figure 22 exhibit a linear relationship. The U.S. Open regression indicates a moderate negative correlation ($r = -.56$) between television ratings and books published, with 31% of the change in books published accounted for by the change in ratings. The correlation coefficient for the Masters Tournament is too low to claim there is a linear relationship or that a correlation exists between television ratings and books published. The shape of the

Figure 21. Golf books published, 1972–2004.

Table 5

Golf correlation analysis, television ratings to books published

Data Set	Pearson's r	r^2	t -test
U.S. Open	-.56	.31	$p < .01$
Masters Tournament	.02	0

Figure 22. Linear regression, U.S. Open.

Figure 23. Scatter plot, Masters Tournament.

Masters scatter plot in Figure 23 suggests there may be a nonlinear relationship that could be defined with additional analyses.

Discussion

The U.S. Open regression and correlation analyses suggest that as more people watch televised golf, fewer golf books are published and read; or, as fewer people watch televised golf, more golf books are published and read. It does not appear that televised golf promotes an interest in the sport which is transferred from one medium to another.

If televised events are not creating interest in the sport, what other factors might be at play? One possibility may be the presence of well-liked or star players in a particular year or period, such as the 1980s and 1990s when there were surges in golf publishing. The increase in books published from 1982 to 1984 follows the memorable duel between Jack Nicklaus and Tom Watson in the 1982 U.S. Open and the inauguration of the Skins Game in 1983, pitting Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer, Gary Player, and Tom Watson against each other. After Jack Nicklaus won his sixth and last Masters in 1986, golf publishing increased by 33% in 1987. In 1995, the year after Arnold Palmer made his last appearance in the U.S. Open, publishing was up 41% over the prior year. Popular players have the potential to generate interest in the sport which could lead to demand for golf books.

It is interesting to note that even though an extraordinary player such as Tiger Woods may generate several books—biographies, how-to's, autobiography, etc.—these publications do not comprise a significant percentage of books published in a given year.

For example, after Tiger Woods won his first Masters in 1997, there were 10 books published about him, accounting for 5% of the total that year. The following year there were seven books produced about Woods, only 3% of the total.

Similar to basketball, another factor that may affect golf publishing is participation in the sport. Of the four sports being examined, golf has the highest participation rate, 67% greater than basketball which has the second highest rate. According to the *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, an average of 21.8 million adults participated in golf each year between 1986 and 2002, and during this period participation increased 40%, at the same time that the publishing of golf books increased 67% (U.S. Census, 2006).

Correlation Continuum

In comparing the statistical analyses of the four sports, the correlation continuum depicted below provides a view of the data in which additional patterns emerge.

Super Bowl basketball season Masters Tournament			
football season	World Series U.S. Open	basketball finals	baseball season
strong	weak	weak	strong
negative correlation		positive correlation	
no correlation or nonlinear correlation			

Baseball and football which exhibited the strongest correlations, positive and negative respectively, have the most viewers of the four sports (Schlosberg, 1987). This fact suggests that there may be significant differences in the characteristics of the two audiences which account for the contrary results. Further research might indicate that there are a large number of dedicated fans among baseball viewers who pursue their interest in the sport in other media, while televised football may attract more casual viewers who have less of an interest in the sport; or there may be more periodicals-only readers among football viewers than among baseball viewers, so that football viewers' interest is not reflected in book publishing.

Golf and basketball, which showed the weakest correlations, also have the highest participation rates, as noted earlier. Participation may have a larger impact than television viewing on a sport's publishing output, thus reducing the effect of televised events. Golf and basketball also have significantly smaller viewerships than baseball and football, which may partly explain the weaker correlations. The two sports found to have positive correlations, baseball and basketball, have the longest seasons which may account in some part for this positive relationship. It is also interesting to note that the two sports with the largest literatures, baseball and golf, are the ones that are played without a time clock. These observations suggest that there are many variables impacting sports publishing and that further research is needed to understand their interaction with that of televised sports and the cumulative effect on sports books publishing.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

What is the nature of the relationship between televised sports and nonfiction sports publishing? This study suggests that the answer to this question depends on the sport. The findings also suggest that there is a complex web of variables interacting in the development of that relationship. Conclusions and implications drawn from the data analyses are discussed in further detail below.

The Sports

The relationship between televised sports and adult nonfiction sports publishing differs from sport to sport as demonstrated by the various strengths and directions of correlation for the four sports examined in this study: two sports had positive correlations of ratings to publishing, one of which was quite strong, the other of which was weak; two sports had negative correlations, one of which was strong, the other moderate.

Baseball was the only sport with a strong positive correlation between television ratings and books published. There is some amount of overlap in demographic patterns for book readers and baseball viewers that may account for this finding. For example, more women read books than do men (Robinson, 1990), and baseball counts more women among its viewers than do the other sports (Schlosberg, 1987). The characteristics of heavy readers noted by Heath (1997) also apply to the typical baseball

viewer described by Schlosberg (1987). These characteristics include being a college graduate, working in a professional or managerial position, and being aged 40–50.

There is no research that addresses the nature and character of a sport and the experience of reading books, yet it seems logical to make a connection between these two in the case of baseball. Mandelbaum (2004) suggests that “baseball is chess to football and basketball’s checkers. It is less straightforward, more complicated, more cerebral, and therefore more interesting to watch, to think about, and to discuss” (p. 46). The slower pace of the game, especially compared to football and basketball, has earned it the moniker of “the thinking man’s game,” which would seem to align it with book reading, an activity that is considered more contemplative and time consuming than other reading activities such as magazine or newspaper reading. Thus the nature of baseball affords a similar viewing and reading experience.

Basketball, which exhibited a weak positive correlation between ratings and books, has a significantly different viewer profile, as described by Schlosberg (1987), from the other sports. The typical basketball viewer is more likely to be young, black, urban, and earning a lower income than viewers of other sports. There has been some criticism that because basketball is perceived to be a black sport it may not receive the same coverage by media nor be as widely accepted by mainstream viewers as other sports. This perception, in turn, may affect publishing in the sport, as publishers seek to maximize profits through large audiences. There were significantly fewer basketball books published than books in the other three sports from 1975–2004, the period for

which the data overlaps in all four sports. Further research is needed to determine how race impacts sports publishing.

Golf exhibited a moderate negative correlation between television ratings and books published. This is perhaps the most surprising finding. Golf has the second largest literature of the four sports, trailing only baseball. The size of the literature might be attributed to the fact that golf has the highest participation rate, but this hypothesis is weakened by basketball's having the second highest participation rate but the smallest literature. Golf's viewer profile also closely resembles that of Heath's (1997) heavy readers. According to Schlosberg (1987), golf viewers, more than viewers of the other sports, are likely to have higher incomes, work in professional or managerial positions, and have college degrees. In this case there may be limitations in the viewing experience that minimize its impact on publishing. Golf is the sport that fares least well on a television screen: the size of the ball makes it hard to follow; participants are spread over several acres of a course; and there is no home team to cheer for.

Football was found to have a strong negative correlation between ratings and books published. Two demographics of football viewers support this finding. The first is that its viewers are the least likely to be from professional or managerial employment (Schlosberg 1987), whereas individuals in this category are the most likely to read books (Heath, 1997). The second is that women, who are more likely to read books (Robinson, 1990; Heath, 1997), are least likely to watch football (Schlosberg, 1987). However, other demographics for football viewers correspond to those of book readers, including education level and income. Football viewers may possibly fall into the periodicals-only

reader category identified by McEvoy and Vincent (1980); if so, they would not choose books to pursue their interest in the sport.

Media Complementarity

Given that only one sport exhibited a strong positive correlation between television ratings and books published, this study suggests that the media complementarity found by Randle (2001) and Neumann (1995) does not exist between television and sports books in general, but may hold true for baseball and possibly basketball. This finding is in opposition to Randle's conclusion regarding television's positive impact on sports magazine publishing. This may be partially explained by McEvoy and Vincent's (1980) finding that there are periodicals-only readers. Further study might show that there is an overlap in televised sports audiences and periodicals-only readers. There also may be different motivations for reading sports magazines versus sports books which explain the difference in Randle's conclusion and that of this study. Many studies have identified the motivations of sports viewers, but there are no studies examining the motivations of sports readers.

Cable Television

Although network television was the exclusive broadcaster of sports programming through the end of the 1970s and still retains an integral role in televised sports today, cable television has played an increasingly important role since the 1980s. As was noted earlier, during the decade following ESPN's launch in 1979, publishing in

all four sports enjoyed a period of growth. After ESPN2 hit the airwaves in 1993, three of the sports again saw increases in publishing, with baseball the sole sport losing ground in the few years immediately following due to the baseball strike and cancellation of the World Series in 1994. The introduction of ESPN2 appears to have been less influential than that of ESPN, as the gains of the three sports were not as significant after ESPN2 appeared as they were following the introduction of ESPN. The launch of the Golf Channel also may have helped to precipitate a surge in golf publishing; its first broadcast in 1995 was followed by a 41% increase in golf publishing from 1995 to 1996.

The effect of increased cable programming on book publishing may not always be positive. In 1987, ESPN contracted to air NFL games on Sunday nights, but football publishing decreased in subsequent years, falling 34% between 1987 and 1992. These observations suggest that cable sports programming may impact nonfiction sports publishing. Further research could define the nature and extent of that impact.

Bestsellers

Sports books began to appear consistently on bestselling book lists in the 1960s, perhaps launched by Jim Brosnan's *The Long Season*, an irreverent, insider view of baseball by a pitcher for the St. Louis Cardinals and Cincinnati Reds, published in 1960. A brief review of bestselling sports books in relation to publishing and televised sports follows.

Twenty sports bestsellers published between 1960 and 2000 were identified and used to examine the possible impact of a sports bestseller on subsequent publishing. Of

10 baseball bestsellers, only one was followed by a sustained increase in publishing; this was *The Bill James Historical Baseball Abstract* published in 1985. There were three basketball bestsellers between 1981 and 1996, with Feinstein's 1986 *A Season on the Brink* the only one possibly leading to an increase in basketball books in the following years. None of the five football or three golf bestsellers examined were followed by increases in publishing. This brief, exploratory review suggests that most bestselling sports books do not have a significant impact on subsequent publishing.

There is no pattern in televised sports ratings prior and subsequent to the publication of bestselling sports books in this sample. Some of the bestsellers in basketball, football, and golf are preceded in the year or two prior to their publication by an increase in television ratings; others are not. Some of the bestsellers in these sports are followed by an increase in television ratings; others see a subsequent decrease in ratings. Baseball bestsellers also showed no discernible pattern in response to television ratings prior to publication, but there was a noticeable pattern in television ratings subsequent to their publication. Every bestselling baseball book was followed the next year by an increase in World Series television ratings. The five bestsellers published during the time period for which baseball season television ratings were available were followed by increased or flat ratings. Even though it seems counterintuitive to hypothesize that reading may increase television viewing, the pattern in baseball bestsellers and television ratings seems to suggest that such a hypothesis may be worth exploring.

Implications for Libraries

In the introduction, four topics of concern for libraries in relation to television and publishing were presented. They were promoting literacy and reading, addressing aliteracy, assessing the effects of new media on library collections, and determining the demand for books by library patrons. The present study provides some insight into these topics as they relate to sports.

Given that the growth of sports publishing has outstripped that of the industry as a whole and that of the nonfiction sector, an argument can be made that publishers see a demand for sports books which they seek to fill. Libraries need to be aware of this demand and determine if their resources adequately address it. To tap into this interest in sports, libraries should ensure that sports magazines are well-represented in their collection. If patrons are aware of and come to the library to read sports magazines, the sports book collection could then be marketed with displays at appropriate times during the year, such as the week prior to major tournaments in each of the sports. Promotion could also be tied to sports news that moves from the sports page to the front page of newspapers, whether positive or negative, such as the steroids scandal in baseball. Sports material should also be visible on a library's Web site. A library might provide a portal Web page listing popular and useful sports Web sites, as well as highlighting the library's databases which provide access to sports information.

In addressing aliteracy, it is important for libraries to be visible where the sports fans and viewers are, as individuals who choose not to read are not likely to visit the library. The American Library Association (ALA) has developed a sponsorship program

with Major League Baseball (MLB), which this year “will challenge library users of all ages to step into their library and use its resources to find the answers to baseball trivia questions” (ALA, 2006, *Step Up to the Plate*). Given that this study indicates baseball fans and viewers are already more likely to read than viewers of other sports, it would be beneficial if similar programs were initiated with the National Basketball Association (NBA) and National Football League (NFL). Collaborating with the NBA, in particular, would potentially reach a very different audience than does working with MLB, given the demographics for basketball viewers cited earlier.

ALA has also joined with ABC Television to produce public service announcements that are distributed nationwide to ABC affiliates. Perhaps a more effective marketing effort would be to place an ad during the Super Bowl. In 2006, this event was watched in almost 46 million homes by more than 140 million people. No other venue provides a similar opportunity for library and reading promotion to reach as many people.

Nearly 40 years after television became ubiquitous in the United States, the publishing industry is going strong. Some research demonstrates that television positively impacts print media (Randle, 2001; Neumann 1995), some indicates a mixed impact as this study does. If we look to television as a model for predicting the impact of new media, it is likely that libraries will remain print centered, at least until the printing technology itself changes and books are produced on “e-paper.” Even as the technology changes, there will likely be many years of mixed media in publishing: books, CD-ROMs, DVDs, and e-books coexisting. As Randle (2001) states, “Old media have found

ways to survive in the presence of new media. So even with all the excitement generated by the explosive growth of the Internet and its exciting capabilities, history shows us that old media continue to survive and prosper” (p. 14). Over the next several decades, libraries will need to continue to follow trends in both print and electronic publishing, as well as to respond to patron demand for the various resources.

Further Research

Multivariate analyses are needed to fully explore the complex relationships between television and books. Other variables that could be investigated include increase in sports television programming per year, number of sports cable stations, number of households or viewers, number of sports publishers, participation rates in the sports, and length of seasons.

Analysis of sports publishing would benefit from information regarding publishers in this area. To obtain information regarding sports publishers, several sources need to be consulted. The bibliography compiled in this study yields the publishers of almost 15,000 sports books. This information could be analyzed in conjunction with other bibliographies of the sports.

This study demonstrated that there are significant differences among the sports. In-depth studies of each sport would likely prove fruitful in generating additional insights regarding sports publishing, reading, and viewing.

Little is currently known about adult readers of sports books. Survey research to identify characteristics and motivations of readers is needed. Research in this area might seek to apply the uses and gratifications theory of mass media and communication.

Even though e-books are not currently a significant portion of the book market, they are a growing segment. Many sports reference books work well in an electronic format in which readers can easily search for statistics and information in which they are interested. How have e-books impacted sports publishing? Do electronic editions of books make up a greater percentage of the sports market than of the general book market?

Also lacking is an examination of role of libraries in providing sports information to the public. Are libraries successfully serving patrons with an interest in sports? Is the circulation of sports books impacted by televised sports events?

And last, we cannot rule out the size of the ball. Plimpton's game theory of literature, or the "Small Ball Theory," may have an impact on sports book publishing that has yet to be assessed. Plimpton (1992) writes that "there seems to be a correlation between the standard of writing about a particular sport and the ball it utilizes—that the smaller the ball, the more formidable the literature" (p. 16). The present study could be expanded upon to include quality as well as quantity of books in an effort to prove, or disprove, Plimpton's provocative theory.

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APPENDIX A
TELEVISION RATINGS DATA

Year	Baseball		Basketball		Football		Golf	
	Season	World Series	Season	Finals	Season	Super Bowl	Masters	U.S. Open
1957		30.9						
1958		30.8						
1959		29.5						
1960		23.7						
1961		25.8						
1962		23.3						
1963		28.9						
1964		23.9						
1965		24.1						
1966		25.3						
1967		22.9				41.1		
1968		22.8				36.8		
1969		22.4				36		
1970		19.4				39.4		
1971		24.1				39.9	8.5	6.4
1972	2.7	27.5				44.2	10.9	9.1
1973	2.5	30.7				42.7	8.4	9.0
1974	2.6	25.6		13.5	12.9	41.6	7.7	7.3
1975	2.6	29		10.1	15.5	42.4	10.0	6.8
1976	2.9	27.7		11.5	16.7	42.3	8.7	7.3
1977	3.6	29.9		12.7	16.2	44.4	7.6	5.5
1978	2.7	32.7		9.9	15.8	47.2	8.4	5.8
1979	2.7	28		7.2	15.9	47.1	7.8	5.2
1980	5.7	32.8		8	16.5	46.3	6.2	6.1
1981	7.1	30		6.7	17.2	44.4	9.1	7.5
1982	3.7	28		13	16.3	49.1	8.0	6.9

Year	Baseball		Basketball		Football		Golf	
	Season	World Series	Season	Finals	Season	Super Bowl	Masters	U.S. Open
1983	3.4	23.3		12.3	15.4	48.6	8.0	5.9
1984	4	22.9		12.1	14	46.4	7.7	5.9
1985	4.7	25.3		13.5	15.4	46.4	6.7	6.3
1986	5.2	28.6	6.8	14.1	14.8	48.3	6.5	5.6
1987	6.2	24	5.9	16.7	13.8	45.8	8.2	6.8
1988	6.5	23.9	5.4	15.4	13.7	41.9	6.7	4.3
1989	6.3	16.4	5.4	15.1	13.7	43.5	7.8	5.0
1990	7	20.8	4.9	12.3	13.3	39	8.4	5.1
1991	7	24	4.5	15.8	13.1	41.8	7.4	4.4
1992	7.1	20.2	4.5	14.2	13.1	40.3	6.7	5.7
1993	8	17.3	4.5	17.9	13.1	45.1	6.1	4.8
1994	6.5	0	4.4	12.4	13.5	45.4	6.9	4.6
1995	7.9	19.5	5	13.9	12.9	41.3	7.8	5.0
1996	8.7	17.4	5	16.7	12.2	46.1	7.6	4.2
1997	9.6	16.7	4.7	16.8	11.5	43.3	11.2	5.5
1998	9	14.1	4.6	18.7	11.3	44.5	8.6	4.6
1999	8.7	16	4.3	11.3	11.4	40.2	7.9	5.1
2000	8.4	12.4	3.3	11.6	10.7	43.3	7.6	6.0
2001	9	15.7	2.9	12.1	10.1	40.3	10.7	5.5
2002	9.3	11.9	2.9	10.2	10.4	40.4	8.1	7.5
2003	8.5	13.9	2.5	6.5	10.2	40.7	6.9	4.2
2004		15.8	2.2	11.5	10.1	41.3	6.7	4.4

APPENDIX B
BOOKS PUBLISHED DATA

Year	All Books	Nonfiction	Sports & Recreation	Baseball	Basketball	Football	Golf
1957	13,142	10,551	222	25			
1958	13,462	10,776	236	24			
1959	14,876	11,940	259	25			
1960	15,012	12,080	286	38			
1961	18,060	14,815	444	33			
1962	21,904	18,326	476	39			
1963	25,784	21,873	568	45			
1964	28,451	24,244	582	47			
1965	28,595	24,360	591	45			
1966	30,050	26,008	526	49			
1967	28,762	24,706	501	42			
1968	30,387	26,514	644	33		35	
1969	29,579	25,608	734	42		51	
1970	36,071	31,460	799	61		51	
1971	37,692	32,768	890	50		44	
1972	38,053	33,309	941	77		67	58
1973	39,951	34,346	1,082	64		97	65
1974	40,896	35,708	1,132	95		86	68
1975	39,372	34,066	1,225	95	37	68	62
1976	41,698	36,280	1,224	92	43	54	64
1977	42,780	37,662	1,119	103	37	55	51
1978	41,216	36,226	1,160	80	41	55	65
1979	45,182	40,557	1,122	107	28	51	49
1980	42,377	38,363	971	115	38	58	65
1981	48,793	41,955	1,264	103	32	60	52
1982	46,935	40,467	1,191	157	32	52	56
1983	53,380	46,676	1,335	145	35	58	47

Year	All Books	Nonfiction	Sports & Recreation	Baseball	Basketball	Football	Golf
1984	51,058	44,481	1,299	147	29	61	60
1985	50,070	43,799	1,154	162	24	65	79
1986	52,637	45,781	1,192	146	27	81	80
1987	56,027	48,493	1,263	195	30	93	76
1988	55,483	48,649	1,099	206	45	88	101
1989	53,446	46,377	1,077	238	50	72	90
1990	46,743	40,105	973	263	42	73	105
1991	48,146	41,832	1,063	250	59	81	110
1992	49,276	42,687	1,113	292	58	61	129
1993	49,756	43,333	1,146	331	62	80	131
1994	51,863	45,383	1,161	284	68	72	150
1995	62,039	53,027	1,591	222	64	78	147
1996	68,175	58,064	1,751	233	76	82	207
1997	119,262	107,006	3,664	248	81	125	207
1998	120,244	106,210	3,718	246	67	107	201
1999	119,357	104,530	3,252	296	73	104	215
2000	122,108	105,012	3,483	308	47	93	202
2001	141,703	121,430	3,789	253	47	75	189
2002	147,120	126,489	4,086	275	40	83	159
2003	171,061	149,071	4,718	298	54	86	127
2004				359	59	110	175

APPENDIX C

SPORTS BESTSELLERS

Year	Title	Author	Sport
1960	The Long Season	Jim Brosnan	baseball
1962	Veeck as in Wreck	Bill Veeck and Ed Lin	baseball
1965	Paper Lion	George Plimpton	football
1968	Instant Replay	Jerry Kramer and Dick Schaap	football
1970	Ball Four	Jim Bouton	baseball
1972	Boys of Summer	Roger Kahn	baseball
1972	The Summer Game	Roger Angell	baseball
1979	The Bronx Zoo	Sparky Lyle and Peter Golenbock	baseball
1981	The Breaks of the Game	David Halberstam	basketball
1985	The Bill James Historical Baseball Abstract	Bill James	baseball
1987	A Season on the Brink	Jon Feinstein	basketball
1989	Summer of '49	David Halberstam	baseball
1990	Bo Knows Bo	Bo Jackson	baseball and football
1990	Friday Night Lights	H.G. Bissinger	football
1992	Harvey Penick's Little Red Book	Harvey Penick	golf
1993	And If You Play Golf, You're My Friend	Harvey Penick	golf
1995	A Good Walk Spoiled	John Feinstein	golf
1996	Bad as I Wanna Be	Dennis Rodman	basketball
1999	When Pride Still Mattered	David Maraniss	football
2000	Joe DiMaggio: The Hero's Life	Richard Ben Cramer	baseball

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1995	A Good Walk Spoiled	John Feinstein	golf
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