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“A Noble Experiment in Human Values”: The Children’s Television Series *Vegetable Soup* and Its Initiative to Change the Environment for Racism in 1970s America

Jeffrey S. Reznick

Abstract

This article explores the creation, production, and reception of the unique, popular, and publicly-funded mid-1970s children’s television series *Vegetable Soup*, arguing that it constitutes a specific and intriguing chapter in the history of efforts in the United States to change “the environment for racism.”

Keywords

Children; public television; race; racial isolation; racism

On August 15, 2017, shortly after the racial violence in Charlottesville, Virginia, William Wan and Sarah Kaplan published an article in *The Washington Post* entitled ““Why are people still racist? What science says about America’s race problem.” They organized it around several fundamental questions: “What causes people to be racist? When does racism drive people to commit violence? Can you teach people not to be racists? Will racism disappear over time?” In response to the first question, Wan and Kaplan wrote, Jennifer Richeson, a Yale University social psychologist commented:

In some ways, it’s super simple. People learn to be whatever their society and culture teaches them. We often assume that it takes parents actively teaching their kids for them to be racist. The truth is that unless parents actively teach kids not to be racists, they will be. This is not the product of some deep-seated, evil heart that is cultivated. It comes from the environment, the air all around us.

In response to the question “Can you teach people not to be racists?,” Richeson offered that:

The only way to change bias is to change culture. You have to change what is acceptable in society. People today complain about politically correct culture, but what that does is provide a check on people’s outward attitude, which in turn influences how we think about ourselves internally. Everything we’re exposed to gives us messages about who is good and bad.

Moreover, on the question of “Will racism disappear over time?,” Richeson argued that: “It’s a myth that our country will somehow become more progressive. And it’s equally a myth to think that our children will save us.” She pointed out further that “most of the alt-right activists who sparked violence in Charlottesville were young white men,” and, she continued, “[t]here’s data that shows young groups like millennials are more progressive and

egalitarian. But that's usually on issues like climate change or gay marriage, usually not in their level of implicit bias." And Richeson concluded:

It's simply not true that we just need to wait for the few old racist men left in the South to die off and then we'll be fine. The rhetoric for racism is still in place. The environment for racism is still there. Unless we change that, we can't lessen racism.

These observations, as well as others offered in the article by Wan and Kaplan and in writings of all kinds which appeared in the wake of the violence in Charlottesville, serve as a reminder that efforts to change "the environment for racism" have pervaded American politics, culture, and society for decades. At the same time, researchers of multiple disciplines have increasingly recognized race, racism, and racial isolation to be key social determinants of health alongside violence, education, housing, and employment, and other aspects of daily life, all of which "reach beyond the boundaries of traditional health care and public health sectors" ("Determinants of Health") to influence population health (Krieger et al.; Paradies et al.; United States, Public Health Service, Office of the Surgeon General).

The creation, production, and reception of the unique and popular mid-1970s children's television series *Vegetable Soup* constitutes a specific and intriguing chapter in the history of efforts to change "the environment for racism." Concerned directly with race, racism, and racial isolation, and produced by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) through a grant from the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, *Vegetable Soup* premiered in the fall of 1975. Although it ran for only two seasons, the circumstances of its broadcast were remarkable for the time, indeed unprecedented: *Vegetable Soup* was the first publicly-funded series to be broadcast on both public and commercial stations, as well as cable television via Warner-Amex Satellite Entertainment. This short but nonetheless culturally significant life of the series belies its complex and dynamic history, its place in the overlapping histories of popular television and public education (Davis; Dobson; Holz; Terrace; Woolery), and its historical significance as a cultural product which sought to change "the environment for racism." *Vegetable Soup* was more than a mere children's educational television series. It was a unique public health initiative, ahead of its time and in tune with contemporary efforts to define the social determinants of health which would pave the way to formal epidemiological investigations into the health impacts of racism, as well as a multitude of public-health focused opinions about the relationship between race and health in America. As the noted clinical psychologist Salvatore Didato aptly described *Vegetable Soup* toward the end of its first season, and in anticipation of its second, the series was "a noble experiment in human values." He stated further that while

...attitude change through films is not a new idea...never before has such a venture as *Vegetable Soup* been tried on so many millions of persons. It is not a piddling effort by any means...[and] what is all means is that creating educational TV can be a power force in human relations, and there's no reason why adult viewers can't eventually be influenced favorably also, no matter how utopian this may sound.

Conceptual Origins

Vegetable Soup was at once a product of 1970s America and a by-product of the social justice movements and related legislation of the previous decade. Its primary conceptual origins reside at the intersection of two hallmark efforts of the period and their overlapping ecosystem of ideas: 1) advancing the desegregation of the nation's public schools, as addressed by the 1972 Emergency School Aid Act (ESAA) and by the associated Emergency School Aid Act Television Program (ESAA-TV) (Hodge); and 2) assessing the impact of television on American social behavior, as addressed by the 1972 report of the U.S. Surgeon General *Television and Growing Up: The Impact of Televised Violence*.

ESAA and ESAA-TV

Originally proposed by President Richard Nixon in 1970, the ESAA legislation provided federal assistance to local school districts specifically to address four special categories of need:

[1] The special needs of desegregating (or recently desegregated) districts for additional facilities, personnel and training required to get the new, unitary system successfully started. [2] The special needs of racially impacted schools where de facto segregation persists—and where immediate infusions of money can make a real difference in terms of educational effectiveness. [3] The special needs of those districts that have the furthest to go to catch up educationally with the rest of the nation. [4] The financing of innovative techniques for providing educationally sound interracial experiences for children in racially isolated schools.

Nixon explained further that these four categories of need would be met through three categories of aid, namely:

(I) Aid to districts now eliminating de jure segregation either pursuant to direct Federal court orders or in accordance with plans approved by the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, for special needs incident to compliance. (II) Aid to districts that wish to undertake voluntary efforts to eliminate, reduce or prevent de facto racial isolation, with such aid specifically targeted for those purposes. (III) Aid to districts in which de facto racial separation persists, for the purpose of helping establish special interracial or inter-cultural educational programs or, where such programs are impracticable, programs designed to overcome the educational disadvantages that stem from racial isolation.

Congress enacted ESAA in 1975 (Education Amendments of 1972) and allocated a minimum of three percent of ESAA funds for the development of ESAA-TV, which, through its programming, was “designed to assist with the overall ESAA mission by helping to eliminate racial isolation, fear, and distrust, and by providing compensatory education material (Nelson et al. 11). More specifically, the legislation for ESAA-TV authorized the program “to make awards for the production of these series only to public or private non-profit organizations employing members of minority groups in responsible positions in the development, production, and administration of the television programs” (Education Amendments of 1972). It also “specified that the series were to be made available for

transmission free of charge and without commercial advertisement” and that awardees would be required to complete “research and evaluation of educational and effective changes achieved by the viewers” of their productions” (Nelson et al. 13).

With these expectations, ESAA-TV followed in the footsteps of the federally-funded Children’s Television Workshop (CTW), which had been producing many children’s series, the most famous of which was *Sesame Street*. CTW also developed curricular materials, teacher guides, and teacher workshops to encourage the use of *Sesame Street* and other CTW series in the classroom (Cook and Curtain 1-63; Hodge; Nelson et al. 12-13). This context is especially important to the history of *Vegetable Soup* because it helps to reveal how some contemporaries defined and understood the purpose of this series, and how some expressly did not.

Television and Growing Up: The Impact of Televised Violence

Issues of race and racism also inhabited the contemporaneous Surgeon General’s report on the impact of televised violence on children. This report conveyed the belief that technology in general—and particularly television—could be an effective tool to achieve social good and a detriment to society as the medium was being fueled by longstanding social dynamics. Chapter nine of the report, “The Unfinished Agenda,” specifically addressed these dynamics, stating that:

...[i]n our quest for more ideal social structures, we have developed in the United States a basic philosophy and many laws which observe, honor, and seek to protect certain basic rights defined for all human beings. However, in the interpretation, administration, and living out of these philosophies and laws, we have employed sociopolitical processes which regularly favor and idealize some people while devaluing and neglecting others. Despite the aspirations for a more human society held by some of the founders of this country, the institution of slavery, racism, various forms of classism, and discrimination based upon sex also emerged... (United States, Public Health Service, Office of the Surgeon General 120).

The report concluded that to confront these issues and the social conflicts they cause and perpetuate “...[i]t seems very possible that television has great potential as a social force to modify progressively society’s definition and awareness of violence. Clearly, this would necessitate a marked change in current practice, where it largely entertains and informs...”. ESAA-TV intended to realize this very change by helping to eliminate underlying social factors of violence—namely racial isolation, fear, and distrust—through its eventual support of thirty distinct television series, including *Vegetable Soup*. As Senator Walter Mondale (D-MN) stated in his Congressional testimony which introduced the proposed legislation with expert witnesses who offered their perspectives:

If we want our children to grow up without the prejudice that has stained so many of our generation, and we want the educational achievement of our children to be as great as possible, then why have we ignored the inexpensive chance to reach children over television in their preschool years? The habit of viewing the television set is well established, and the high cost of hardware, and the cost of television receivers in well over 95 percent of all homes in the country, has already

been met by the voluntary purchase of television sets by individual citizens. All that is needed is the software, the programming... (qtd. in Nelson et al. 13-14).

Testifying further as one of the expert witnesses was James A. Perkins, PhD, Chairman of the International Council for Educational Development. He stated:

A child watching television programming featuring actors of all races is himself taking part in integrated education. If an educational television program assumes the normality of good relationships between the races, and if it provides a pleasant viewing experience, a child watching the program is participating in integrated education under the best of possible circumstances. Television cannot take the place of the classroom. It can help to reinforce the child's positive experience with integration through the presentation in a remarkably flexible medium of many real life or fantasy situations. It can make children feel that an environment in which people of all races interact in positive ways is natural and pleasant. In showing that people of all races can live, work, and learn together in a spirit of harmony and understanding, educational programming can create positive racial attitudes which are essential if racial harmony is to prevail in the classroom and everywhere (qtd. in Nelson et al. 15).

While ESAA, ESAA-TV, and the Surgeon General's report combined to inform the immediate ecosystem of ideas which contributed to the creation of *Vegetable Soup*, the conceptual origins of the series lay in an even broader constellation of ideas, while its practical origins lay in a phone call during the spring of 1973 from Sidney P. Marland Jr., U.S. Commissioner of Education, to Ewald B. (Joe) Nyquist, New York State Commissioner of Education. Nyquist recounted this call in a 1980 interview about his public-sector leadership when responding to a question about the effectiveness of the ESAA legislation. He acknowledged that while it "really hasn't done the job for integration that was envisioned at the beginning... There is one way, though, that it affected New York" (qtd. in Murphy 35). He continued:

One day, Sid Marland, U.S. commissioner of education, called me up and said 'Joe, how are you?' 'Fine, great. How are you doing, Sid?' 'Great.' He said, 'Joe, how would you like a million and a half dollars?' I said, 'What the hell are you talking about?' He said, 'Joe, we think your organization is most capable of developing some kind of *Sesame Street* on racial integration and in creating racial understanding.' And I said, 'Yeah, I think we got the capabilities and when we need help, it is easier to get it here in New York, being what it is.' And that was it. We got the million and a half bucks and the program, *Vegetable Soup* is really very successful—it went all over the United States and still goes on, just like *Sesame Street*.

Nyquist not only correctly stated the ultimate outcome of *Vegetable Soup* by the end of its two-season run but also suggested the gusto with which he and his colleagues at NYSED proceeded during the spring of 1973 with their designated "Special Project" grant application to the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) (New York State Archives 13143-82 box 4 folder 27).

In this application, through a comprehensive survey of related initiatives and published works organized around key themes and addressing global, national, and state contexts, staff of NYSED worked in short order to justify their proposal to produce a yet-to-be-named children's television series about race, racial isolation, and racism. "While minority group isolation has existed in the United States for a number of generations," the application narrative began, "by no means is this purely an American problem" (New York State Archives 13143-82 box 4, folder 27). Quoting from the September 1967 *Statement on Race and Racial Prejudice* published by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], the narrative continued, explaining that:

'The school and other instruments for social and economic progress can be one of the most effective agents for the achievement of broadened understanding and the fulfillment of the potentialities of man. They can equally much be used for the perpetuation of discrimination and inequality...The schools should ensure that their curricula contain scientific understandings about race and human unity, and that invidious distinctions about people are not made in texts and classrooms. [In addition] [i]n view of the importance of teachers in any educational program, special attention should be given to their training. Teachers should be made conscious of the degree to which they reflect the prejudices which may be current in their society. They should be encouraged to avoid these prejudices.'

As the grant narrative explained further, the UNESCO report also noted that:

The media of mass communications are increasingly important in promoting knowledge and understanding, but their exact potentiality is not fully known. Continuing research into the social utilization of the media is needed in order to assess their influence in relation to formation of attitudes and behavioral patterns in the field of race prejudice and race discriminations. Because the mass media reach vast numbers of people at different educational and social levels, their role in encouraging or combating race prejudice can be crucial. Those who work in these media should maintain a positive approach to the promotion of understanding between groups and populations. Representation of peoples in stereotypes and holding them up to ridicule should be avoided. Attachment to news reports of racial designations which are not germane to the accounts should also be avoided...

The application narrative continued with a section *The American Dilemma*, addressing how Gunnar Myrdal, in his 1944 book of the same title, "noted that one of the basic problems in American Society [sic] which has been perpetuated for generation after generation was the crisis existing between the stated American heritage of equality and opportunity and practices which did not promote that heritage." The subsequent section, *Majority-Minority Polarization*, described the conclusions of the 1968 National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, known as the Kerner Commission, whose report on urban unrest would reshape American debates about race and inequality (Gillon). A subsequent section "Equality of Educational Opportunity" addressed the national study of the same title, specifically the Coleman Report which set the standard for the study of public education (Dickinson). Among the other major sections of the grant narrative were *Governmental Concerns*, *White Flight*, *Desegregation Trends*, *Governmental Policy*, and *Awareness of Differences*. In this

last section, staff of NYSED discussed a variety of recent and highly relevant literature, including *Rightness of Whiteness* by Abraham Frederick Citron; *Institutional Racism in America* by Louis L. Knowles and Kenneth Prewitt, *Institutional Racism in America*; *Shortchanged Children of Suburbia* by Alice Miel, and *Integration and the Schools*, part of the *Report of the New York State Commission on the Quality, Cost, and Financing of Elementary and Secondary Education*.

In their focus on these themes and contextualizing them in wide range of literature, the staff of NYSED largely defined their proposed series in public health terms, essentially making it of a piece with contemporary efforts to define the social determinants of health (Bellow and Breslow, 1972) and unfolding observations on this subject (Dubos 1979; McKeown, 1978). These initiatives would pave the way to formal epidemiological investigations into the health impacts of racism, as well as a multitude of public-health focused opinions about the relationship between race and health in America (American Public Health Association; Culp-Ressler; Estes; “Determinants of Health;” García and Sharif; Gee; Mitchell; Paradies; Panko; Patychuk; Paradies).

While conceptually and intellectually expansive, NYSED’s proposed project had a pragmatic focus. “Somewhat aside from the educational, pragmatic, policy, sociological and other considerations already noted,” the grant narrative explained, “the New York State Education Department through its Division of Intercultural relations in Education is concerned about the affective learnings of children, based on some of the research already available.” Citing the landmark educational research of Helen G. Trager and Marian Yarrow, as well as that of Mary Ellen Goodman, the narrative continued:

The State of New York is convinced that children’s attitudes and affective learnings and their development commence early in their lives. For this reason, then, the intended audiences for the activities proposed herein are children from the Pre-K level commencing at about the age of three through children enrolled in schools in the first and second grades (New York State Archives 13143-82 box 4 folder 27).

The depth and breadth of NYSED’s grant application therefore reveals how well its staff understood the landscape for their proposed children’s series on race, racial isolation, and racism. While they recognized the limits of its one-year timeframe to impact racial attitudes, noting that it “would be unrealistic to expect to achieve the objectives of a basic change on either a national or an international scope,” they expressed confidence that “objectives related to the activities designed to meet some of the needs...are obtainable.” Those objectives specifically entailed:

For the target population of pre-school, kindergarten, first and second grade children, a primary objective is the elimination of negative attitudes toward children and adults of another racial, religious, or ethnic group, particularly those identified as minority groups in the guidelines of the Emergency School Assistance Act [(Section 185.02((f)(1))]. Another objective related to this is the reduction or elimination of negative stereotypes of others who are different. It is expected that the target population will develop an understanding of the American heritage and concept of equal opportunity and those practices which do not permit attainment of

that heritage...[and] recognize and accept the fact that differences among people exist and that these differences will be perceived positively rather than negatively. Another aim of the project is to develop among young children the concept that there are many common samenesses and likenesses among all people. The project is designed to achieve for children who are isolated from others who are different from them, through vicarious experiences, an understanding, perception and, possibly, contact.

And the application narrative concluded its summary of the objectives of the proposed series, stating that:

The primary aim of this project is to develop within minority group children a positive self image. An additional objective seeks to assist majority group children to develop an understanding which is neither derogatory nor pejorative toward minority group children and adults.

With this defined purpose and broad justification, the staff of NYSED submitted their grant application to HEW on May 31, 1973. Shortly thereafter, in anticipation of a positive outcome, the department began to advertise for an executive producer to helm the envisioned series. As the trade journal *Broadcasting* informed its readers:

Soon to be announced is \$1.5-million Department of Health, Education, and Welfare grant to New York State Educational Department for new ETV [educational television] series, hopefully to achieve *Sesame Street* caliber, for pre-school and up-to-second grade appeal, seeking elimination of negative effects of racial isolation. Project envisages 78 15-minute segments. Dr. Bernarr Cooper, chief of NYSED's Bureau of Mass Communications in Albany, is looking for executive producer for 18-month project. Pay: \$52,000 of which \$41,000 would be take home, \$11,000 for retirement, health and other fringes ("Opening").

Cooper and his colleague William Hetzer, Project Director in the Bureau of Mass Communications, received sixty-five applications from minority and nonminority individuals alike (Segeberg Jr., *The Story of Vegetable Soup*). One of these applications came from Yanna Kroyt Brandt, an accomplished producer and writer noted for her leadership of the series *Problems of Everyday Living*, which featured top psychologists and other medical specialists, and for her authorship of several popular articles about key public health issues, including depression and recipients of welfare (Brandt and Brandt, 1968; Brandt, 1968). She held nearly two decades of professional experience and numerous awards, including four Emmys, a Peabody, and a Robert E. Sherwood Award. Respected deeply for her background and record of accomplishment, Brandt took up the role as executive producer of the series in September 1973, joining Cooper and Hetzer who brought their own substantial experience to the production enterprise as staff of NYSED. (Segeberg Jr., *The Story of Vegetable Soup*; Hetzer, 2017).

Serving the grant's Project Administrator, Cooper held a doctorate in communications from Stanford University, and he had served on the faculty of both the University of New Mexico and Florida State University. At NYSED, he was responsible in his full-time work for "administering policy and coordinating all work for the educational uses of CATV (cable

television), satellites, ETV stations, and FM radio network; and aiding colleges, universities and teacher-training institutions in their plans to use broadcast and other mass media, and assisting school systems on request” (New York State Archives 13143-82 box 4 folder 27; Hetzer 2017). Additionally, Cooper coordinated “plans for the production, acquisition and duplication of the more than 4½ million-dollar instructional video tape service available to more than 700 school systems and more than 227 institutions of high learning.” Especially notable in Cooper’s background—given what would take shape as the international dimension of *Vegetable Soup*—was his training in, teaching of, and work with “communications and broadcast materials in foreign languages and in literacy education,” as well as his record publications related to broadcasting in four languages, namely English, Japanese, Korean, and Chinese.

Serving the grant’s Project Director, and as an Associate in Educational Television in the Bureau of Mass Communications, Hetzer brought to *Vegetable Soup* his own substantial experience as executive producer of more than a dozen educational television series—including *Man Builds, Man Destroys*, the award-winning PBS environmental series—and as a Peace Corps volunteer in Bogota, Colombia, from 1965 to 1967, where he directed U.S. Agency for International Development-funded school programs for National Radio and Television of Colombia (“William Hetzer served in Colombia in Bogota beginning in 1965;” Hetzer 2017). One of the most impactful contributions Hetzer would make in the Bureau of Mass Communications was producing its memorable video branding (Hetzer 2017; University of the State of New York, Bureau of Mass Communications. “*Vegetable Soup* - Episode #1 (1975);” “The Bureau of Mass Communications/New York State Education Department”).

Joining Brandt on the original, core staff of *Vegetable Soup* were:

- Norma Davidoff, who served as supervising producer while also field producing and directing. She was a former English teacher turned television producer who had worked at CBS, NET (National Educational Television, which became PBS) and was a staff producer for *The Great American Dream Machine*, a weekly satirical variety television series, produced in New York City by WNET and broadcast on PBS from 1971 to 1972 (“*The Great American Dream Machine*”; after *Vegetable Soup*, Davidoff went on to become supervising producer of the 1982-83 public television series *Powerhouse*, as well as produce segments for this series about “the crime-fighting adventures of five members of an inner-city community center” (“Powerhouse”), and, in the early 1990s, became senior producer for Ted Turner’s Better World Society, which produced documentaries on global issues aired on TBS, BBC, and Gosteleradio (Davidoff 2017);
- Angela Fontanez-Fleming (later Angela Fontanez), who served as executive production manager, joined with her experience as a producer for the WNET award-winning, national series *Black Journal*, which covered issues relevant to African American communities. She was responsible for the production accounting of *Vegetable Soup* through its first season, as well as its second. As a result of her work on *Vegetable Soup*, Fontanez-Fleming went on to create and executive produce *Reflections of Our Past*, a pilot for children on early Puerto

Rican migration. Subsequently, she worked at WNYC-TV, producing the two-time, Emmy-award winning *Poetry Spots*, a series of video poems from a wide range of poets, from a woman in prison to the poet laureate of Israel, and executive producing a film biography of Arturo Alphonso Schomburg (“Angela Fontanez-Fleming” 1989; “*Black Journal* (television)”; Fontanez 2018; “The Legacy of Arturo Alfonso Schomburg”).

- Charles Thomas, who, like Davidoff, also served as supervising producer. He was a painter/teacher turned television writer and producer who worked on such shows as ABC’s *Like It is*, WNEW-TV’s *Inside Bedford-Stuyvesant*, and the Emmy Award-winning *Black News* (Davidoff 2018; “Channel 5 To Have Black News Program”);
- Joan Griffiths Vega, who served as production assistant. She was a young writer and theater professional who had worked for several years as the administrative assistant for the Director of Cultural Programming of National Educational Television. She went on to receive a master’s degree in cross-cultural mythology and Jungian and religious studies, as well as a master’s in fine arts in from Columbia University. Her love of multicultural myth and story lead her to become a storyteller. As she recognized the healing power of the listeners’ experience in hearing stories, she became a teacher of Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), teaching meditation and sharing multicultural tales to a wide demographic of people burdened by stress and pain. Over the years, she enjoyed producing small independent films and theatre projects. She co-produced and was post-production supervisor on the 2016 documentary “Central Park: The People’s Place” (Vega 2018).

To appreciate fully what Brandt and her team would collectively begin achieving during the summer of 1973, we fast forward two years to the outcome of their creative efforts.

Introducing *Vegetable Soup*

On June 19, 1975, the Bureau of Mass Communications hosted a crew party in New York City “to celebrate *Vegetable Soup* coming out” (New York State Archives 13143-82 box 4 folder 28). The series did so—officially—less than three months later when, on September 11, 1975, Ewald Nyquist convened a press conference in New York City to introduce *Vegetable Soup* as a new, magazine-style children’s television series “concerned with improving human understanding among children of all racial and ethnic backgrounds” (“State Unit Adopts ‘Sesame’ Formula for Racial Series”). Cooper, Hetzer, and Brandt joined Nyquist at the event along with Luberta Mays, PhD, a consultant who brought her own unique experience and expertise to *Vegetable Soup* as head of research and evaluation for the series. Mays was a professor of education at Medgar Evers College, a former teacher at Bank Street College of Education, and affiliated with the Research Foundation of New York City as a specialist in early childhood development. Mays was also ideally suited to work on *Vegetable Soup* because she was familiar with the production of a children’s television series: she had been the principal performer in the WNBC-produced, daily pre-schooler television series *Watch Your Child*, which ran from 1970-1973 (“*Watch Your*

Child/The Me Too Show”). Ultimately, Mays would become integral to the success of *Vegetable Soup*.

Through joint state and federal support, Nyquist explained at his press conference, *Vegetable Soup* was soon to be available in two formats, and free to commercial and noncommercial broadcast users alike, the former specifically including the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) thanks to the leadership and support of George Heinemann who had been a strong supporter of children’s and youth programming (Hetzler, 2017; Fortune-Maginley 2018; “George Heinemann, 78”; “Personal Award: George Heinemann”). In all, there would be 39 half-hour programs designed for these broadcasts and 78 fifteen-minute shows to be shown daily during school hours by the New York Network and by more than 100 public television stations in other parts of the country. And although Nyquist did not mention it, the series was in the public domain, as HEW grant guidelines made clear that all ESAA-TV-funded series should be, and as NYSED intended their production to be, for the greater good (New York State Archives 13143-82 box 4 folder 27 and B1060-87 box 31 folder 31; United States Congress 1972).

Echoing the message in the “Awareness of Differences” section of NYSED’s grant application to HEW, with which the staff of NYSED framed *Vegetable Soup* in distinctly public health terms, Nyquist’s further description of the series reflected a fundamental understanding that racism and racial differences were major determinates of an effective educational environment, as well as healthy, secure, and meaningful lives for all children:

Vegetable Soup is designed for children of elementary school age...[and it] reinforces and dramatizes the positive, life-enhancing value of human diversity, and it does this in entertaining and effective presentations that children can understand and relate to. The programs are designed to help counter the negative, destructive effects of racial prejudice and racial isolation. Although the subject is a serious one, the programs are produced in highly imaginative and entertaining ways that make them fun to watch (New York State Archives, 13143-82 box 5 folder 6)

Nyquist explained further that: “We call the series *Vegetable Soup* because, like vegetable soup, it has a variety of good things in it.” A final production outline of the series underscored the meaning of the title, stating that “... *Vegetable Soup*...is filled with the things children love—cliff-hangers, humor, fantasy, cartoons, games, crafts, songs, dances, and other children. Its underlying theme, however, is unlike anything ever attempted before on children’s television...” (New York State Archives 13143-82 box 5 folder 6). To illustrate this point as he described it in his own words, Nyquist presented clips of the opening title sequence as well as a segment, drawn from episode 32, which illustrated “the questions that children ask about race and racial characteristics,” in this case about the subject of different kinds of hair.

The opening sequence welcomed viewers with a score by the award-winning composer Peter Link, then best known for his work on the rock-opera *Salvation*, and vibrant animation by the acclaimed artist James A. Simon, president and creative director of Wantu Animation, the first fully African-American animation studio. The lyrics to the score invited viewers to enjoy the multi-colored, music-playing figures and singing faces and, in so doing, to

appreciate and embrace the allegory that “it takes all kinds of vegetables [individuals] to make vegetable soup [our world]” (University of the State of New York, Bureau of Mass Communications. “*Vegetable Soup* - Episode #1 (1975)”):

Come on along and join us

Come on along

We’re gonna have some fun

Come on along and join us

In a little bowl of Vegetable Soup

Come on along and join us

Come on along

We’re gonna have some fun

Come on along and join us

In a little bowl of Vegetable Soup

It takes all kinds of vegetables

All kinds of vegetables

All kinds of vegetables

To make a Vegetable Soup

It takes all kinds of vegetables

All kinds of vegetables

All kinds of vegetables

To make a Vegetable Soup

Come on along and join us

Come on along

We’re gonna have some fun

Come on along and join us

In a little bowl of Vegetable Soup

What’s In a Name? – Part I: An Idea Takes Shape

Ideas abound in every collaborative creative process, and in many cases the precise origins of one or more ideas can be challenging to identify. To a certain degree, this was the circumstance surrounding the very name “Vegetable Soup.” Yanna Brandt fundamentally conceived the concept of cultural differences being recognized not in terms of cultural absorption but rather cultural distinction (Davidoff 2017). However, the precise *name* of the series evolved and emerged through a creative process involving Link and Brandt, as Brandt

had been turning to Link regularly to write music for her productions (Davidoff 2017; Link 2017). As Link recalled in a 2017 interview:

Yanna told me that she was working on a new children's series to help counter racism, and that she needed an appropriate title, a title song, and several 'connectives' which would serve as transitions between individual segments of each episode in the series. She had a working title of about five words, and we discussed a number of ideas based on her fundamental idea, as she conveyed it to me, that it takes all kinds of people to make the diverse world in which we live. From this—and please keep in mind that crazy music titles were in vogue at this time—the idea occurred to me that it takes a variety of vegetables to make vegetable soup. I took this idea to Yanna, and she selected 'Vegetable Soup' from the ten or so ideas I presented to her.

During this same period, Brandt had engaged James Simon in creating animations for the title sequence, as well as the envisioned segues between the various "genres" of the series—as Brandt and her production team called the individual productions—all of which made up the magazine-style format of each episode, encompassing animation, live-action, comedy, drama, and documentaries, all as means to address and celebrate the importance of multicultural diversity in America. Link met with Simon to see his visualizations as one guide to proceed with his scoring. As Link recalled: "Jim's animation process was the most powerful thing in our effort together to conceive the title sequence. I was struck by the whimsy of his work, and especially his use of a variety of vivid colors."

In a separate interview which immediately complemented and supplemented the recollections by Link, Simon emphasized two specific features which distinguished his animation of the opening title sequence: "I used a variety of colors to help convey and reflect the many colors of America. And if you look carefully, you will see that the faces did not have eyes, or they did not have complete eyes. I introduced this in the animation to underscore the diversity of America and [to] counter the idea that a single color could represent a single individual." Framed by Brandt's vision, therefore, the outcome of Link and Simon's creative collaboration was the dynamic, indeed provocative, introduction which Nyquist presented at his September 1975 press conference.

What's In a Name? – Part II: Definition and Differentiation

Brandt and her creative team therefore used the very name of *Vegetable Soup* to define its purpose and intentions and, fundamentally, to differentiate the series from what were two of the most popular and publicly-funded contemporary children's series: *Sesame Street* and *The Electric Company*. At Nyquist's September press conference—and shortly thereafter in the NYSED journal *Inside Education*—Brandt made it clear that while the magazine-style format of *Vegetable Soup* was like *Sesame Street*, the series itself was fundamentally different than that program (Figures 1 and 2). It was also different than *The Electric Company* whose primary focus was reading comprehension. Brandt explained that whereas the producers of these popular programs concerned themselves with education, the producers of *Vegetable Soup* concerned themselves with ameliorating the negative effects of racism and racial isolation on children, and in doing so, to improve their social engagement,

their learning, and their health as young people in society. “I don’t consider [*Vegetable Soup*] competitive with *Sesame Street* in any way,” Brandt argued. “*Sesame Street* is for children younger than six...it teaches them mathematics and how to read. We’re talking about attitudes.” Brandt explained further that *Vegetable Soup* is:

...unlike *Sesame Street* in two respects: It is geared for elementary ages instead of the preschooler and is concerned with ‘attitudinal learning’ rather than what is called ‘cognitive learning’ in educational jargon.

In answering the question “Why [the name] vegetable soup?” Brandt explained in detail:

The melting pot idea is no longer viable. Many people don’t want life to be a melting pot. They want to be a part of the whole, yet they want to maintain their own ethnic and cultural identities. The aim of the program is to help children learn to live together in appreciation of the common humanity of different peoples. We are trying to show that prejudices, hostilities, and bad words lead to a limitation of experiences—that if we look at people as people, we’ll see that inside, everyone isn’t so different after all. That kind of realization can lead to undreamed-of possibilities for friendships and understanding (“*Vegetable Soup*. State Education Department’s TV Series Tackles Race Prejudice” 8-9)

Brandt continued, offering the realistic view held by her and her creative team:

Of course, we are not naïve enough to think that television can suddenly change anyone’s deep-seated prejudicial attitudes; but it can certainly present positive images and evidences which contradict negative attitudes. And certainly, enough evidence can change people’s way of thinking, and their attitudes. This is especially true for young children 8 to 12, during those crucial years of development.

Notably, Brandt’s thoughts about melting pot vs. vegetable soup were of a piece with the broader contemporary dialogue about multiculturalism in America. Among the many participants in this conversation was Carl A. Grant, a young scholar and future educational leader who in 1975 published one of his first articles “A Carrot in a Pot of Boiling Water is Not Vegetable Soup: Racism in School and Society.” Here, Grant used “vegetable soup” as a metaphor for multiculturalism. As he explained in a 2017 interview: “Multiculturalism—and multicultural education—involves class, gender, race, etc. If you are dealing with any one of these elements alone, that is not multiculturalism. Therefore, just as any one of these elements is not multiculturalism, or alone defines multicultural education, a carrot in a pot of boiling water is not vegetable soup.” Asked how and why he crafted the vegetable soup metaphor, Grant explained that he studied and held a degree in the culinary arts, suggesting that it emerged from his interest in this field. Asked further if he had been in touch with Brandt about *Vegetable Soup*, or otherwise had any involvement in the conception or production of the series, Grant indicated “no” and “none whatsoever.” (Grant) His work is nonetheless of a piece with the broader contemporary ecosystem of ideas which informed *Vegetable Soup*.

Informing this ecosystem were newspaper headlines nationwide which sometimes emphasized the important difference between *Vegetable Soup* and *Sesame Street/The Electric Company* (“Countering Racial Prejudice Is Aim of TV Program”; “Racial Prejudice

Target of New Children's Show;" "Vegetable Soup: ABCs of Attitudes;" "Vegetable Soup' - New Learning Dish" and sometimes overlooked this difference ("New Children's Program To Follow Used Formula;" "State Unit Adopts *Sesame* Formula for Racial Series;" "Vegetable Soup' Based On Successful Recipe"). The latter view perhaps annoyed Brandt while pleasing Nyquist, since he consistently and enthusiastically associated *Vegetable Soup* with *Sesame Street* in his public remarks. Regardless of this possibility, and as suggested previously, Nyquist demonstrated unwavering support of *Vegetable Soup* from the very beginning. Indeed, this support was emblematic of his equally unwavering advocacy for minorities, individuals with disabilities, and desegregation in New York State Schools even at a time when there were protests and lawsuits in many states against busing. In 1977, Nyquist's advocacy and outspokenness caught up with him when the New York State Board of Regents dismissed him as Commissioner of NYSED (Buder). Nyquist refused to step down, but he left the position soon thereafter (Hetzer 201; Murphy; Uhlig)

There was an important connection between *Vegetable Soup* and *Sesame Street* which Brandt likely did not wish to address because avoiding it, in fact, helped her to make the case for the distinctive, indeed unique, character of her series. That connection partly involved Simon and Link, as well as John Korty, president of the San Francisco-based studio Korty Films and the animator Elmore Theodore ("Tee") Collins). All four had either previously created content for *Sesame Street* and *The Electric Company*, or they were doing so at the same time they were contributing to *Vegetable Soup* ("John Korty"; ("Tee" Collins Taught, Created *Sesame Street* Productions"). Simon's best-known work for *Sesame Street* would become *A Loaf of Bread, a Container of Milk, and a Stick of Butter*, an animated short in the same style as his *Vegetable Soup* sequences, and one which also appeared occasionally in episodes of *The Electric Company*. Korty would become known for the cut-paper quality, stop-motion character of his animation, which he called *lumage* and would later demonstrate exquisitely in his critically-acclaimed 1983 feature film *Twice Upon a Time* ("Twice Upon a Time").

With their respective contributions, Link, Simon, and Korty joined a large, diverse, and unprecedented group of writers and producers who came together under Brandt's direction to craft and curate the multi-ethnic focus of *Vegetable Soup*. In identifying, gathering, and orchestrating this collective talent, Brandt abundantly met—and exceeded—the expectation of the series "employing members of minority groups in responsible positions in [its] development, production, and administration." Indeed, she embraced an approach to producing the series which was as forward-thinking as the series itself, fundamentally because she believed that one could not achieve the latter without the former. As Brandt later recalled:

I was determined that we were going to search out and hire minority crews, minority producers, minority editors, all sorts of people of color, not just African-American but Hispanic and Asian etc. And to have a real United Nations. And to help these people train so they could then get jobs in the mainstream industry. And I hired a production manager who was Hispanic—Angela Fontanez-Fleming—and she, of course, had been working with people of color, and she knew a lot of them. We hired a production manager named Preston Holmes who I still work with; I've

worked with him through five films. He is now line-producing a major Hollywood movie. He line-produced a lot of Spike Lee's movies. He is hugely successful. Hiro Norita is a hugely successful California director-producer. So, *Vegetable Soup* was not only about doing the program. It was also about how the program was going to be done (Brandt 2007).

Alongside these early-career and notable professionals, Brandt brought on board many others (New York State Archives B1060-87 box 31 folder 3), including but not limited to:

- Louis J. San Andres, a young film editor and cinematographer who worked on the 1972 film *Black Rodeo* starring Muhammad Ali, which documents "what took place when a traveling black rodeo set up stakes in Harlem one warm summer day in 1971," as well as "the history and legacy of black cowboys in the West during the 19th and early 20th centuries (*"Black Rodeo Documentary Now Available On DVD;"* "Louis San Andres");
- Albert P. Brodax, who produced and co-wrote the Beatles' award-winning 1968 animated film *Yellow Submarine*; he subsequently became the animation supervisor for ABC, where he produced the children's educational series *Make a Wish*, which ran from 1971 to 1976, and was hosted by the musician Tom Chapin, and *Animals, Animals, Animals*, which ran from 1976 to 1981, and was hosted by Hal Linden ("Albert B. Brodax");
- Lucille Clifton, noted author of children's and poetry books, whose volumes of poetry which appeared from 1969 through the mid-1970s reflected the political and social upheavals of the period, and whose 1973 children's book *All Use Come Cross the Water* "created the context to raise awareness of African-American history and heritage" ("Lucille Clifton 1936-2010");
- Moctezuma Esparza, a young filmmaker, whose footage of a speech by the Mexican-American radical and civil rights activist Reies Lopez Tijerina became the basis for the 1970 film *Requiem 29*, which documented "the chilling inhuman treatment of 50,000 Chicanos by police and the death of L.A. Times journalist Ruben Salazar at the Chicano National Moratorium in Los Angeles on August 29, 1970 ("Requiem 29"). Like his fellow *Vegetable Soup* contributors Link, Simon, and Korty, Esparza worked for Sesame Street, specifically developing bilingual segments. Significantly, he produced the pilot and first season of the award-winning *Villa Alegre*, another ESAA-TV funded children's television program. Esparza went on to have a successful career as a film producer, entrepreneur, and business executive, becoming committed to public service and "an outspoken promoter of Latino films" (Bernstein; "Moctesuma Esparza").
- Salvador R. Flores, PhD, superintendent of schools in Trenton, New Jersey, and a former an educational leader in San Diego where he started the first "Headstart Program" in that city's school district, and a member of the California Pre-School Commission named to that body by governor Ronald Reagan ("Dr. Salvador Ramirez Flores");

- Mifaunwy Shunatona Hines, a notable Otoe-Pawnee-Wyandot Native American, director-secretary of the American Indian Community House in New York, and the first Ms. Congeniality and Native American to be crowned Ms. Oklahoma (“About J. Artiste”);
- Charles B. Hobson, a native of the Brooklyn neighborhoods of Bedford-Stuyvesant and Crown Heights, director of the Mass Communications Center at Clark College, and producer of the award-winning series *Inside Bedford-Stuyvesant* (“Interview: Producer Charles Hobson on ‘Inside Bedford-Stuyvesant’”), which aimed to change the negative focus on the area by mainstream media during the late 1960s; Hobson also produced *Like It Is*, a widely-acclaimed public affairs television program focusing on issues relevant to the African-American community and airing on WABC-TV of New York City (Hobson; “Like It Is”);
- Jon Wing Lum, a native of New York City’s Chinatown, cameraman/editor of theatrical, documentary, educational, and television films, including Academy Award-nominated *The Year of the Rat* (1963) (“Jon Wing Lum”);
- Jesús Papoleto Meléndez, founding poet of the Nuyorican poetry movement, and award-winning author of several volumes of poetry and plays about life in New York’s East Harlem (“Jesús Papoleto Meléndez”);
- Victor Nunez, who grew up in Peru and in Tallahassee, Florida, a filmmaker known for three fictional shorts, *Taking Care of Mother Baldwin* (1970), about a boy’s tentative friendship with a woman neighbor; *Charly Benson’s Return to the Sea* (1972), which follows a returning Vietnam veteran; and *A Circle in the Fire* (1974) adapted from a Flannery O’Connor story about a dairy farm’s inhabitants (“Victor Nunez”);
- Alan Seeger, producer/writer/director of documentaries for ABC and NBC, who also taught film at St. John’s University, in Queens, New York (Taylor 2007);
- Pura Belpré White, a native of Cidra, Puerto Rico, and author and translator of more than a dozen children’s books and collections of folktales, a puppeteer, and the first Puerto Rican librarian in New York City (Ulaby); and
- Theodora Emiko Yoshikami, a Japanese-American dancer, choreographer, and teacher specializing in Japanese dance forms, who was born in the Tule Lake Relocation Center, one of ten World War II-era internment camps located in the interior of the US for the incarceration of Japanese Americans who had been forcibly relocated from the West Coast (Weiss);

Complementing the talent of these contributors and augmenting the public profile of the series was the participation of several prominent personalities of the day, including the singer Bette Midler and the actor James Earl Jones. Midler served as the voice of Woody the Spoon in what would become a popular sequence of the same name, animated by Simon, in which Woody helps the viewing youngsters cook up some tasty, easy-to-follow ethnic recipes. James Earl Jones lent his voice to the animated character of Long John Spoilsport, who taught children how not to behave in the genre *The Big Game Hunt*. Other animated

characters included *Luther* and his friends, created by Brumsic Brandon, Jr., from his nationally syndicated comic of the same title—one of the first such comics to feature a mainly black cast of characters (Vitello) (Figure 3). Other high-profile personalities who contributed their time and talents to *Vegetable Soup* included Ricardo Montalban, the Mexican-American actor; Paul Russell of the Dance Theatre of Harlem; Willie Tyler, the Black ventriloquist; folk singer Bill Withers; Native American ballet star Maria Tallchief; Asian-American dancer and singer Pat Suzuki, and Puerto Rican jockey Angel Cordero (New York State Archives B1060-87 box 31 folder 31).

Notably, a young actor named Daniel Stern—later to be best known for his role in the *Home Alone* and *Home Alone 2* movies—lent his talent to episodes of *Outerscope*, a serialized adventure about justice, equality, and development of better relations among children of different ethnic backgrounds and perspectives who travel across the universe meeting a variety of “fantasy creatures—some funny, some silly, and some scary—[who] display... foolish and hurtful aspects of prejudice.” (New York State Archives 13143-82 box 5 folder 6; “Vegetable Soup (TV Series);” “Home Alone (franchise)”) (Figure 4). Complementing this genre of the series—which became one of the most popular among viewers—were a variety of others, including, for example:

- *People’s Jobs*, which aimed to shatter the stereotype of ethnic types assigned to certain jobs—as well as convey the message that “human labor, exalted or humble, can be dignified and satisfying”—by enabling “young viewers...to meet people in some familiar and not-so-familiar roles, like a black window-washer, a black millionaire, a Puerto Rican janitor, Puerto Rican diamond cutter, a Chicano vegetable picker, a Chicano lawyer, a Chinese-American city planner, a Chinese-American restaurant worker, a Japanese-American gardener, a Japanese-American recording director, a Native American mathematician, and many others, including a white housemaid (New York State Archives 13143-82 box 5 folder 6); and
- *Where I Live*, which presented the experiences of children in their own words, sharing thoughts about “the lives and their hobbies in Hawaii, in Alaska, in Arizona, in Louisiana, and in Harlem,” including an Asian-American girl who takes viewers “on a shopping trip through the markets of San Francisco’s Chinese section, and, back home in her kitchen, show them how she prepares Bok Choy.” This genre also presented children celebrating a variety of holidays and festivals, participating in potlatch and piñata parties, and learning “the Native American origin of such words as ‘tuxedo,’ ‘pecan,’ and possum” (New York State Archives 13143-82 box 5 folder 6).

Fundamental to developing and producing these and the many other genres which made up *Vegetable Soup*—indeed the series as a whole—was the involvement of an advisory committee of consultants, which was itself a requirement of the HEW grant. Monitoring the production of the series every step of the way—literally evaluating it as it unfolded—the committee consisted of twenty-five members representing fourteen ethnic groups and four public school organizations (New York State Archives 13143-82 box 4 folder 27). The HEW grant guidelines stipulated that one-third of the committee members were to be Black, one-

third Caucasian, one-third Hispanic, and half of the members had to be parents of children in the target age range of 7-10 years. Moreover, members had to represent at least five ethnic organizations, and it needed to include three students.

Through Brandt's leadership and the experience and expertise of Cooper and Hetzer, the *Vegetable Soup* team achieved these remarkable expectations—and arguably exceeded them—as they produced the rich content of their series.

What's In a Name? – Part III: Audience, Research, and Recognition

Vegetable Soup not only stood apart from *Sesame Street* and *The Electric Company* but also was unique in several ways among the other twenty-nine series funded by ESAA-TV between 1972 and 1979. In terms of production, it was the only series produced by a state education department (NYSED) which contributed its own funds to help realize the series. This difference was also particularly significant because it led to NYSED funding in-school and related materials, where the ESAA-TV fell short (Estes, 188; Nelson et al.). In terms of target audience, *Vegetable Soup* was the only series which sought to reach 4-to-10-year-olds, primarily “all minority children” and secondarily “all other children in the U.S.” Two other self-defined “multi-cultural” series—namely *Rebop* and *As We See It*—did explicitly target broad audiences, but these groups were either older than the children who *Vegetable Soup* sought to reach, or these two series, like the majority of the twenty-nine programs—fundamentally concerned themselves with only one, two, or three ethnic groups, not the widest possible audience as was the expressed goal of *Vegetable Soup* (Nelson, et al. 99-111).

Integral to the unique focus of *Vegetable Soup*, and complementing the diverse talent who contributed to its creation and ongoing evaluation, were the formative and summative research components of the series led by Mays and which involved testing for change of attitude among children who viewed sixteen selected *Vegetable Soup* episodes. Reporting the results of this testing in her final evaluation report, Mays detailed how the testing involved 240 experimental groups and 240 control groups of children, who were ages six- to eleven-years old, from a diversity of backgrounds—white, black, Asian, Puerto Rican, Chicano, and Native American. These children also lived in three different areas: New York City, Long Island, and New Mexico. Identification of these children occurred through close collaboration with the leadership of school districts in these areas. Mays concluded in her final report: “*Vegetable Soup* is the only children's television program, to date, which has as its major focus the development of positive feelings about all ethnic groups. It was designed to induce intergroup attitudinal change which it has done successfully” (Mays et al. xix).

The testing which yielded this conclusion focused on four specific questions which addressed the key objectives of the series:

1. Did the child who saw the programs show evidence of fostering more positive identification with his own ethnic groups? (including self-identity)
2. Did the child who saw the programs develop greater feelings of acceptance for others new to his group? (acceptance or rejection)

3. Did the child who saw the programs feel more friendly or affiliative toward others? (including age and sex groups)
4. Did the child who saw the programs have less of a tendency to stereotype—what people could or could not do occupationally on the basis of race and sex?

Mays herself and the research she achieved became central to publicizing *Vegetable Soup* and its success with young viewers. In its widely-distributed press release for the series, the Bureau of Mass Communications featured Mays and her contributions to the series, including a photograph of her and Brandt from their joint appearance in July 1977 on the NBC *Today* show to discuss the positive effect of *Vegetable Soup* on its viewers. Around the same time Mays taped interviews with Black Audio Network, Mutual Black Broadcasting, and WNYC Radio (New York State Archives B0457-14 box 2).

Mays's contributions to *Vegetable Soup* fundamentally shaped the research legacy of the series. Between 1980 and 1997, several researchers discussed her work in a positive light, including Sherryl Browne Graves, who, with reference to Mays' 1975 evaluation study as well as Nelson's seminal *Assessment of the ESAA-TV Program* published the same year, observed that "[o]ne conclusion emerges clearly from this research: Educational programming that consciously includes blacks and other minorities in positive portrayals can alter positively racial attitudes, especially under conditions of prolonged or multiple exposure" (Graves, 267). Significantly, Graves's work—"Psychological Effects of Black Portrayals on Television"—appeared in the 1980 edited collection *Television and Social Behavior: Beyond Violence and Children. A Report of the Committee on Television and Social Behavior*, which grew out of the Social Science Research Council's Committee on Television and Social Behavior. Barrie Gunter and Jill L. McAleer later offered a comparable acknowledgement of Mays's work, and the impact of *Vegetable Soup* overall, observing the significance of the series among "educationally oriented television programmes [sic] [which have had] positive effects on young children's ethnic minority perceptions and attitudes" (Gunter and McAleer 85). Also surveying Mays's research, yet assessing it more critically, was Jennings Bryant, Alison F. Alexander, and Dan Brown. In their chapter "Learning from Educational Television Programs," which appeared in Michael J.A. Howe's 1983 collection *Learning from Television: Psychological and Educational Research*, they concluded that "[a]lthough *Vegetable Soup* failed to achieve demonstrable educational success on a number of dimensions, it has been extremely popular and has received considerable critical acclaim from educators" (Bryant et al. 24).

This research legacy of *Vegetable Soup* helps to locate the series further in the public health context it has long deserved and in the broader, contemporary dialogue about the relationship of television to human health. It also helps to reveal a distinctive aspect of the history of ESAA/ESAA-TV, one which complements important assessments of these legislative initiatives, and inspires further research in this area (Cain; Hodge; Nelson).

Vegetable Soup went on to win numerous awards during its approximately three-year lifespan. For their collaborative contributions to *Vegetable Soup*, Simon and Link won seven of the top awards at the 1975 International Animated Film Association-East Festival. Ohio State University conferred its prestigious Ohio State Award, specifically for episode #16,

which featured an historical, multi-lingual segment about celebrating birthdays, and an especially provocative segment about bullying. The series also received the Writers' Guild of America, East, Best Writing Award for best children's script of the year 1976 for "The Superlative Horse" which was directed by Urs B. Furrer, appeared sequentially in episodes #21, #22, #23 of season 1, and was based on Jean Merrill's award-winning 1961 allegorical children's story *The Superlative Horse: A Tale of Ancient China* (Merrill). *Vegetable Soup* also won the Bronze Medal by the International Film and Television Festival of New York, The Cindy Gold Award from the Information Film Producers Association, and The Golden Eagle Award from The Council on International Non-Theatrical Events.

Vegetable Soup II...and III?

Plans for a second season of *Vegetable Soup* took shape months before its premiere in September 1975, and well in advance of the apparent success of the series through 1976 as it was carried on more than 280 public television stations and NBC affiliates. In fact, as early as April 1975, the staff of NYSED were "encouraged to reapply for support of a second series which will emphasize the same area of concern and feature much of the same type of approach, and the department's leadership indicated strong support of the department continuing its commitment to producing the series (New York State Archives 13143-82 box 4 folder 29). Brandt and her team eventually applied for a second ESAA-TV grant, which they received, in the amount of \$2.3 million, to support *Vegetable Soup II*.

Many of the contracted directors, producers, and writers who contributed to the first season of *Vegetable Soup* stayed on to support Brandt her staff in crafting the second season, and new talent joined the project. These individuals included, among others, Terence Taylor. He was a student of Alan Seeger at St. John's University who, through Seeger's guidance, became a production assistant trainee on *Vegetable Soup II*, and soon thereafter, a full production assistant and writer for the series; Taylor would eventually become an award-winning children's television writer and noted author of horror novels (Taylor 2007; Taylor 2018). Also joining *Vegetable Soup II*, yet in front of the camera, was Debbie Allen, who contributed specifically to the quiz-show themed genre *The Big Job Hunt*; she was then co-star of NBC's *3 Girls 3* and future award-winning choreographer and actor ("3 Girls 3;" "Debbie Allen;" New York State Archives A0729-80 box 11 folder 3).

Among the new members of Brandt's core staff for *Vegetable Soup II* was Lois (Tippy) Fortune, whom Brandt recruited directly to be her associate executive producer. Fortune had been a stage manager on the *Electric Company* and involved with the production of *Feeling Good*, a CTW health series designed for adults ("Feeling Good"). She held a master's degree in teaching from NYU, was previously involved in the National Teacher Corps, and had been the only female African-American writer to be selected for participation in the *Sesame Street* writers training program. Fortune would eventually leave *Vegetable Soup* to join CTW's International Department, working with adaptations of *Sesame Street* and *The Electric Company* in Europe, Asia, and The Middle East. She was the executive producer of *Pinwheel*, the Ace and Catholic Mass Media award-winning series that launched the Nickelodeon channel, which garnered a Peabody Award. Later, she expanded her interest in children's programs by working on the *Galaxy Classroom*, three educational series beamed

directly into classrooms via satellite (“Feeling Good;” Fortune-Maginley 2018; “Lois Fortune”).

Also joining the core staff of *Vegetable Soup II* was Alyce Myatt who was previously a producer at WBZ-TV in Boston, where she began as an intern for a local public affairs program. For *Vegetable Soup II*, she was an associate producer, coordinating live-action and animated genres. Subsequently, she became production associate and segment producer for ABC’s popular newsmagazine *20/20*, a senior producer at CTW supervising the production of multiple episodes of *3-2-1 Contact!*, executive producer at Nickelodeon where she received an ACE Award and contributed to the network receiving a Peabody Award, and then director of Children’s Programming at PBS (Myatt).

Ewald Nyquist formally introduced *Vegetable Soup II* at a press conference on February 10, 1977. The occasion included “a special preview of pilot material to be contained in the series” as well as “an ethnic buffet of foods featured in the series” (New York State Archives A0729-80 box 11 folder 3). As part of NYSED’s promotion of the second season, staff designed, produced, and distributed colorful posters which featured Simon’s illustration of the popular character Woody the Spoon to help declare “The exciting television series for children is back to celebrate the positive values of human diversity [and] to counter the destructive effects of racial isolation” (Figure 5).

Integral to the benchmark accomplishment of a second season—indeed the ongoing success of *Vegetable Soup* overall—was the substantial body of research completed and published by Mays and well promoted by NYSED, in the shape of a detailed and lengthy formal grant report and a brief and easily-readable booklet *Vegetable Soup: The Research Continues* (Figures 6 and 7). Both publications established a concise and clear research case for *Vegetable Soup II*. Particularly impressed with the latter publication was John G. Broughton, Associate Commissioner for Cultural Education in the New York State Department of Education, who wrote to Cooper in an internal memo dated September 20, 1977:

I have just read through [it] and want to congratulate you and Ozzie [Osborn] Segerberg on the publication. In my opinion, it is the best thing that you have done in a promotional and informational way for *Vegetable Soup* and, best of all, I *can’t find a single thing wrong with it* [Broughton’s own emphasis]. I am sure you will use this at the Wednesday press conference and I would think that it will go far in convincing the people of the value of the program series” (New York State Archives B0457-14 box 2).

The individual “Segerberg” praised here was Osborn Segerberg Jr., author of the NYSED-commissioned 1976 pamphlet *The Story of Vegetable Soup*. The fact that Broughton identifies him as one of the authors of *Vegetable Soup: The Research Continues* is significant because there is no author indicated in the publication itself. Crediting it at least in part to Segerberg therefore augments his own important role in the history of *Vegetable Soup*, as a noted journalist with deep interests in, and an impressive body of work about, popular medicine and science. His earliest works included *Where Have All the Flowers, Fishes, Birds, Trees, Water, and Air Gone? What Ecology is All About* (1971) and *The Immortality Factor* (1974). In 1973, Segerberg worked with NYSED to write and publish

Man Builds, Man Destroys: An Action Guide for a Television Video Tape Series for Environmental Understanding. A special “Energy Edition” of this guide appeared in 1975, and, in 1976, the same year in which *The Story of Vegetable Soup* appeared, Segerberg published the children’s book *Living with Death*. Subsequently, Segerberg wrote *Living to Be 100: 1200 Who Did and How They Did It* (1982), *The Riddles of Jesus, Answers of Science* (1987); and, in 1990, he co-edited—with Gerard Piel, the former publisher of *Scientific American* who helped to reinvent magazine and redefine the modern era of science journalism—a collection of writings by René Dubos, one of the researchers who made significant contributions to defining the social determinants of health.

Vegetable Soup II premiered in the fall of 1978, with continued research by Mays (Mays, *Formative Evaluation of New Pilot Segments for Vegetable Soup II*) and to much acclaim, well-orchestrated publicity by NYSED—including “promotional meetings” held in at least five states, involving Brandt, Cooper, Hetzer, Fortune, Mays, and Lucille Wong, who was a member of the advisory committee of consultants—and a new and more upbeat and colorful opening sequence scored by Link and animated by Simon (New York State Archives B0457-14 box 2; “Vegetable Soup Theme”).

Vegetable Soup II included many popular segments from the first season—like *Outerscope* and *Woody the Spoon*—while incorporating new ones, including live-action dramas which placed “contemporary children in historic situations,” and a genre called *What Would You Do If...*, which posed “serious dilemmas in which children often find themselves.”

Ultimately, *Vegetable Soup II* was as popular as the first series, if not more popular. An internal NYSED memo, dated September 22, 1977, offers some evidence to support this conclusion. Here, New York State Education Commissioner Gordon Ambach wrote to Associate Commissioner Broughton, stating that “the Children’s Television Workshop is publishing a new children’s magazine on programs they consider worthwhile, and have asked for the right to reproduce in their magazine some of the scripts of our new series” (New York State Archives B0457-14 box 2). Subsequently, the 1981 annual report of the New York State Education Department documented that

...In more than 15 places in the U.S., the entire series of 39 half hour programs was rebroadcast for the seventh time; in some states, for the eight and ninth times. In addition, the Public Broadcasting Service made the entire series available on its network to more than 200 stations. The idea of ‘Vegetable Soup Nite’ as a celebration in which ethnicities and minorities were honoured was again popular. The concept received popular recognition from the Mayor of the City of Albany with his attendance on one such public school occasion...” “Communications Unit Produces Programs of Tape, Cable Use.”

As *Vegetable Soup* continued to realize such success on television stations across America, Mays not only continued her research evaluation of the series, publishing a comprehensive, 212-page report (Mays “Formative Evaluation”) but the same year also published *Black Children’s Perception of the Use of Their Dialect*, which advanced the idea “that knowledge of phonemes used by many Black second graders in New York City public schools, and knowledge of how the child perceives the language he uses in terms of ‘right’ or ‘wrong’

might be a missing link for teachers in planning an effective reading program for these children” (Mays 1).

Despite the measurable popularity and success of *Vegetable Soup*, it did not yield what Brandt and her colleagues had evidently hoped—and planned—with substantial ideas and a detailed budget, namely *Vegetable Soup III*. Precisely why they did not achieve a third season of the series is unclear based on an assessment of the surviving historical record and conversations with members of the *Vegetable Soup* creative team who simply either did not remain on the team through *Vegetable Soup II* or were not in the chain of communication about the future of the series. Regardless, as this article as shown, the available historical record reveals much about *Vegetable Soup*, most of all the remarkably diverse talent who came together under Yanna Brandt’s able direction to create its unique and dynamic character, an achievement which clearly met, if not exceeded, the expectation of the ESAA-TV legislation to employ members of minority groups in responsible positions in its development, production, and administration.

Moving On

During the years following the end of *Vegetable Soup II*, Brandt and her colleagues at NYSED moved on to significant new projects and career opportunities, as did the many individuals with whom they had worked on *Vegetable Soup I and II*. In many cases, these career trajectories involved continued engagement with the social determinants of health.

Brandt herself continued to work with NYSED, and with Link, Mays, Seeger, and Taylor, among others. She executive produced *High Feather*, which premiered in 1980 as the third major television series (after *Vegetable Soup I and II*) produced by the Bureau of Mass Communications under the continued leadership of that unit by Cooper (Hetzer 2017). The name of the series came from the Old English expression “Fine Fettle,” meaning to enjoy life and cheerfully undertake the tasks of living (Vega 2018). The heartfelt spirit of the show—which Seeger directed and an episode of which Taylor wrote—was captured in the lyrics to its theme song, which Link composed and performed: “I’m in High Feather. Feel like the sun is shining on me. High Feather. I’m as free as I can be...” (Link 1980). The series was “like *Vegetable Soup*” in that it “...attacks misconceptions which children accept as truth—in this case, the relationship of food and eating to health” (“Communications Unit Produces Programs of Tape, Cable Use;” “High Feather”).

More specifically, Brandt produced *High Feather* “to counter [the misinformation of] television advertising.” Involving complementary teacher guides, like those produced for *Vegetable Soup*, each of the ten episodes of *High Feather* “emphasize[ed] a different, but essential nutritional lesson,” including subjects like “sensible weight loss, the importance of fruits and vegetables, the dangers of crash dieting, gardening, low cost meals and comparative shopping” (“Keeping in ‘High Feather’”). Mays led the summative evaluation of *High Feather* which involved the testing of one hundred forty-eight fourth and fifth grade students from Black, White, Asian, and Hispanic backgrounds “to determine viewers’ knowledge of nutrition at entry level...their attention to the programs...the appeal of each program and receptivity towards the show...level of comprehension of material presented...”

[and]...possible gains in knowledge, and extent to which the program met the goals of the series” (Mays 1980 2-3). Cooper praised Mays’s work in the foreword to the study, stating that:

To find the answer to comprehension and to the maintenance of a continuous interest span is a task that Luberta Mays has undertaken on many projects for the Bureau of Mass Communications. That she has once more does it on a project designed to serve the needs of increased nutritional understanding and a changed pattern of eating for many sub-teens and teens is no mean feat...We are again indebted to Dr. Mays for a job well done.

In the years after *High Feather*, Mays became a celebrated educator and leader at Medgar Evers College, retiring from the school in 1992 as a professor of teacher education. She passed away in April 2014, remembered and celebrated as an “education champion” (Barker).

High Feather earned Brandt two Emmy Awards for series and direction, further advancing her prominence as a leader in the field. Shortly thereafter, in 1983, the nonprofit organization Action for Children’s Television featured a statement by her in its publication *Fighting TV Stereotypes: An ACT Handbook*. As ACT President Peggy Charren stated in an Apr. 1, 1983, letter to Michael K. Deaver, Deputy Chief of the White House Staff, the publication offered “concrete suggestions for ridding television programming and advertising of stereotypes about women and minorities and filling the TV schedule instead with positive images from which children may learn.” Herein, Brandt was identified as the executive producer of *Vegetable Soup*, stating that “You can’t turn the world around in a half-hour TV series. But you can make it more difficult for children to maintain stereotypic notions. Once you’ve been exposed to a variety of people within a group, it’s hard to continue saying, ‘They’re all alike.’” (qtd. in Alperowicz).

Brandt continued in her award-winning career, directing and producing a variety of films and series in locations across the United States, Europe, and Asia. Tragically, on June 6, 2008, she died in an automobile accident (“Remembrance of Yanna Kroyt Brandt”).

Legacies Remembered, Endangered, and...Lost?

Shortly before her untimely death, Brandt was interviewed about her career and asked “What was your greatest achievement? She responded:

...I think that my greatest achievement in the public interest was probably *Vegetable Soup*. ...I know that it affected a lot of people, both behind the camera and the children who watched it. And obviously it created a lot of job opportunities for a lot people of color. So, I think in terms of the greater good, that’s probably my number one achievement... (Brandt 2007).

That achievement reached its pinnacle of public recognition on September 19, 1975, a week following Ewald Nyquist’s press conference for the series. Shirley A. Chisholm (D-NY), the first African-American Congresswoman and 1972 Democratic Presidential candidate, took

to the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives to introduce the series and urge her colleagues to watch it (Figure 8). Chisholm stated:

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to announce the premiere of a new television show for children which deals with the variety of racial and ethnic characteristics of our society. ‘Vegetable Soup,’ produced by the New York State Education Department, is funded through money from the Emergency School Assistance Act-ESSA [sic] in order to facilitate better communication on the subject of cross-cultural understanding. This is indeed an important program, and I urge my colleagues to view the first of 39 installments of ‘Vegetable Soup’ Monday evening on WETA, Channel 26. In addition the show will be presented on educational television networks throughout the country, and will be seen on NBC beginning November 2.

Following these remarks, at Chisholm’s request and based squarely on the formal news release prepared by NYSED, a detailed description of *Vegetable Soup* was included in the *Congressional Record*. This outcome testifies to the effectiveness of NYSED in its publicity efforts for the series, and it serves to show how *Vegetable Soup* is not only a part of the cultural fabric of America but also a part of its official legislative record, and therefore its political history.

With her statement—and therein the strategic coordination of her office with NYSED—Chisholm inscribed *Vegetable Soup* in the official legislative record. The subsequent success of the series—rooted firmly in its research outcomes and the contributions of its remarkable team of producers and writers—established it on the American cultural landscape. *Vegetable Soup* remains there today, now rediscovered in historical context through this article, and despite having faded to a nostalgic memory in the minds of many members of the generation it targeted, namely children from the ages of 7 to 12, individuals who today are Generation-X adults between the ages of 45 and 50.

Complementing and augmenting her enthusiastic support of *Vegetable Soup*, Chisholm wrote a letter to her Congressional colleagues explaining to them that the “telecast of this series presents [us] with an opportunity which we rarely have: to see the finished product of a legislative program which we have promoted and worked for” (qtd. in Segerberg, Jr. *The Story of Vegetable Soup*). Moreover, Chisholm supported the arrangement of a reception at the Rayburn House Office Building hosted by Nyquist, as well as Robert Howard, President of NBC. The bi-partisan occasion included a viewing of excerpts of *Vegetable Soup* and attendees included Representative Carl D. Perkins (D-KY), Chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee, and Senator Jacob K. Javits (R-NY), ranking Republican on the Education Subcommittee of the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee (New York State Archives B1060-87 box 31 folder 3; Segerberg Jr., *The Story of Vegetable Soup*).

Beyond revealing a significant moment in the history of bi-partisan support to change the environment for racism in America, this reflective chapter in the history of *Vegetable Soup* opens a window onto the intersecting worlds of access, preservation, and research in the digital age. Indeed, it serves as a case study of the fragility of late-twentieth century historical sources and testifies to the importance of preserving the series for the benefit of

current and future research on issues which will continue to shape our politics, culture, and society.

As of June 2018, a majority of the episodes of the first season of *Vegetable Soup* are available on a YouTube channel called “Classic Educational TV.” No episodes of the second season appear on this channel, and none appear anywhere else on YouTube or on any other similar Internet resource. As a direct result of this determination being presented at the 2017 Researching New York Conference, staff of the New York State Archives have begun to digitize and make freely available through their institution’s digital archive—located at www.archives.nysed.gov—a complete set of original *Vegetable Soup* ¾ U-Matic video tapes, encompassing all episodes of both seasons (Gray). When this process is complete, researchers will be able to explore *Vegetable Soup* in greater detail, and its origins as a publicly-funded television series will have come full circle, as anyone anywhere will be able to appreciate the creativity and purpose of series, and consider it in the context of the historical narrative revealed here. However, counterbalancing this eventual new availability and rediscovery of *Vegetable Soup* is a persistent fragility of the very sources which document the history of the series.

Brandt and her team produced uniquely for adults—including teachers, parents, and interested others—a number of audio-visual and printed resources to complement the many genres which constituted *Vegetable Soup*. Among the former resources were five short films, including two “teacher in-service” films, *Approaches to Effective Learning Part I: Who Am I?* and *Approaches to Effective Learning Part II: Activities* (New York State Archives B1060-87 box 31 folder 31). According to a contemporary NYSED resource catalog *Looking Through the Video Glass*, the former was filmed on location throughout the state, ran 20 minutes, and offered teachers a preview of *Vegetable Soup*, including “individual segments...related directly to classroom situations...giving them insights for achieving the effective goals” of the series. The latter film ran 16 minutes and highlighted classroom activities “that can be used with *Vegetable Soup*,” with “ample opportunity...to the viewer to observe students and teachers actually using *Vegetable Soup* in the school setting.” Complementing these two productions were two “parent consciousness raising” films, *Desegregation: Positive Images* and *Sports: Sticks and Stones May Break My Bones...But Names Won’t Harm Me*. The latter was a 13-minute “case study of a racial incident that had disastrous results” involving “an ill-tempered remark in a hockey game [which] leads to the death of a student.” The film “dramatically depicts the lack of understanding that can exist between people with similar aspirations. Although a sporting event is the focus of the program, similar emotions can vent themselves in many situations. *Vegetable Soup* is related to the incident as a resource for children in solving problem situations that they may face in the future.” Additionally, Brandt and her team produced *How Do You See Me?*, a “30-minute general interest introductory film” intended for “prime-time adult viewing” and starring James Earl Jones, Pat Suzuki, Ricardo Montalban, Maria Tallchief and Angel Cordero, who each “talk about his/her childhood and growing up as a minority group person.” Brandt and her team intended this film to have “high entertainment value” and be used for “community presentation.”

WorldCat—the world’s largest network of library content and services—lists three of the five *Vegetable Soup* short films. While several dozen libraries hold a copy of *Approaches to Effective Learning Part I: Who Am I?*, none hold *Sports: Sticks and Stones May Break My Bones...But Names Won’t Harm Me*. And whereas *Approaches to Effective Learning Part II: Activities* may be held by a single library, *WorldCat* offers no records whatsoever for *Desegregation: Positive Images* and *How Do You See Me?*, suggesting that these two productions are at best extremely scarce, or at worst lost.

Other key visual artifacts documenting the history of *Vegetable Soup* have had the same or a similar fate. Evidently lost is the original videotape of the appearance of Brandt and Mays on the July 25, 1977, episode of the NBC *Today* show to discuss the positive effect of *Vegetable Soup* on its viewers; only a poor-quality photocopy of a single still image from the videotape survives (New York State Archives B0457-14 box 2; Panzarella). A digitized copy of a White Plains, New York, newspaper article shows a photograph of Yanna Brandt and Ewald Nyquist at the September 1975 press conference for the launch of *Vegetable Soup* (“‘Vegetable Soup’ - New Learning Dish”). However, the rights holder of this photograph, Associated Press, does not hold the image in its photo library files, so, per the policies of that company it could not license this image for use in this article, and therefore for inclusion the reconstructed history of *Vegetable Soup* (Scherer).

Among the printed resources created by Brandt and her team were the *Vegetable Soup I Parent-Teacher Guide* and the *Vegetable Soup II Parent-Teacher Guide and Cookbook* (Figures 9 and 10). While photocopies of both publications are available via ERIC, the online library of education research and information, sponsored by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) of the U.S. Department of Education, very few original, color copies have survived, arguably qualifying them to be, like their associate films, scarce modern historical materials. Another printed resource, *Vegetable Soup Activities*, co-authored by Mary and Ray Shepard (Figure 11), is equally scarce, and the same can be said for *The Story of Vegetable Soup*, Osborn Segerberg’s color pamphlet history of the series commissioned by NYSED (Figure 12). And oddly elusive, if not lost completely, is Brandt’s 1976 book *The Adventures of Outerscope I*, apparently published as a “TV tie-in” book by the now-defunct Pyramid Books (“*The Adventures of Outerscope*,” Patton).

Like the majority of the short films produced by Brandt and her team, all of these scarce resources deserve to be located, preserved, and more widely appreciated not only as part of the history of *Vegetable Soup* and the legacies of its creators, but also the broader history of the dozens of programs funded by the ESAA-TV legislation. “The research continues,” therefore, much in the same spirit and practice as Brandt and her team concluded in their research report of the same name which they published after the first season of *Vegetable Soup*. Today, however, this phrase takes on and holds new meaning. “The research continues” in order to resurrect both the historical record and the history of this unique effort to change “the environment for racism.” And “the research continues” to understand why this environment itself continues on our national landscape. Perhaps the history of *Vegetable Soup*, and the persistent relevance of its themes and content can help to inspire new ways to change this environment, and to fulfill the promise of the series being a “noble experiment in human values” (Didato).

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Biography

Jeffrey S. Reznick is a historian on the federal staff of the US National Library of Medicine (NLM) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), where he serves as Chief of the NLM History of Medicine Division and maintains a diverse, interdisciplinary, and highly-collaborative research portfolio rooted in social and cultural history. He is author of two books, both published by Manchester University Press in its Cultural History of Modern War series, as well as numerous articles, book reviews, and essays for the popular press.

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Figure 1.

Cover of NYSED's October 1975 issue of *Inside Education* announcing the premiere of *Vegetable Soup*. Animated characters created by Jim Simon appear in the foreground while the background includes a scene from the genre *What Do You Want to Be When You Grow Up*, which appeared in episode 6 and featured Francis Cole, a solo concert harpsichordist of African-American background who plays for a group of children and explains how she became interested in and pursued her career. Image is in the public domain and reproduced here courtesy of the New York State Archives and Library.

Figure 2.
Photograph of *Vegetable Soup* Producer Yanna Kroyt Brandt and Project Director William Hetzer as reproduced in NYSED's October 1975 issue of *Inside Education*. Image is in the public domain and reproduced here courtesy of the New York State Archives and Library.

Figure 3.

A scene from *Luther*, by Brumsic Brandon, Jr., as reproduced in *The Story of Vegetable Soup*, by Osborn Segerberg, Jr. One of the many “genres” of the series—as Brandt and her production team called the individual productions—*Luther* was intended satirize social situations of African-Americans, primarily to help children of African-American background understand how humor can be a way to cope with these situations, and to help all children treat others as they themselves would wish to be treated. Image is in the public domain and reproduced here courtesy of the New York State Archives and Library.

Figure 4.

Scene from Vegetable Soup II's *Outerscope II*, the serialized adventure, continuing from the first season, about justice, equality, and development of better relations among children of different ethnic backgrounds and perspectives. Directed by Douglas W. Cheek, *Outerscope* became one of the most popular genres of the series despite some viewers finding the puppets odd due to their humanlike heads and hands. The producers recognized this fact and took action to correct it, making the puppets for *Vegetable Soup II* "more aesthetically pleasing," as the series advisory committee of consultants recognized them to be (New York State Archives A07929-80 box 11 folder 3). Image is in the public domain and reproduced here courtesy of the New York State Archives and Library.

Figure 5.

Poster designed, produced, and distributed in late summer or early fall 1977 by NYSED staff to promote the premiere of *Vegetable Soup II*. It features Woody the Spoon, the animated character created for the series by Jim Simon and voiced by Bette Midler, and, in the lower-left corner, the popular logo of NYSED's Bureau of Mass Communications created by William Hetzer. Image is in the public domain and reproduced here courtesy of the New York State Archives and Library.

Figure 6.

Cover of *An Evaluation Report on Vegetable Soup: The Effects of a Multi-Ethnic Children's Television Series on Intergroup Attitudes of Children*, featuring one of the many characters created for the series by animator Jim Simon.

Figure 7.

The brief and easily-to-read booklet *Vegetable Soup: The Research Continues*, featuring “Woody the Spoon.” In conjunction with *An Evaluation Report on Vegetable Soup*, this publication helped to establish a concise and clear research case for *Vegetable Soup II*. Images are in the public domain and reproduced here courtesy of the New York State Archives and Library.

Figure 8.
Congresswoman Shirley A. Chisholm (D-NY). Image is in the public domain and reproduced here courtesy of the Library of Congress.

Figure 9.

Cover of the *Vegetable Soup I Parent-Teacher Guide*. Image is in the public domain and reproduced here courtesy of the New York State Archives and Library.

Figure 10.

Cover of the *Vegetable Soup II Parent-Teacher Guide and Cookbook*. Image is in the public domain and reproduced here courtesy of the New York State Archives and Library.

Figure 11.

Cover of *Vegetable Soup Activities*. Image is in the public domain and reproduced here courtesy of the New York State Archives and Library.

Figure 12.

Cover of *The Story of Vegetable Soup*. Image is in the public domain and reproduced here courtesy of the New York State Archives and Library.