

Theory and Methodology in Media Research

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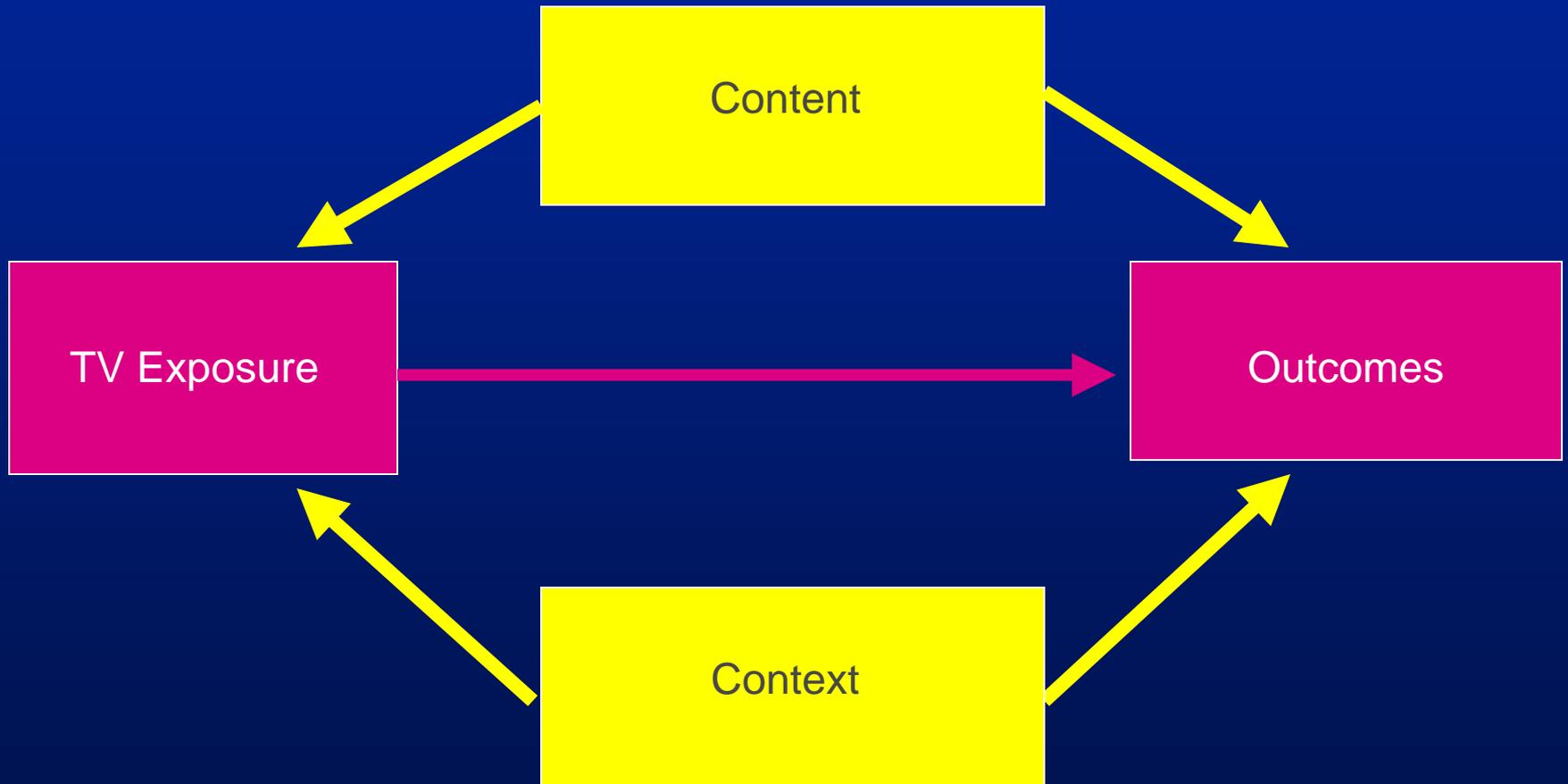
Limitations of current research base

- Limited conceptualization
- Exposure measure poor
- Generalizability questionable
- Much research is 20-40 years old
- Surprisingly little on very young children

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Conceptual Model



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Measuring Television Viewing

- Retrospective self-report (global estimates)
 - *How many hours does your child watch...?*
- Diaries (prospective or retrospective)
 - *Please record as they watch; Please circle what they watched.*
- Video surveillance
 - Time lapse video (used for validation)
- Devices (proprietary)
 - Nielson
 - Arbitron (PPM)

CDS Time Diary Example

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	J
TIME	What did your child do?	Time Began	Time End	IF WATCHING TV, was that a video tape or TV program?	IF TV, VIDEO, COMPUTER GAMES, what was the name of the (program/video/ game) child was (watching/playing)?	Where was child?	Who was doing the activity with child?	Who (else) was there but not directly involved in the activity?	What else was child doing at the same time?
Midnight	⓪ Sleeping	12:00	7:30			at home			
	⓪ Watching TV	5:30	6:00	T.V. program	Wishbone	at home	father, cousin	mother	playing w/ toys
	⓪ Eating dinner	6:00	6:25			at home	father, mother, cousin		talking
	Reading book from library	6:25	7:00			at home		cousin, mother,	
	Playing computer games	7:00	7:30		Oregon Trail	at home	cousin	mother, father	
	Taking a bath	7:30	8:20			at home			
	Brushing teeth	8:20	8:30			at home			
	Watching TV	8:30	9:00	Video	Aladdin	at home	cousin	father, mother	hitting cousin
	Listening to bedtime story	9:00	9:20			at home	mother	father	
Midnight	Sleeping	9:20	12:00			at home			

Nielsen Box (People Meter)



- Records what is on set
- Enter ID # for who is watching

Portable People Meter



- Worn like a pager
- Captures inaudible signal encoded in any broadcast media
- Records date, time, specific program

Base Station



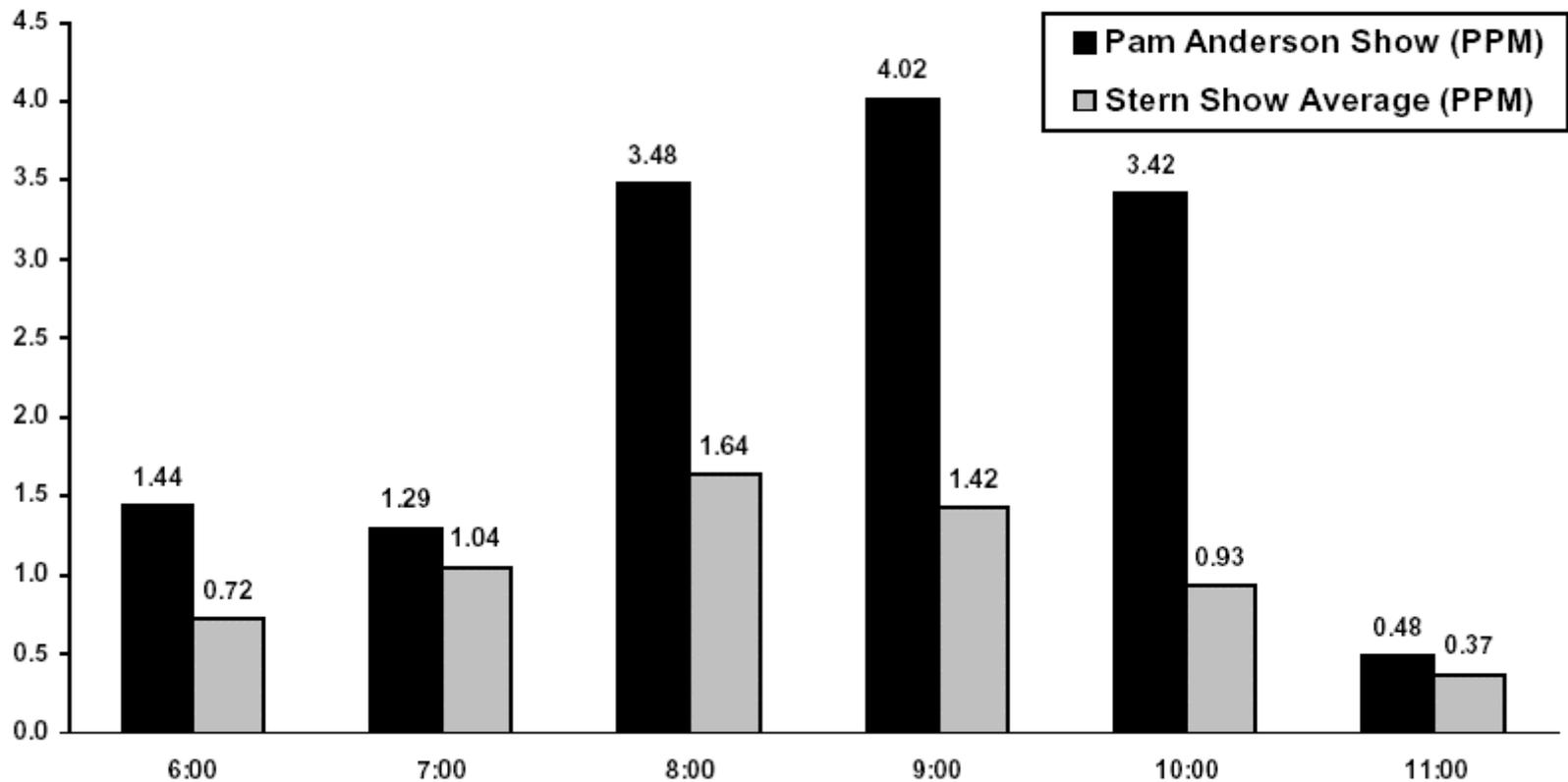
Dock for recharge, data dump, & points



Nightly docking

- Recharges
- Downloads and transmits data
- Earns points (feedback)

DISCERNING THE IMPACT OF A SPECIFIC GUEST APPEARANCE: PAMELA ANDERSON ON THE HOWARD STERN SHOW



February 2002, Philadelphia Metro. Persons 12+, Monday-Friday 6A-10A

Measuring Content

- What is “good” media?
- Better Taxonomies are needed
 - Parental self-report
 - Evidence-based
 - Expert opinion
 - Content vs context derived?

Measuring Context

- Background vs Foreground
 - Is 18 hours a miscode?
- Beyond who is in the room
 - Are they watching?
 - Are they processing?
 - Are they discussing?

Measurement Issues (cont)

- Commercials
- Displacement
- Concurrency
- Other Media
 - Computers, games, Video/DVD
- Blinding

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? Generalizability

- Lab based
- Select samples
- Brief follow-up

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- Best longitudinal studies (Early Windows etc) now dated
 - Research not keeping up with technology itself

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Why focus on young children?

- Critical window of brain development
 - 1st three years of life
- Significant exposure
 - 20-30% of waking hours in front of screen
- Early exposure predicts later viewing
 - Primary prevention approach

Why focus on young children? (cont)

- Both high and low quality programs abound
 - Optimization rather than reduction
- Fast growing segment

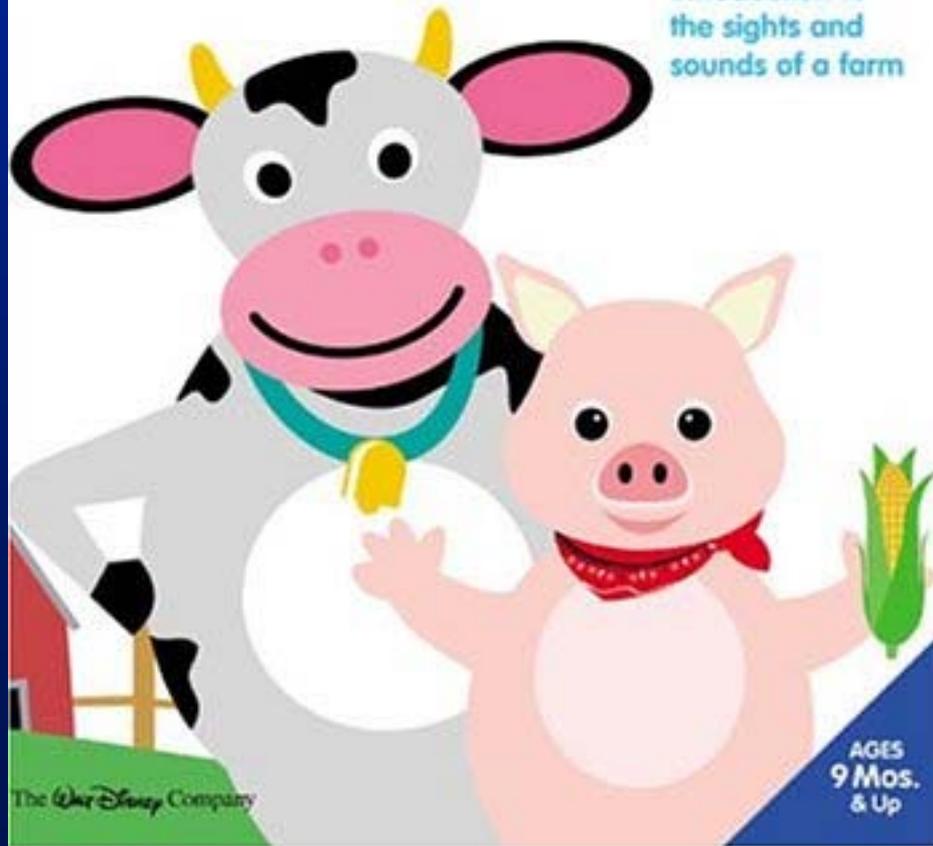
baby
einstein.



Baby MacDonald

A Day On The Farm

A fun-filled
introduction to
the sights and
sounds of a farm



The Walt Disney Company

AGES
9 Mos.
& Up

Research Paradigms

- Optimization rather than reduction
- Experimental designs
- Population based
- Theory-driven outcome vs process
- Long(er) term outcomes
- Public health approach (prevention, scalability)
- Gene-environment effects

Challenges to Research

- “Real” effect sizes may be small
- Precision in measurements of content and context
 - How good is good enough?
- Interventions are transparent
 - Social response bias a problem
 - Can look at distal endpoints